

The State of London's Children Report

September 2007

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The report also draws on data from government department websites, national and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), children's organisations and university websites.

Foreword by Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London

This is the third *State of London's Children Report*. This series of reports continues to provide the most comprehensive picture of where children and young people's lives in London are getting better, and what has deteriorated or stayed the same.

The previous reports in 2001 and 2004 were welcomed across London agencies as offering an 'observatory' role and a strategic overview on issues faced at a pan-London level in key children's areas.

This picture of children's lives is in the context of the particular characteristics of London's children – diversity, mobility, high levels of poverty and inequality – and there are continuing, unequal life chances for disadvantaged groups including some children from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, refugee and asylum-seeking children and disabled children.

We must ensure that all Londoners feel the benefits of an internationally successful city. Yet this report evidences London's high levels of child poverty and inequality as a theme running through every chapter. This is out of place alongside the capital's dynamic economic success. High levels of income and employment deprivation in London particularly affect families and children. A key conclusion of the report is that major challenges remain in narrowing the gap in education and health outcomes for the most disadvantaged children.

Since I was elected Mayor, children and young people's issues have been one of my priorities. I shall continue to champion children and young people's issues within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as my remit and powers increase.

I have delivered free bus and tram fares in my OysterCard scheme for under-18s in full-time education, so that thousands of families with school-age children are saving up to £350 a year for each child. My 'Guide to Preparing Play Strategies' (2005) provides a template for the development of local play strategies, and approximately £20 million is now being allocated by Big Lottery Fund to London boroughs for play. I have published, 'Providing for children and young people's play and informal recreation', draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (2006). As well as organising major Playday and International Children's Day events each year, we have established my Young London website and team of Peer Outreach Workers. We are now moving ahead, in partnership with the government, to deliver my youth offer of £20 million to provide



additional support to youth and young people's services across London Boroughs to maximise opportunities for teenagers.

I am looking forward to working with London government and stakeholder agencies to advance the children's agenda in relation to Every Child Matters, and, at a national level, with the new Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families.

As Mayor, and as a parent, I want this report to support the GLA group in delivering my Children and Young People's Strategy in partnership with London government, boroughs and other partner agencies. Together we can make the much needed improvements to make London a truly child-friendly, safe and inclusive city.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Livingstone". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'K'.

Ken Livingstone
Mayor of London

Foreword by Nicky Gavron, Deputy Mayor of London

London is a young city. Almost a quarter of its population is under 18. Although living and growing up in a huge, buoyant, diverse world city offers London's children and young people incredible opportunities, it also creates unique problems for many of them.

There are no simple answers and the Mayor has no formal statutory responsibility for under-18s. That is why I championed the preparation of the Mayor's strategy, 'Making London Better for All Children and Young People' in 2004 and the establishment of the GLA Children and Young People's Unit. The strategy provides the strategic framework for co-ordination and engagement with the full range of key London partners.

All GLA strategies and policies have consideration of children and young people built in from the start. Examples include strategies for Refugee Integration; Housing and Health Inequalities; the role of the London Child Poverty Commission; opportunities to be provided by the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games; and the 2007 alterations to the London Plan, requiring adequate and accessible play and informal recreation space to be provided as part of all new housing development where there are more than ten children.

There are still major inequalities experienced by particular groups of children, such as those in refugee and asylum-seeking families, looked after children, disabled children and children suffering mental health problems. Child poverty rates are particularly high in inner London, where around half of all children (51 per cent) live in poverty.

But the report contains some good news for London's children and young people. Progress has been made in tackling inequalities, with the pace of improvement in the educational attainment of disadvantaged children being greater in London, particularly inner London, than in other parts of the country. Strategies to tackle health inequalities are showing results in the reduction of unplanned teenage conceptions, especially in some boroughs, and the rate of child casualties on London's roads has reduced significantly.

The introduction of free travel for children and young people is a major step in increasing access to facilities for the least well-off. There is welcome evidence that London is beginning to take play and recreation seriously with strategies to improve accessible and inclusive spaces to play.

But there is much to be done. On education, more progress is needed to 'narrow the gap' in attainment for children on free school meals and



children of African-Caribbean heritage in particular. The proportion of UK young people staying on in education and training post-16 is low.

Despite progress in health, inequalities persist – children from poorer families in London are more likely to be born early, to be born small, to experience ill-health or unintentional injury, and ultimately to die sooner than children from better-off families. London has the highest percentage of obese children aged two to 15 years of all English regions.

Finally, the high numbers of children in custody, and high re-offending rates following custody, are not only damaging to young people's life-chances but expensive, and there are strong concerns of over-representation of young black people in the criminal justice system.

So many aspects of children's lives are interlinked, whether it is the impact of parental mental health or substance misuse on their children's schooling; the link between poor maternal nutrition, low birth weight and a child's life chances; and poor air quality on children's physical health. As the Mayor's lead for the London Plan and climate change, as well as children, I recognise how crucial it is that play and recreation space is provided with new housing to meet the needs of London's growing child population. The well-being of London's children and the quality of their present lives are fundamental to creating a sustainable future for them as Londoners.

The Mayor and I are fully committed to ensuring that children and young people continue to participate in and shape the direction of our work. We benefit enormously from learning from them, and have established a range of London-wide structures that actively encourage young Londoners to talk to us. These include the Young Londoners' Network, a peer outreach scheme and the Young London website, on which we shall publish a young people friendly version of this report (www.london.gov.uk/young-london).

Children's well-being is a key indicator of a healthy and sustainable city. The report presents a detailed analysis and critical challenges to the Mayor, the UK government, boroughs and other agencies working with children and families in London to improve children's present and future life chances.



Nicky Gavron

Deputy Mayor and London Assembly Member

1 Summary and introduction

Introduction

The State of London's Children Report series

The state of London's children today determines the state of London tomorrow. Measuring and reporting the circumstances of children is key to improving children's living conditions, promoting children's rights and well-being, and ensuring the development of London as a more child-friendly and inclusive city for all Londoners. Regular, reliable information is critical in supporting plans to ensure that London's 1.72 million children – nearly one quarter of the total population – have the best possible childhood now and are well placed to ensure that London has the best possible future.

This is the third State of London's Children Report and the second produced by the Greater London Authority (GLA). The previous reports, in 2001¹ and 2004², provided data to inform Londonwide policy, including the Mayor's Children and Young People's Strategy³, highlighting the need for policies to promote equalities and to reduce poverty and social exclusion for London's children.

In addition to informing the regional planning process, the State of London's Children Reports offer an accessible reference source for all those who are concerned with the well-being of London's children – including national policy-makers, other regional government bodies and local authorities and their partner agencies.

The report also complements other initiatives to monitor and document the position and circumstances of children and young people, including the UK series of 'Monitoring the Well Being of Children in the UK'⁴, the 2007/08 examination of the UK government's progress in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (see below), and the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre's report on the well-being of children and young people in the world's most advanced countries⁵.

The State of London's Children Reports aim to provide data of relevance to the well-being of all children aged 0 to 18 years of age, using the definition in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, there are some groups of young Londoners who experience disadvantages in many areas of their lives. Children who are experiencing disproportionate threats to their well-being as children now, and unequal life-chances in the future, include children in low-income families, some black, Asian and minority ethnic children, disabled children, refugee and asylum-seeking children and looked after children. In this report we draw particular attention to data highlighting these inequalities.



The 2007 report comes at a significant time for policy and planning for children in London. National, regional and local government are focused on implementing the major 'change for children' agenda following the *Every Child Matters* green paper, *Children Act 2004* and *Youth Matters* programme (see below).

The principal aim of this report is to provide a descriptive analysis of the circumstances of London's children, exploring the ways in which London is changing for children and indicating trends in their well-being within the overall context of the *Every Child Matters* outcomes framework⁶.

Measuring child well-being

Measuring child well-being brings several challenges. A recent report from UNICEF used the *Innocenti Report Card* to compare the progress of developed countries across six dimensions of child well-being, pointing out that, '*The true measure of a nation's standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialisation, and their sense of being loved, valued and included in the families and societies into which they are born*'⁷.

However, the authors of that report highlight the limitations of the available data, not only in accessing up-to-date, comparable information, but also in identifying the measures that are a true reflection of the breadth of children's lives. Some of the most important elements of a good childhood, such as being loved and valued, are less susceptible to measurement. Some of the dimensions of children's lives that are important to children themselves are less likely to be measured. There is a particular lack of information about some groups of children – for example, there is little data on the lived experience of very young children.

Similar limitations apply to measures of child well-being in London. Consequently, this State of London's Children Report is inevitably a reflection of what can be counted rather than everything that counts. Later in this chapter we set out the indicators and data sources used in this report and suggest where there are gaps in information that need to be addressed if a fuller picture of children's well-being in London is to be developed. Good information is not only important for providing a regional overview, but is also vital for local authorities and their partners to support meeting and recording progress towards the priority national targets and other indicators in the national outcomes framework.

Despite these limitations, this report provides a comprehensive overview of the state of London's children and highlights the areas in which progress is being made to improve children's well-being, as well as where key policy and service challenges remain.

Making use of the report

The 2007 State of London's Children is reported in eight chapters. This introductory and summary chapter provides a brief overview of the national and regional policy context, highlighting significant developments since the previous report in 2004. It also gives a demographic overview of London and London's children before presenting summary findings from each of the subsequent chapters. It concludes with a discussion of what the data tell us about changes in the state of London's children since 2001 and 2004; how London compares with national trends; and, by way of concluding analysis, some of the current and future challenges for those working to improve the well-being of children in London.

Chapters 2 to 8 are structured to reflect both the outcomes set out in *Every Child Matters* and the Mayor's Children and Young People's Strategy. Each chapter begins with a short summary and provides a descriptive analysis of the most recent data available at the time of writing (July 2007). Chapters also include text boxes summarising national, regional and local policy or service initiatives relevant to the topics covered in each section.

Finally, a word about terminology: for the purposes of this report 'children' or 'children and young people' refers to those aged 0 to 18, except where relevant data are reported differently, which we highlight in the text. When we refer to black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) children, this normally refers to census classifications unless the data are reported differently. We use SOLCRs as abbreviation for the series of State of London's Children Reports.

The national and regional policy context

National legislative and policy changes

The 2004 State of London's Children Report commented on the rapidly changing policy context for children and young people and observed that since the first report in 2001, children's issues had attained a higher priority on the national policy agenda.

In 2007, we can look back on several years of unprecedented policy change. *Every Child Matters* and the *Children Act 2004* brought about the most fundamental review of children's services since the previous *Children Act 1989*. Accompanied by the National Service Framework for Child and



Maternal Health, *Every Child Matters* promotes an integrated, outcomes-focused approach to provision for children and young people. The development in every local authority of Children's Trust arrangements, integrated children's services headed by a Director of Children's Services and elected lead members for children's services are designed to ensure that the separate planning processes for children and young people's education, health, social care and recreation are brought together within a Children and Young People's Plan.

Integrating services for children entails those with different departmental responsibilities, at all levels, sharing a common, holistic understanding of children's needs, and effective sharing of information between agencies. This is being promoted via the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework⁸ and the development of ContactPoint, a universal system of children's records to enable the rapid and efficient sharing of information, particularly when there is a concern about a child⁹. In London, this is complemented by data on schools and pupil attainment collected and analysed by London Challenge (DCSF), the Institute of Education and GLA Data Management and Analysis Group (DMAG). These individualised and aggregated data sources provide critical information for tracking outcomes for children, monitoring trends and promoting improvements in service delivery.

Safeguarding of children is now co-ordinated through Local Safeguarding Children Boards, replacing Area Child Protection Committees. These changes, many of which have their origins in the Inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié¹⁰, are aimed at providing better protection for children at risk as well as improved support to families. Currently, we are at the stage of new arrangements being implemented and becoming established. At the same time, a further phase of health service changes has been taking place: the creation of a Londonwide (single) Strategic Health Authority and the move toward practice-based commissioning at the PCT (or consortia of PCTs) level. It is too soon to assess the impact of these changes but by the time of the next SOLCR we may be able to present some evidence of the difference these policy developments have made for children.

The provision of better and more preventative support to families has been a recurring theme in national policy in recent years, based on recognition that to improve outcomes for children it is necessary to provide effective support for their families. The UK government invested in Sure Start and is continuing its development through the roll out of Children's Centres to provide support to parents and children, especially in the early years, and drawing on evidence that early life experiences have a profound influence on later outcomes.

Parenting is seen as key to preventing poor outcomes for children: the increased emphasis on parenting programmes ranges from enabling parents to support their children in education, to tackling potential anti-social or offending behaviour in young people. Parents are also seen as crucial to the government's aim of reducing, and eventually eradicating, child poverty. The drive to get more parents, especially lone parents, into work and support them to maintain employment underpins objectives both to increase the availability of childcare and ensure minimum income levels through policies such as the working families tax credit.

In 2005, the (then) Department for Education and Skills (DfES)¹¹ and HM Treasury issued *Support for Parents: the best start for children*, setting out four strands of the government's strategy to improve outcomes for children: providing economic and financial security for families as a foundation for improving the quality of children's lives; support for parents; building stronger communities; and improving public services. This was further developed in a 2006 report from the Cabinet Office¹² which highlighted '*patterns of extreme and persistent disadvantage passed between generations... [and] the inter-generational cycle of disadvantage*' needing to be addressed through a reform programme to improve social inclusion by earlier identification and targeting those at most risk of social exclusion in later life.

This approach recognises that in the longer term, sustained economic growth will be needed to address poverty, and economic success hinges on achieving a well-educated population. Education continues to feature strongly in government policy priorities and the *Every Child Matters* outcomes framework reflects this, with a growing number of targets to increase educational attainment at all levels. These targets not only aim to increase attainment for all children, but also to close the gap in achievement between the lowest achievers and the rest. As a recent report from Ofsted points out, '*the biggest challenge continues to be narrowing the gap in opportunities and outcomes between most children and young people and those that are the most vulnerable or underachieving*'¹³.

Following a policy review by DfES and HM Treasury in 2006/07¹⁴, the government issued *Aiming Higher for Children: Supporting Families*, in March 2007¹⁵. This sets out the key role of universal services, particularly schools, in improving outcomes for all children, as well as the increased focus on prevention, early intervention and personalisation, to address the individual needs of children and young people. It reiterates the priority focus on raising attainment and narrowing gaps, as well as the importance of effective social and emotional skills and positive parenting for children and young people's outcomes¹⁶. New national research by the LSE¹⁷ shows

that eligibility for free school meals is strongly associated with low achievement, and significantly more so for white British pupils than other ethnic groups, though Afro-Caribbean pupils are the least successful on average. Levels of unemployment, single parent households and parents with low educational qualifications are other main indicators.

Linked to *Every Child Matters* is *Youth Matters*¹⁸, and now the ten year youth strategy, which set out the government's intent to provide young people with 'something to do, somewhere to go and someone to talk to'. Combined with the 'Respect Action plan'¹⁹, this has led to renewed interest and investment in support and facilities for young people. In consultations, the need for more facilities frequently emerges as a top priority for young people themselves. Similarly, having places to 'play out' is a high priority for children. It is encouraging, therefore, that since 2004, both issues have begun to rise up the policy agenda nationally, regionally and locally.

Children and young people's participation and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Consulting children and young people has become a more common feature of policy development in recent years. Consultation on *Every Child Matters* and *Youth Matters* obtained a substantial response from children and young people directly and, while there is still progress to be made (notably in ensuring that there is genuine evidence of the views of children and young people actually making a difference to decisions made), the increased participation of children is another welcome development. This is reflected in this report across Chapters 2 – 7, with some strategic, developmental aspects discussed in Chapter 8.

During the passage of the *Children Act 2004* there was considerable debate on the extent to which the bill should have been more overtly based on a children's rights framework derived from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). One significant development was the creation of a Children's Commissioner for England (alongside the previously established Commissioners for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales). The Commissioner's remit is to promote awareness of the views and interests of children, having regard to the UNCRC.

When the UK government agreed to put the UNCRC into practice (following ratification in 1991), it was required to prepare a report for the Committee on the Rights of the Child after two years, and then every five years. The Committee, a group of experts on children's rights from different countries, last examined the UK government's record on implementing children's human rights in 2002²⁰. In May 2007, the government released its latest

draft report to the UNCRC for consultation, setting out the government's view of how well it is meeting its obligations under the convention. In addition, the four Children's Commissioners within the UK, and NGOs working across the four nations, will be making their own submissions to the UN Committee. This State of London's Children Report will be made available to all these interested parties, and to the UN to inform the formal examination that is scheduled for early 2008.

Regional strategies for children and young people

The Mayor's *Making London Better for All Children and Young People* (January 2004) set out a vision for a more child-friendly London, developed within the framework of the UNCRC²¹. The strategy contained a range of policies and action points shaped by three core themes:

- Reducing poverty and social exclusion
- Promoting inclusion and equality
- Making the case for the delivery of quality services and facilities.

In September 2005, the Mayor reported on progress against 27 policies and 86 action points in his Children and Young People's Strategy²². The report noted that the first year's priorities (April 2004 – March 2005) had been delivered, with medium and long-term actions all 'on target', 'partly delivered' or with work 'ongoing'. It reported significant progress made across the majority of policies and action points, including children and young people's engagement, guidance and resources for play, cheaper and safer public transport and facilities for walking and cycling.

Since 2005, the Mayor's 'Guide to Preparing Play Strategies'²³ has been produced, and all London boroughs are now producing play strategies. He has issued draft Supplementary Planning Guidance on 'Providing for Children and Young People's Play and Informal Recreation' for use by those planning local neighbourhoods²⁴; introduced free bus and tram fares for all under-18-year-olds in full time education, and free travel for children under 11 on the tube and Docklands Light Railway when accompanied by an adult. In addition, the GLA has developed some innovative participation work with young people through establishing a Young Londoners' Network, including a team of Peer Outreach Workers and a dedicated Young London Website, linked to other parts of London government and the voluntary and community sector²⁵.

More recently, the review of powers of the GLA has led to legislative proposals through the *Greater London Authority Bill 2006* and the *Further Education Bill 2006* to increase the Mayor's responsibilities in several areas. These include a new health inequalities duty, and the development

of the Health Inequalities Strategy (during 2007), through which issues in this report of children's sexual health, obesity and emotional health and well-being will likely feature. The task of producing an integrated London housing strategy stems, too, from the bill, where there will be links with *Every Child Matters* outcomes for children to be living in decent homes and sustainable communities.

The new powers will include the setting up of a London Skills and Employment Board chaired by the Mayor, which will be required to prepare an adult Skills and Employment Strategy for London. While local authorities continue to have the lead responsibility for 14-19 education, there will be a key interface between young people's and young adults' skills and employability issues, particularly to address young people 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) in the context of Green Paper proposals to raise the school-leaving age to 18. The government has also asked the Mayor to lead on refugee integration for London and the Mayor's Board for Refugee Integration in London (BRIL) is developing its Refugee Integration Strategy during 2007²⁶. Finally, the Mayor and London Councils set up an independent London Child Poverty Commission in 2006, chaired by Carey Oppenheim, to identify ways to reduce and eventually eliminate child poverty in London²⁷.

Many strategic policy initiatives for children and young people are ongoing, involving London government – the GLA, London Councils and Government Office for London (GOL) – and a range of statutory, voluntary and community sector agencies. Some of the main areas are cited within relevant chapters of this report. One overarching partnership since 2006 – led by GOL – is Young London Matters (YLM)²⁸, a cross-cutting and integrated approach to developing the infrastructure for the delivery of services for children and young people across London. The main strands of YLM's pan-London approach are:

- improving the access of children and young people to services that support their mental and emotional health
- reducing the rate of unplanned teenage pregnancy in under-18s
- improving the attainment of black African and black Caribbean boys and the attainment and achievement of children in care
- engagement with key partners including the voluntary and community sector across London to ensure that young people are able to influence service development effectively.

London Challenge²⁹ was originally due to end in 2008. However the government has decided to continue it for at least three more years, as the evidence of its impact on school standards is very positive. Consultations

are now under way on how London Challenge should develop in future, and how to make a more powerful impact on attainment.

Since the 2004 SOLCR, considerable progress has been made, through regional and local policy and service delivery, towards improving the well-being of children in London and tackling inequalities for the most disadvantaged. However, as the data in this report shows, some serious challenges remain, some of which are highlighted at the end of this chapter.

London and London's children

Growth and diversity of London's population

Three key features of London's population make the city unique: its growth, its diversity and its mobility.

For its future prosperity, London needs to grow, attract and sustain a population able to contribute to the economic and cultural life of the city. However, a growing population brings challenges, especially to the infrastructure of housing, transport and services needed to meet demand, particularly the case in the Thames Gateway. As outlined below, London also has a growing child population similarly placing additional demands on education, childcare and family support services.

Diversity is also a positive characteristic of London, making the capital one of the most culturally varied and vibrant cities in the world. At the same time, London's black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities are among the most disadvantaged in the city. As we note throughout this report, many BAME children fare less well against virtually every measure, experiencing major inequalities in economic well-being, health and educational achievement. While London should celebrate its diversity, it also needs to continually challenge the unequal life-chances which persist for many minority groups.

London's population mobility

On the whole, population mobility is desirable and advantageous, contributing to economic prosperity, regeneration and a flexible labour market. Yet, for some disadvantaged people, frequent movement can be less positive, can damage life chances, and cause or compound social exclusion. London experiences three main types of mobility: international mobility, including families migrating to London from other countries for varying periods of time; migration between London and the rest of the UK; and (cross-border) migration between London boroughs. Other kinds of mobility affecting children include movement between schools (with or without moving home) and the individual movement of children, for example, those who are taken into care or who 'run away'.



A high proportion of London boroughs (20 of 33) have been identified as having an issue of 'frequent movers'³⁰. Children who move frequently – and generally not by choice – include those in families in temporary accommodation and refugee and asylum-seeking families, as well as the children of low-paid labour migrants. Frequent movers are subject to multiple disadvantages including poor access to services and instability of home, school and community. High levels of movement also present additional challenges to those planning and providing education and children's services in London, which are not present to the same degree in other parts of the country.

This mobility pattern is in the context of London's relatively high share of households in social housing – 26 per cent compared with 19 per cent in England and Wales – with the difference more marked for households with children³¹. More than one in three children in London is living in social housing, and in inner London social housing is the dominant tenure for families with children, accounting for more than half the child population. This compares with just over one in five in England and Wales overall.

There has been a substantial increase in international migration to London within the past decade. There is now a net increase in the overseas-born population of about 100,000 per year. In 2003/04 it is estimated that 348,000 people moved to London and 362,000 left. Most of the inflow (196,000) came from overseas while most of the outflow (267,000) went to other parts of the UK³². Thirty-seven per cent of London's working age population – and 42 per cent of London's parents – were born outside the UK³³. Although international migrants to London are evenly split between high and low income countries of origin, non-UK born parents in London are overwhelmingly from low-income countries.

A recent report by researchers from the London School of Economics (LSE) for London Councils³⁴ highlights the characteristics of mobile households which present particular challenges to service providers and planners in London. Although many highly mobile households are young employed people with little need for local services, others include lone parent households with dependent children and multi-adult households, which have higher levels of mobility. Mobile households are also over-represented among low-income groups³⁵.

The LSE report points out that many households arrive in the capital with significant needs for public service support and that a number of London boroughs act as an 'escalator' for people, investing heavily in them when they first arrive (for example with language skills and housing), before those individuals move on to be replaced by new cohorts which also

require similar assistance. Planning for a mobile population presents issues for central and local government, not least the difficulty of obtaining accurate measurements of changes in population giving rise to new service demands. It is also difficult for a centralised system of funding to respond flexibly to emerging needs resulting from population changes concentrated in a small number of areas.

The particular challenge for London of frequent movers was acknowledged in a 2006 report from the Social Exclusion Unit,³⁶ which concluded that there was a need for improved access to services to help those who would rather settle to do so. This would interrupt the cycle of frequent moving and both reduce the damage to life chances for individuals, and have the added benefits of reducing population turnover and contributing to sustainable and cohesive communities.

Diversity and other characteristics of London’s children and young people

When the previous SOLCR was written in 2004 the population of London was around 7.37 million. It is now almost 7.52 million³⁷. Almost 40 per cent of London’s inhabitants live in inner London.

Of the UK’s total population, 12.5 per cent out of 60.2 million live in London, and London has a faster growth rate than any other region. At a rate of 1.2 per cent in the year preceding the mid-2005 estimates, its growth was nearly double the national average. In that year the largest increases were in Kensington and Chelsea (6.6 per cent), Westminster (6.2 per cent) and Camden (4.2 per cent). London’s population is predicted to continue to grow – increasing by up to 900,000 between 2006 and 2021.

Table 1.1 London’s growing population, estimates 2006 – 2021

Year	Range (millions)
2001	7.32
2006	7.47 – 7.57
2011	7.75 – 7.89
2016	7.94 – 8.19
2021	8.10 – 8.47

Source 2006 Round Demographic Projections DMAG Briefing 2006/3238

Thirty-two per cent of all Londoners belong to an ethnic minority group³⁹. The 2001 Census indicates that there were 42 communities of over 10,000 people born in countries outside Britain living in the capital. The largest non-white ethnic groups were Indian (6.6 per cent) and black African (6.0 per cent)⁴⁰.

The most recent figures available show very little change in the ethnic diversity of London's population. The non-white population increased slightly from 29 per cent to 32.5 per cent in Greater London between the 2001 Census and 2006. The non-white population of inner London increased from 34 per cent to 36 per cent in the same period. In inner London, all non-white groups increased as a proportion of the population, except black Caribbean groups.

Nearly 60 per cent of Londoners are Christian, 8.5 per cent Muslim, 4.1 per cent Hindu, 2.0 per cent Jewish and 1.5 per cent Sikh. Sixteen per cent of Londoners say they do not have a religion⁴¹.

In SOLCR 2004 it was reported that children and young people aged 0 to 18 (inclusive) represented almost 22 per cent of London's total population. The most recent figures (for mid-2005) show that it has increased to 22.9 per cent of London's total population, which equates to 1.72 million⁴². If we look at the age range 0 to 19, now commonly in use, children and young people represent 24.2 per cent of London's population.

Table 1.2 Numbers of 0 to 19-year-olds, by age band, London, males and females

	0 – 4	5 – 9	10 – 14	15 – 19	Total 0 – 19	%
Males	253,500	224,100	218,200	235,800	931,600	51.2%
Females	243,800	216,100	206,300	221,900	888,100	48.8%

Source ONS 2005 Mid-year estimates

There are more boys than girls in London, as there are in the UK as a whole. In the overall population (all ages) there is a slightly higher proportion of women than men. Among those aged under 19 the ratio is reversed for all age bands⁴³.

London continues to have a greater share of 0 to 4-year-olds and a slightly lower share of 5 to 17-year-olds than England and Wales as a whole. This is related to patterns of mobility whereby some households with children choose to move out of London, particularly inner London.

There is considerable variation in the child population between boroughs, both in numbers and as proportions of their residents. Young people under 16 make up 22 per cent of the population in Hackney (26 per cent are under 19), but form only 13 per cent of the population of Westminster (16 per cent are under 19). Overall proportions of children and young people are higher in outer than inner London boroughs.

London's 0 to 18 population (some 1.7 million) is projected to increase by over 102,000 over the next ten years.

Table 1.3 Projected growth in London's child population (thousands)

Age range		0 – 4	5 – 9	10 – 14	15 – 19	0 – 19
2006	High	515	441	428	426	1,810
	Low	511	438	425	422	1,795
2011	High	541	474	421	420	1,856
	Low	536	468	417	416	1,837
2016	High	555	495	449	413	1,913
	Low	545	485	490	406	1,876
2121	High	561	507	468	438	1,974
	Low	544	491	453	425	1,912

Source GLA 2006 Round Demographic projections

London's young population is more ethnically diverse when compared with the total population. Forty-six per cent of all children and young people in London are from a black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) group, compared with 32 per cent of the total population. This diversity is projected to increase, with change much more pronounced among the younger population. By 2016, more than half of children and young people in London will be from a BAME group (52.6 per cent). By 2026 this figure is projected to be 54.3 per cent.

Alongside the growth in its population over the past 30 years, London, in common with Britain as a whole, has experienced changes in the shape of families and households. The proportion of children living in lone parent families more than tripled in England between 1972 and 2006 to 23 per cent.

London's children are more likely to be living in a lone parent family than children living elsewhere in England: 28 per cent of London's children compared with 23 per cent in England as a whole. In inner London the proportion is higher with more than one in three children living in lone parent families (36 per cent)⁴⁴.

The State of London's Children: summary of key findings

Child poverty and economic well-being

In 2005, London ranked sixth in the league table of the world's richest cities and had the highest incomes of any city outside the United States.

Yet, alongside this evidence of wealth, 41 per cent of children in London – over 650,000 children – live under the poverty line (after taking housing costs into account), compared with 28 per cent of children in the UK as a whole. London has the highest rate of child poverty, after housing costs, of all English regions. Rates of child poverty are particularly high in inner London, where around half of all children (51 per cent) live in poverty.

Lack of paid employment in families is one of the major factors in child poverty in London. London's high cost of living, including travel, housing and childcare have a major impact on incomes of parents. Fifty-nine per cent of all children in poverty are in workless households. London has the highest percentage of children living in workless households of all English regions, almost twice as high as the rate in the rest of the UK (27 per cent and 14 per cent respectively). Again, rates are higher in inner London and there are variations within and between boroughs. For example, 43 per cent of children in Tower Hamlets live in workless households compared with just ten per cent in Richmond upon Thames.

Poverty is not, however, confined to those out of work. Two in five children living in poverty in London have at least one parent in work, so employment alone is not a guaranteed route out of poverty. Low wages and the high costs of living in the capital have also had an impact on family incomes.

Over a quarter of children in London live in families with at least one adult claiming a key benefit. Of 376 local authority areas in England and Wales, the London boroughs of Tower Hamlets (46 per cent), Islington (45 per cent) and Hackney (41 per cent) have the highest percentages of children in families receiving benefits.

Estimates for 2003/04 showed London as having the lowest take-up rate by families of tax credits of all regions, with a rate of around 65 per cent of eligible families compared with around 78 per cent in the rest of the UK.

Certain groups of children are at particular risk of living in poverty in London, as elsewhere. These include black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi children, children with lone parents, children in larger families, those in families with a disabled parent and refugee and asylum-seeking children.

The government has targets to reduce child poverty – to halve it by 2010/11 from its 1998/99 level and to eliminate it entirely by 2020. There has been progress in the UK as a whole, with 600,000 children taken out of poverty. In London, however, after an initial reduction, there has been no consistent improvement in poverty rates between 2000 and 2006.

An important development since SOLCR 2004 has been the establishment of the London Child Poverty Commission by the Mayor of London and London Councils in 2006 to identify ways to reduce, and eventually eliminate, child poverty in London. Tackling child poverty in London will be key to reducing the national child poverty figures.

Recent policy analyses suggest that to reduce child poverty in London, there needs to be both a substantial package of national policy changes to benefits and tax credits, combined with London-specific measures to significantly improve parental employment rates. However, strategies to address child poverty need to take account of the wider context of inequalities and life chances, encompassing education, housing and regeneration.

Being healthy

The health of London's children has steadily improved over the past 50 years. Most children in London, as elsewhere in Britain, report feeling happy about their health.

Serious health inequalities remain, with poverty a strong determinant of health. At 5.1 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, London is close to the overall England rate. Boroughs with high levels of deprivation such as Southwark, Hackney, Brent, Haringey and Newham have higher infant mortality rates than London overall. London has a slightly higher standardised rate of child death than England as a whole.

Research suggests that young Londoners are less likely to drink alcohol than their peers in other parts of the country. The proportion of 16 to 24-year-old Londoners who reported using any drug in the year in 2005/06 was lower than that for the national sample in this age group (20.3 per cent, compared with 25.2 per cent).

The 2002 Health Survey for England found that London children were more likely to consume the recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables than elsewhere in England, which may be influenced by the ethnic diversity of the population though more in-depth research is needed to understand this. The 2004 Families and Children Survey reports similar findings. However, in 2003, London had the highest percentage of



obese children aged two to 15 years of all English regions and significantly lower levels of physical activity among children and young people than the England average.

In London 88 per cent of schools are engaged in the Healthy School initiative and 55 per cent are accredited Healthy Schools.

Levels of immunisation in London are unsatisfactory, and below the targets set by WHO. Problems are reported to have worsened following the implementation of new child health information systems.

London has the worst air quality in the UK. Air pollution is a major environment-related health threat to children and a risk factor for both acute and chronic respiratory disease.

London still has a higher conception rate for under-18-year-olds than the England and Wales rate, although 2005 data suggest a downward shift since 2002. Some London boroughs, however, show a considerable reduction in unintended teenage pregnancies.

New diagnoses and prevalence of HIV in England remain highest in London. In 2005, 42 per cent of all new HIV diagnoses were from the London area including 319 16 to 24-year-olds.

Rates of chlamydia and gonorrhoea are higher in London than elsewhere in England. Nationally, in 2005, 16 to 24-year-old men accounted for 57 per cent of all chlamydia cases in men; young women aged 16 to 24 made up 75 per cent of all chlamydia diagnoses in women.

Survey evidence on diagnosable mental disorders is inconclusive in identifying clear differences between children and young people in London and those elsewhere in the UK. There is also insufficient data to show differences between ethnic groups, although a study in East London found that Bangladeshi children reported lower rates of psychological distress than those from other ethnic groups.

Staying safe

A series of high profile child abuse inquiries over the past thirty years has increased awareness of the potential risks to children from adult carers.

If you ask children themselves what their primary safety concerns are, they frequently refer to the importance of feeling safe in their neighbourhoods, schools and communities.

Bullying is a priority concern for children and young people, with racial bullying identified as a particular issue. In a recent London survey 37 per cent of Year 7 and 28 per cent of Year 10 pupils felt that bullying was a problem in their school. A review of Children and Young People's Plans suggests that bullying is now being taken more seriously as a local policy issue, although the lack of good information on the incidence of bullying makes it difficult to monitor and report progress.

Crime also concerns children. Children and young people are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of crime. A 2005 survey in England and Wales found that over a quarter of 10 to 25-year-olds reported having been a victim of personal theft or assault in the previous 12 months. Equivalent figures for London alone are not available but as London has the highest rate of recorded crime per head in England, we can infer this proportion of young victims will be similar or higher for London.

It is difficult to estimate accurately how many children and young people in London are subjected to abuse. A national study of young adults (in 2000) found that 13 per cent of a large randomised sample identified themselves as having experienced some form of abuse in childhood.

Research in London in 2005 estimated that there were 1,000 young people likely to be at risk of sexual exploitation across the capital, double the number being identified by services.

In 2005 the legal definition of harm was extended to include the effects on children of living in households where there is domestic violence. In Greater London the Metropolitan Police Service attends around 300 incidents of domestic violence every 24 hours.

The rate of child protection registrations in London has remained consistent at 29 per 10,000 children under 18 since 2004. This rate is higher than the England rate of 24 per 10,000 children and the second highest of all English regions. Changes in categorisation in London have followed national trends with an increase in registration for 'neglect' and 'emotional abuse'. London has markedly reduced the number of children's names remaining on the register for two years or more, although inner London still has the highest rate of registration nationally.

Unintentional injury or 'accident' remains a leading cause of child death and causes more children to be admitted to hospital each year than any other reason. The risk of accidental injury is strongly associated with socio-economic status and deprivation.



Road traffic injuries are of particular concern. In London in 2006, there were 2,241 child casualties, over a half of which were child pedestrians. Although the rate of serious child casualties has gradually declined over recent years, the decline for black African and black Caribbean children has been slower, resulting in black children being at twice the risk of death or injury as white children. By the end of 2005 severe casualties in London were 62 per cent below the baseline for the national casualty target of a 50 per cent reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured by the year 2010. As a result of this progress, the Mayor has introduced new targets to reduce the number of children killed and seriously injured on London's roads by 60 per cent by 2010.

Achieving

Educational achievement in London is influenced by several distinct characteristics. Schools may be in areas where extremes of wealth and deprivation exist side by side. London schools have a high proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (39 per cent in inner London compared with 14 per cent nationally). At the same time ten per cent of pupils attending schools in London attend independent schools compared with only seven per cent nationally.

Three-quarters of London boroughs had an increase in average school size between 2003 and 2005. London primary schools generally have over 100 more pupils on roll than elsewhere in England.

Compared with England as a whole, schools in inner London have particularly high proportions of pupils with a black, Asian or other ethnic minority heritage. In inner London, 22.4 per cent of primary pupils of compulsory school age and above were white British in 2006, compared with 78 per cent of the English total. The equivalent figure for secondary schools in inner London was 23.7 per cent compared with 81 per cent in England as a whole.

London has the highest pupil mobility in the country, with large numbers of children joining or changing schools at non-standard times. International migration, housing problems, family break-up and low income are some key factors, often interrelated. Many of these children need additional language or learning support in order to achieve well.

The percentage of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) has changed little in England or London since 2002. In London primary schools, 1.7 per cent of pupils had a statement of SEN in 2006. More secondary school pupils have statements, and in London the percentage has remained the same since 2002 at 2.5 per cent.

In 2006 attainment levels at key stage 1 were lower in London than for England by one or two percentage points in each subject. At key stage 2, London pupils achieved levels of attainment equal to or only just below the national levels, with improvement being particularly marked in inner London.

At key stage 3, results improved faster in London than in England between 2001 and 2005, with the combined percentage of pupils achieving level 5 improving by 38 points in inner London schools, a 25.3 per cent increase.

In 2006, 58.3 per cent of London pupils achieved the equivalent of five or more A* – C grades at GCSE compared with an England average of 57.5 per cent.

Post-16 attainment figures suggest that young people in London are attaining level 3 qualifications at slightly above the national average but are doing so at a slightly older age. Nationally, success rates in the further education sector increased considerably in 2005/06. The national FE success rate was 77 per cent; in London it was 74 per cent.

In inner London schools 37 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and inner London also has the lowest attainment gap for the proportion of pupils obtaining five-plus A* – C at GCSE. A gap of 12.9 percentage points compared with a national average of 23 percentage points. This partly reflects the fact that non-FSM pupils in deprived areas such as inner London are likely to be relatively more deprived themselves. However, inner London also has the highest results nationally for FSM pupils.

A 2006 report from Ofsted noted that London schools had improved 'dramatically' and standards are rising faster than in schools nationally, particularly at key stages 3 and 4.

Overall there has been a drop in pupil absences, and London secondary schools in 2005 had a lower rate of absence than schools in England, with particular improvement in inner London schools. The rate of permanent exclusions in London is higher than for England, and is considerably higher for black Caribbean young people.

In 2006, London ranked fifth out of nine English regions for its percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). Recent Connexions data suggest that London boroughs are making good progress in reducing this number of young people NEET.

Enjoyment

Since the previous State of London's Children Report in 2004, there has been a range of national and regional policy initiatives aimed at increasing children and young people's play and recreation opportunities. This has included a £155 million investment in play allocated to local authorities in England via the Big Lottery Fund, and new policy initiatives aimed at giving young people 'more things to do' and 'places to go'.

There are some early indications that these developments are starting to make a difference to policy and planning locally. In 2004 only eight boroughs had developed a play strategy, rising to 33 being developed by local play partnerships in 2007.

The 2006 Playday survey reported most children preferring to play outdoors. Fewer than one in five children said they preferred to play computer games than play outside.

London currently has 79 adventure playgrounds, which compares very favourably across the UK and internationally (though they are concentrated in a small number of London boroughs).

Outdoor play includes opportunities for children to access open, and particularly, green spaces. Many children in London do not have easy access to parks or other open spaces. As well as proximity, other access factors include the number of roads children have to cross and the prevailing attitude of adults towards children using public space.

Ensuring inclusive play facilities for disabled children and young people is a priority objective for many organisations including Play England and the Big Lottery. However, feedback from families with disabled children suggest there is still considerable progress to be made on developing accessibility of play, recreation and leisure facilities.

In relation to provision for older children and young people, National Youth Agency data on the average per capita spending by local authorities shows London overall to be the biggest spender on youth services of any English region, although there is considerable variation between boroughs.

Participation in youth services by young people also varies, from around 30 per cent of young people in Bexley, Havering and Southwark participating in youth services in 2005/06 compared with six per cent or less in Haringey, Barnet and Enfield. The national average is a participation rate of 16 per cent.

Access to affordable transport is a vital element to enable young people to access facilities and enjoy London, and consultations with young people identify transport as a priority issue for them. Trends in transport use between 2001 and 2005/06 are not uniform, but Transport for London data show a clear increase in the relative use of buses. In inner London, this seems mainly to represent a transfer from car to bus use, whereas in outer London, car use is fairly static and there is a suggestion of some switching from walking to bus use.

A major development since SOLCR 2004 has been the introduction by the Mayor of the free bus and tram scheme for under-16s from September 2005, for under-18s in full-time education from September 2006, and free and concessionary arrangements for families, including free tube travel for accompanied under-11s from April 2007.

An evaluation of the first six months of the free scheme for under-16-year-olds reported an increased use of buses by young people and positive feedback from both young people and adults.

Supporting families

This chapter focuses on the supports and challenges to families in London covering housing, child care, for children in need and those children who live away from their families of origin.

In 2006 there were 16,240 households accepted as homeless in London, down from 28,050 in 2004 and 30,510 in 2003.

Legally, homeless families should no longer be placed in bed and breakfast for more than six weeks, but the problem of temporary accommodation persists. At December 2006, there were nearly 61,000 households placed in temporary accommodation in London. Nearly 46,000 of these households included children: a total of over 87,000 children. As this figure is more than three times the total number of households accepted as homeless in the same year, it gives a worrying indication of how long many families continue living in temporary accommodation and the decline in the availability of social housing to meet their needs.

In 2005/06 there were a total of 544,000 overcrowded homes in England, 212,000 in London. This represents an increase of 42,000 overcrowded households since 2001/02. Most overcrowded households include children. London has a much higher proportion of children living in overcrowded housing than in the rest of England. Almost a fifth of lone

parent families with children in London live in overcrowded homes; twice the proportion in Britain as a whole.

Black, Asian and minority ethnic families are more likely to be affected by homelessness and overcrowding than white families. Around one in 12 Bangladeshi households are in housing need.

Home building in London has increased, from 19,500 new homes in 2000 to about 27,500 in 2004/05 and 2005/06. The Mayor has set a new housing target of 30,500 new homes per year up to 2016. Half of these new homes should be affordable, with a target of 70 per cent being housing association or council rented housing and 30 per cent intermediate housing.

In March 2004, London had 96 Sure Start programmes in 29 local authorities (SOLCR, 2004). In April 2007 there were 209 designated Sure Start Children's Centres in London and around 188,000 London children under five are currently living in areas served by Children's Centres with the opportunity to access the services they provide.

Nationally, around a quarter of families use grandparents for childcare. This is much less common in London (around 14 per cent). There is less childcare provision for under-fives in London than the national average. Day nurseries and child-minders provide 24.5 places per 100 children aged under five in London, compared with the England average of 31.4 places per 100. There is also variation between boroughs in the amount of provision and turnover of provision continues to be a problem as reported in SOLCR 2004.

Daycare costs in London are around 25 per cent higher than the average in England. However, after-school clubs in inner London are typically £10 cheaper for an average 15 hours care than in other regions.

In London, the relative spend on preventative services to children in need is a little above the national average and has increased in line with national increases.

In a national survey of 28,000 households, six per cent of under-16s had a disability, two-thirds of whom were boys. These figures would equate to over 100,000 disabled children under 16 in London. It is estimated that around one in 40 London children are young carers.

Nearly one-fifth of England's 60,300 looked after children are London children (11,770), and the rate for inner London is the highest in the

country. This rate has risen considerably from the 2003 level of 77 children per 10,000. The outer London rate has dropped from 70 per 10,000 in 2003 to 59 per 10,000 in 2006.

In 2005/06 there were a total of 18,300 looked after children in England in placements outside their local authority boundary; 5,680 of them were London children. Of these 2,200 were in placements more than 20 miles from their home.

At 31 March 2006, 3,200 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children were looked after in England, 63 per cent of whom were located in London.

Making a positive contribution

Every Child Matters (2003) defined making a positive contribution as 'being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour'.

National developments to promote participation include the appointment of a Children's Commissioner for England, and increased consultation with children and young people over policy proposals.

In London, the higher priority given to increased participation of children and young people in decision-making and service planning is evident through specific initiatives by the Greater London Authority (Peer Outreach Team, Young London website), as well as through London Councils, GOL and by children's services at borough level.

Despite these developments, the involvement of children and young people in decision-making remains difficult to quantify. Participation is subject to a range of interpretations encompassing a wide range of activities from consultation exercises to young people led services. In addition, the lack of recording and evaluation means there is a gap in information on the extent to which participation brings about real change in policy development and service planning.

The 2006 London Council's Survey of Londoners included a sample of 11 to 17-year-olds. Of these, 20 per cent had been a member of a school council and half had campaigned or said they might do so in future. Just ten per cent said they would never vote, an improvement on 2005 when 16 per cent of young Londoners had said that they would never vote in an election.

The 2005 Communities and Local Government (CLG) national Citizenship Survey found that 73 per cent of young Londoners answered 'very' or



'fairly' to the question of how strongly they felt they belonged to their neighbourhood; 72 per cent felt the same in relation to their borough; and 80 per cent in relation to Britain.

The CLG Survey found that young Londoners were more likely to have friends of a different ethnic background than young people nationally.

Increasing the number of young people involved in volunteering is a government target. In the above Citizenship Survey 28 per cent of young Londoners said they had undertaken some formal volunteering in the previous month, and 44 per cent over the previous year.

Despite recurring public and media concern about youth offending, the vast majority of young people do not become involved in offending behaviour. A recent Metropolitan Police Service report (2006) highlighted that the number of young offenders in London has gradually decreased in the last five years.

In November 2003, there were 10,919 young people (aged 15 to 20) in prison (of these 2,254 were 15 to 17-year-olds). At 31 March 2007, there were 11,725 young people in prison (2,413 15 to 17-year-olds), an increase of six per cent of 15 to 20-year-olds and three per cent of 15 to 17-year-olds from 2006. Eleven per cent of the London prison population was under 21 in 2006.

In London, the use of anti-social behaviour orders has increased yearly in line with national statistics, from just ten ASBOs imposed on 10 to 17-year-olds in 2001 to 188 in 2005. However, young people under 18 make up only 36 per cent of those subject to an ASBO in London.

There continues to be limited access to advice and advocacy for young people in London as elsewhere in the UK.

Indicators and trends

The following table sets out the indicators and data sources used in the 2007 State of London's Children Report, and provides a commentary on how London compares with the rest of the UK and trends since the earlier SOLCRs in 2001 and 2004. The table indicates where there are gaps in currently available data.

The indicators in bold type could form the basis of a set of 'high level' indicators for future State of London's Children Reports.

Child poverty and economic well being

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
1. Percentage of children in income poverty	DWP Households below Average Income (HBAI) after housing costs DWP Households below Average Income (HBAI) before housing costs	2003 – 2006 average London AHC 41% UK AHC 28% Average London BHC 26% UK BHC 20%	Some improvement in London rates on a three-year average basis, 1997 – 2000 (41%) and 2000 – 2003 (38%), followed by a rise to 39% in 2002 – 2005 and to 41% in 2003 – 2006. On an annual basis, child poverty peaked in 1997/98 at 43% and has shown some variation but no consistent improvement since 1998/99. At national level, the child poverty rate fell from 32% to 28% between 1997/98 and 2004/05. Significant reduction in GB rate, 1996 – 1999 (25%) and 2003 – 2006 (22%). No sustained reduction in London rate over the last ten years.
2. Percentage of children in families on key benefits	DWP	2005 London 27% GB 18%	Slight fall in London rate between 1998 and 2005 from 29% to 27%. Little change in London's position relative to the rest of Britain.
3. Percentage of children in workless households	ONS Labour market statistics	2005 London 27%; UK 14% % of lone parents in employment London 43%; UK 58%	Slight fall in rates between 1998/99 and 2000/01 with no significant change since. Worsening of London's position relative to the rest of UK.
4. Relative material deprivation	DWP, Families & Children Survey	2004 London 8.15 Great Britain 5.79	Small decrease in material deprivation mean overall score in both London and Great Britain since 2002.

Being healthy

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
1. Child and infant mortality	ONS annual death extracts	2005 London IMR of 5.1; England 5.0; London has slightly higher SMR for children than England but lower than 4 other regions	Continued long-term downward trend in both London and nationally.
2. Completed primary immunisations by 5 years	HPA data	2005/06 percentage of children not immunised: London 12% compared with regional average of 5%	London has much lower rates of completed immunisations than the England average and lower than any other region for all antigens.
3. Self-reported health status including emotional and mental health	Self-report studies, eg HSE	2004 FACS: 89% of London's children 11 – 15 reported being happy about their health; 88% across Britain	Overall consistently high levels of satisfaction with health and only minor regional variations. In 2004 London had slightly lower prevalence of long-standing illness in children based on parental self-report than national average. Trends difficult to assess because surveys ask slightly different questions, (Census, HSE, FACS) 2005. HSE data for London should be available in 2008.

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
4. Prevalence of obesity in children & young people	HSE	HSE 2003: 18% of London's children aged 2 – 15 obese compared with 16% nationally	National increase in under-11s' obesity from 9.9% in 1995 to 13.7% in 2003. London has highest percentage of obese children aged 2 – 15 years of all English regions. Predicted increase to 2010 highest among London boys.
5. Conceptions to under-18-year-olds	2005 ONS/Teenage Pregnancy Unit	Teenage conception rate (per 100,000 15 – 17-year-olds): London 44.6; England 41.1.	Steady decline in rates nationally and in London over past 10 years. Higher proportion of London conceptions end in abortion (London 59.7%; England 46.9%). Borough variations and higher rates in inner London.
6. Self-reported smoking, drinking and drug-taking behaviour	Self-report studies	2006 Natcen/NFER self-report: England 9% 11 – 15-year-olds regular smokers; 21% drank in previous week; 17% took drugs in previous year. Comparative regional data not available but survey data suggest lower levels of smoking and drinking among young Londoners. Drug use is higher among Londoners in adult age groups but not for young Londoners.	Nationally smoking levels in 11 – 15-year-olds unchanged, 2003 – 2006. National decline in both alcohol and drugs. Regional trend comparisons not reliable.
7. Prevalence of mental disorders	ONS surveys	2004 ONS: 10% of children nationally aged 5 – 16 had diagnosed disorder. Similar rates in London.	Comparisons between ONS studies conducted in 1999 and 2004 show little change in prevalence nationally or any significant regional variations.

Staying safe

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
1. Prevalence of abuse by self-report	2000, NSPCC national study – self-report by young adults of abuse in childhood	13% considered themselves to have been abused No regional comparisons	No trend data available, though NSPCC plan to repeat study.
2. Levels of domestic violence	Metropolitan Police Service figures	MPS data record 103,042 domestic violence incidents across London in 2006	Long-term national downward trend in domestic violence since 1995 (fall of 64%, 1995 – 2005). London trends available via MPS on incidents, offences and detections. Incidents gradually increased from 2000 (when there were 91,872), peaking at 109,282 in 2004, then declining to 103,042 in 2006.

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
3. Children on Child Protection registers	DfES CP returns (about to be changed, but data should still be available on no. of children with safeguarding plans)	2006: England 24 per 1,000; London 29 per 1,000	Rates fairly constant since 2001. London rate consistently slightly higher than national rate. Probably need to be reported in SOLCRs but these data are not a reliable source of trend information about abuse.
4. Prevalence of bullying by self-report	Self-report surveys	2006 London Challenge survey: 37% Year 7 pupils felt bullying a problem in their school; 22% reported being bullied in Young Londoners Survey, 2004	Self-report studies suggest bullying a major concern of children nationally and in London, though any increases in self-reports need to be interpreted in context of changing perceptions/definitions. TellUs2 should provide national and regional trend data from 2007.
5. Children as victims of crime	2005 OCJS – national self-report study 2007 MPS data on reported crime	27% of young people aged 10 – 25 nationally victims of theft or assault. MPS data shows that in 2005/06 a total of 68,637 of London’s crime victims were aged under 18. In 2006/07 it was 64,468.	Data from self-report study OCJS comparing 2003/04/05 suggest little change over time nationally. Slight decrease in reported crime against victims under 18 in London between 2005/06 and 2006/07
6. Unintentional injury	Child road casualties Transport for London	2,241 child casualties of children aged 0 – 15 in 2006; a decrease of 14% from 2005	Reduction in higher severity child casualties in London – fall of 27% since 2004. Persistent variations by socio-economic groups and ethnicity, with black African and Caribbean boys at particular risk in London.

Achieving

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
1. Progress on closing the gap in attainment at: KS 1,2 & 3	DfES attainment stats incl. comparisons for particular groups, eg children eligible for free school meals, English as a second language	2006, 72% London pupils achieving level 5 English at KS3; 73% England	Attainment improving nationally at all key stages and rate of improvement has been even greater in London, especially in inner London since 2003, so gap is narrowing.
2. GCSE attainment	DfES	2006 58.3% London pupils attained 5 or more A* – C grades compared with England average of 57.5%	Rate of improvement faster in London than in England as a whole.

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
3. Post-16 attainment	DfES London Learning & Skills Council	2007 level 3 qualifications – by age 21 47.7% London young people attained L3 compared with 46.6% nationally. FE success rate 74% in London; 77% nationally	Data from cohort aged 19 in 2004 suggest London young people less likely to be qualified to level 3 at 16 but gradually catch up to exceed national attainment by age 21.
4. Children's engagement with education	Survey data on young people's engagement DfES data on exclusions and absence DfES & Connexions data on Young people NEET	2006 London Challenge survey compares 5 London boroughs with comparison sample in other met areas – overall attitudes in London similar to other areas. All London primary schools, 94.6% attendance; all London secondary schools 92.2% 2006 London permanent exclusions 0.32%; England 0.25% 2006, 11% young people NEET nationally. London ranked 5th of 9 regions for % NEET	Trend data not available from this survey and comparisons with other surveys not feasible due to different methods of collection. TellUs2 may provide trend data. Attendance rates have improved in London and England with greater improvement in London secondary schools. There has been a reduction in permanent exclusions in inner London secondary schools; slight increase in outer London. Black Caribbean and white/black Caribbean are more likely to be excluded than any other ethnic group. Nationally % of NEET has stayed fairly constant at around 10% since 2001. Connexions data suggest London boroughs achieving significant reductions.
5. Quality of school	Ofsted inspections – schools judged good or better against criteria	2005/06 Overall effectiveness good or better: London 59%; England 49% Quality of teaching good or better: London 57%; England 51% Leadership and management good or better: London 73%; England 58%	Significant improvement in London schools in recent years.

Enjoying

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
1. Access to and satisfaction with play facilities	Self-report surveys	Currently no large-scale data available	Trend data not available at present. TellUs2 should provide this from 2007.
2. Distance from parks and greenspace	GLA mapping	2007 maps – available to show distances and areas of deficiency. Not easily nationally comparable	Considerable borough variations in access. Trends very slow to show change. Also distance alone not necessarily the key indicator in relation to barriers to access.
3. Number of LAs addressing play as priority in CYPPs	Audits of Children and Young People's Plans	2007 preliminary analysis of JARs suggests higher priority being given to play and recreation	Trends not available at present but may be possible to monitor from 2007 once LAs submit plans.
4. Level of young people's participation (and their satisfaction with) positive leisure activities	National Youth Agency data on expenditure on youth services National and regional survey data	2005/06 inner London spend per head higher than national average; outer London lower. 2004 FACS provides some information on young people's leisure activities and shows regional comparisons (but very small London sample sizes)	Considerable variations between boroughs ranging from £220 per head spend to £56. Variations in way data reported makes trends hard to track. Excludes VCS provision. Trend data on participation in and satisfaction with leisure activities not currently available. TellUs2 will provide data on what young people do in their spare time.
5. Access to independent means of transport for young people	LTDS mode shares of transport to school and for leisure	LTDS data 2005/06 shows use of bus to go to school by 5 – 11-year-olds has increased from 7% in 2001 to 12% in 2005/6; for 12 – 16-year-olds use has risen from 36% to 40% since 2001	2005/06 shows relative increase in use of bus since 2001. Car use still high for leisure trips especially in outer London

Family life

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
1. Percentage of families with children accepted as homeless including families in temporary accommodation	P1E returns of households accepted as homeless	2004/05 P1E returns of households accepted as homeless – in London 23% couples with children; 40% lone parents, cf England 18% & 42% respectively 62,200 London households in temp. accommodation	Homelessness remained constant between 1997 & 2003 since when there has been both a national reduction in homelessness and in London. Need to bear in mind P1E only records families accepted as homeless. London still has large numbers of families in temporary accommodation, though variations across London. Slight fall in numbers since 2004 (62,200, cf 65,000).
2. Percentage of families living in overcrowded and/or unsuitable accommodation	Census Communities & Local Gov't stats on overcrowding and dwellings failing to reach decent homes standard	2001 proportion of children in overcrowded households in London is 28.5%, cf England at 12.5% 2005/6 DCLG of 544,000 overcrowded homes in England, 212,000 are in London	Problem of overcrowding much greater in London. DCLG data suggest increase in number of overcrowded homes since 2001 but trends can be more accurately assessed following 2011 census. Data disguise variations especially by ethnicity.
3. Access to and take-up of childcare provision	DfES information on Surestart centres Ofsted stats on childcare places 2006 NatCen childcare survey DayCare Trust stats on costs of childcare	2007 number of Surestart Children's Centres in London reached 209 2006 registered childcare places – London 24.5 places per 100 children, cf 31.4 in England 55% London parents used childcare, cf 66% nationally 2007 Costs c. 25% higher in London than England	Major increase in number of centres in London since 2004. Significantly less self-reported use of grandparents for childcare in London. Fewer childcare places plus problem of turnover especially acute in London. Cost comparisons with 2003 show London daycare consistently higher particularly in inner London. Exception is after-school care in inner London.
4. Support for children in need	CSCI data	2005/06 CSCI gross expenditure shows relative spend on preventive services slightly higher than national average	Comparisons with 2000/01 and 2002/03 data show steady increase in spending on CIN who are not LAC. London increases in line with national trends but inner London spend 2% more than national average.

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
5. Numbers of LAC and patterns of placement	DfES LAC stats CSCI LAC placements	2006 DfES LAC – London higher rate of LAC per 10,000 children than national average 2005/6 CSCI LAC placed in foster care 82% England; 76% inner and 77% outer London	Inner London rate especially high with borough variations. Inner London remains below national average for foster placements though, in line with national trends, has increased use of foster care. London issue with out-of-borough placements. London is looking after higher numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children than anywhere else in Britain.
6. Educational attainment of LAC	% LAC attaining 1 GCSE or 5 A* – C grades – DfES data	2005, 13% London LAC obtained 5 GCSEs compared with 10% nationally	Slow but gradual improvement in London and nationally.

Positive contribution

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
1. Levels of participation by young people in decision-making	Self-report surveys	2006 Survey of Londoners 2005 CLG Citizenship survey	Not possible to report trends or regional comparisons with currently available data. TellUs2 survey will ask questions on involvement in decision-making in local area.
2. Young people involved in volunteering	Self-report surveys	2006 Survey of Londoners – 14% did voluntary work in previous year 2005 CLG Citizenship Survey – 28% of the London sample in the 16 – 19 year age had undertaken some formal volunteering in the previous month and 44% had done so in the last 12 months	Not possible to report trends or regional comparisons with currently available data. Inconsistency of findings due to different ways of asking the question between surveys. Will be possible to compare regions using TellUs2 survey.
3. Young people accused of crimes	MPS data on reported crime Self-report studies on offending behaviour, eg OCJS	MPS 2006/07 24,108 young people accused of crime in London	Gradual decline in London since 2001. Nationally levels of youth crime stable across all categories of offences.

Lead indicator	Sources of data	Data in SOLCR 2007	Trends and comment
4. Use of secure remands in custody for young people	Youth Justice Board statistics	50.3% of remands in London were to secure in 2005/06; 41.3 in England & Wales, against national target of 30% Use of custody 2005/06 7.9% in London; 5.1% in England & Wales against national target of no more than 5%	No reduction in use of custody for young people in London; reduction nationally of 2% from 2004/05 to 2005/06. Secure remands increased in London; slight reduction nationally. Research conducted for the Youth Justice Board in 2004 found a greater proportion of secure remands in cases involving black and mixed parentage boys and young men, than for white boys or young men.

The State of London's Children: concluding analysis and critical challenges

The title of this series of reports is 'the state of London's children', but in many respects the reports also reflect the state of London *for* children.

This concluding section of the report highlights some key challenges in the policy context for those working to make London a better place for children, whether at national, regional or local levels.

Tackling inequalities for the most disadvantaged children

Inequality is a theme running through every chapter in this report. There are major inequalities experienced by particular groups of children, such as those in refugee and asylum seeking families, looked after children and disabled children.

Published findings from the national Millennium Cohort Study (May 2007) show that even at the age of three, income is strongly associated with children's chances of showing advanced or delayed development for their age⁴⁵. The difference in attainment between the poor and the middle classes is stark, with the poorest nearly a year behind those from homes with graduate parents. Chances of showing delayed development are also linked to other characteristics which are associated with low income, such as being in a lone parent family, belonging to some ethnic minority groups and speaking a language other than English at home, all of which are more widespread in London. Indeed, earlier studies of previous generations of children (1958 and 1970 cohorts) show that the higher risk of negative outcomes associated with low income, and other disadvantaging factors in childhood, continues throughout childhood and into adulthood.

That is not to say there has been no progress made in tackling inequalities in London. For example, the pace of improvement in the educational attainment of disadvantaged children has been greater in London, particularly inner London, than in other parts of the country. Nevertheless, levels of permanent exclusions and secondary (school) absence persist at rates higher than the England averages. More progress is needed to 'narrow the gap' in attainment for children on free school meals and children of African-Caribbean heritage in particular. The proportion of UK young people staying on in education and training post-16 is low.

Strategies for narrowing the gaps in health and achievement for these children need to be targeted and specific. Some inequalities are especially pernicious because they amplify or multiply the effects of other kinds of disadvantage. For example, overcrowded dwellings lead to poorer health and children with nowhere to study show lower educational achievement. Such children can expect to have poorer life chances and be less employable as adults; be less healthy; and probably less likely to participate in civic activity⁴⁶. Furthermore, as a 2005 ADSS/LGA report set out, the factors which put children and young people at risk of crime are 'strikingly similar, if not the same, as factors which put children at risk of exclusion and disadvantage in many other spheres of public life'⁴⁷.

Strategies to tackle health inequalities are showing results in, for example, the reduction of unplanned teenage conceptions, especially in some boroughs. The rate of child casualties on London's roads has reduced significantly and the introduction of free travel for children and young people is a major step in increasing access to facilities for the least well-off. However, despite these significant improvements, health inequalities persist. Children from poorer families in London are more likely to be born early, to be born small, to experience ill-health or unintentional injury, and ultimately to die sooner than children from better-off families. In relation to childhood obesity, which has become a major national concern, London has the highest percentage of obese children aged two to 15 years of all English regions. Overall, there remains a strong relationship between poverty and health, and major challenges remain in narrowing the gap in health outcomes for the most disadvantaged children.

Reducing child poverty

Poverty is the single most important determinant of outcomes for children and the underlying theme of the inequalities highlighted in this report.

A positive development since the 2004 SOLCR has been the establishment of the London Child Poverty Commission (LCPC). This has



given fresh impetus to efforts to tackle child poverty in London, but as the LCPC acknowledges, there are major challenges to overcome. Household income poverty levels have shown no real improvement in London over the last 15 years and a recent analysis, modelling the effects of demographic and economic trends on child poverty in London up to 2010/11, indicates that child poverty in London (and nationally) will change little without further policy change⁴⁸.

However, there is no clear consensus on the policy changes required, in part because there are different understandings of child poverty. In Chapter 2 of this report we focus largely on income poverty and its links to parental employment and low wages. A strategy to tackle child poverty, though, cannot rely on employment and tax credits alone, with investment in early years, education and housing also necessary. Accordingly, a more complete understanding of child poverty encompasses most of the topics covered in the report – in particular, the impact on children of living in poor environments, in poor housing and with unequal life chances in terms of health and education.

The first part of the Social Exclusion Task Force's Families at Risk Review ('Reaching Out: Think Family') has looked at the most excluded two per cent of families nationally, who remain in poverty with complex needs, multiple problems and low aspiration⁴⁹. Their analysis of evidence indicates the dramatic impact that parent-based family circumstances have on the outcomes and life chances of children. The review recommends a more family-focused approach from agencies that work with adults and those that work with children, re-framing the aim of early intervention so that children's services work together to tackle the root causes of children's disadvantage that often lie in the difficulties of their parents.

There are also interconnections between the transitional difficulties experienced by many vulnerable young people as they grow into adulthood. A young person with an emotional or mental health problem who experiences difficulty accessing support when over the age range of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), may also have fallen into the NEET category (say due to truancy or persistent poor attendance), and therefore have poor access to the job market through lack of engagement in education or training. In turn, a young person out of school is at greater risk of offending behaviour, which is more likely to continue into adulthood.

Policies therefore need to address both the gaps in income and inequalities of life-chances simultaneously, and, recognising that persistent patterns of poverty require an equally persistent policy focus,

these joint concerns will need to remain long term at the top of the London agenda for local, regional and UK government.

Ensuring adequate funding for services

Achieving a sustained improvement in the state of London's children involves both the development of strategies most likely to be effective and ensuring that they are sufficiently resourced. For example, the speed of progress in educational attainment is linked to the growth of expenditure.

The relatively high numbers of London's children in poverty and in need impose additional cost pressures on London's public services. At the same time, the cost of not providing good support is also high. When children end up, for example, missing education or being excluded, or are sent to custody, the result is not only poorer outcomes for children and young people but even more pressure on budgets when services are required to address the consequences of earlier failure. Providing preventive services is expensive – but arguably less so than not providing them.

The Treasury settlement for 2007/08 included 2.5 per cent Budget increase for education spending. A lower allocation for the non-education grant to children's services, however, reflects that there is currently more funding pressure on the non-school element of children's services budgets, including for preventive work with children and families.

The impact of pupil mobility in schools is of particular concern in London. London Councils⁵⁰ has highlighted that government funding does not take account of mobility rates which is a major issue in London schools, in which in-year mobility can reach as high as 60 per cent in some inner London schools (see Chapter 5). More broadly, they set out that the local government finance system makes no direct allowance for population mobility, in terms of either the total funding available or its distribution⁵¹.

At the same time, there are concerns that allocations based on the Index of Local Deprivation (ILD), intended to provide additional resources to authorities based on local needs, permits little flexibility. Government is introducing three-year settlements for councils from April 2008 and it is thought likely that the process will be more fine-grained in terms of multiple deprivation distribution for the next spending review round, with the possibility of more reserved funds for specific needs.

Funding pressures on local authorities also have an impact on funding to the third sector. There has been progress in building in 'full-cost recovery' to the commissioning of third sector services. Under the terms of the Cabinet Office's Compact initiative, the start of the 2007/08 financial

year was the deadline for all funding relationships between local government and the third sector to be on a full cost recovery basis. This measure is in the context of indications from some research that only 12 per cent of voluntary and community sector respondents covered all of their costs when delivering public services (national survey by the Charity Commission) and that 68 per cent of such organisations delivering services to children and young people had experienced cuts in their funding in 2006/07 (National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) report)^{52,53}.

Prioritising the issues that matter to children and young people

Children and young people share many issues and priorities in common. Their concerns focus on the world they share with their peers in the public realm. Their demands on adult Londoners are to provide adequate, accessible places and spaces for them to play and socialise; to enable their independent movement between home, school and social life; and to help address bullying and other kinds of victimisation in their schools and communities.

There is welcome evidence that London is beginning to take play and recreation seriously with strategies to improve accessible and inclusive spaces to play (which in turn will play a part in tackling obesity). The introduction of free transport is another example of responding to the concerns of children and young people. As London boroughs implement the Youth Matters programme and their local play strategies, there should be further tangible evidence of provision that accords with children and young people's priorities.



In relation to schemes to reduce bullying and to address young people's fear and actual experience of crime, the report has outlined current and developing initiatives to improve community safety. The overall number of young people affected by violent crime has increased only marginally in recent years. Yet, although relatively rare, violent crime experienced by young people in London – including gun and knife crime fatalities – clearly has a disproportionate impact on their, and the wider community's, feelings of safety, especially where the ages of those affected is getting younger. It is of critical importance to ensure that all relevant agencies have effective strategies in place to reduce involvement of young people as perpetrators and/or victims of violent crime. Indeed, violence will be one of three main priorities of 11 Million (the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England), after young people nationally voted it their most important issue in 2007 (along with abuse and bullying).

The high numbers of children in custody, and high re-offending rates following custody, are not only damaging to young people's life-chances but expensive, and there are strong concerns of over-representation of young black people in the criminal justice system. These aspects support the case for better preventative work, by engaging with those most at risk of offending and victimisation, and comprehensive support for children who do enter the criminal justice system to minimise re-offending.

As in many areas we have seen, safety, too, impacts more widely. For example, the ability to achieve in schools may be influenced by the levels of safety and protection afforded to pupils. Focus groups with Bangladeshi and Pakistani young people, as part of unpublished GLA research⁵⁴, have raised concerns about young people truanting from school because of fear of violence, and being assaulted travelling home for lunch. Moreover, the research suggested that young Bangladeshi men's participation in youth and leisure and community activities may be limited due to intra-community violence, or fears about intra-community violence⁵⁵.

There are particular priorities for some groups of children and young people. In particular, refugee and asylum seeking children experience a range of acute challenges including frequent changes of school and home. They may have to wait a long time for a school place when they arrive in London and often experience isolation and a lack of support. Promising developments include peer mentoring and support schemes in some schools to help develop friendships and reduce isolation and bullying, enhancing links between their community and the school.

There is consistency in the priority issues London's children and young people continue to raise as their most important concerns. Violence and safe streets, bullying and racism (along with child abuse and drugs) featured in the top five issues in 'Sort It Out!', a large-scale survey of 3,000 young Londoners in 2002⁵⁶.

The challenge of this, the Mayor's third State of London's Children Report, is to ensure that adults continue to take these concerns seriously. This means not merely consulting children and young people on their priorities and views but ensuring that the evidence that we have about young Londoners' lives are built into the policy development, service planning and resource allocation of all agencies with responsibility for making London a better city for children and young people.

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- 27 <http://www.londonchildpoverty.org.uk/>
- 28 <http://www.younglondonmatters.org/>
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2 Child poverty and economic well-being

Summary

In 2005, London ranked sixth in the league table of the world's richest cities and had the highest incomes of any city outside the United States.

Yet, alongside this evidence of wealth, 41 per cent of children in London – over 650,000 children – live under the poverty line (after taking housing costs into account) compared with 28 per cent of children in the UK as a whole. London has the highest rate of child poverty, after housing costs, of all English regions. Rates of child poverty are particularly high in inner London, where around half of all children (51 per cent) live in poverty.

Lack of paid employment in families is one of the major factors in child poverty in London. London's high cost of living, including travel, housing and childcare, have a major impact on incomes of parents. Fifty-nine per cent of all children in poverty are in workless households. London has the highest percentage of children living in workless households of all English regions, almost twice as high as the rate in the rest of the UK (27 per cent and 14 per cent respectively). Again, rates are higher in inner London and there are variations within and between boroughs. For example, 43 per cent of children in Tower Hamlets live in workless households compared with just ten per cent in Richmond upon Thames.

Poverty is not, however, confined to those out of work. Two in five children living in poverty in London have at least one parent in work, so employment alone is not a guaranteed route out of poverty. Low wages and the high costs of living in the capital have also had an impact on family incomes.

Over a quarter of children in London live in families with at least one adult claiming a key benefit. Of 376 local authority areas in England and Wales, the London boroughs of Tower Hamlets (46 per cent), Islington (45 per cent) and Hackney (41 per cent) have the highest percentages of children in families receiving benefits.

Estimates for 2003/04 showed London as having the lowest take-up rate by families of Tax Credits of all regions, with a rate of around 65 per cent of eligible families compared with around 78 per cent in the rest of the UK.

Certain groups of children are at particular risk of living in poverty in London, as elsewhere. These include black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi children, children with lone parents, children in larger families, those in families with a disabled parent and refugee and asylum-seeking children.

The government has targets to reduce child poverty – to halve it by 2010/11 from its 1998/99 level and to eliminate it entirely by 2020. There has been progress in the UK as a whole, with 600,000 children taken out of poverty in London, however, after an initial reduction, there has been no consistent improvement in poverty rates between 2000 and 2006.

An important development since SOLCR 2004 has been the establishment of the London Child Poverty Commission by the Mayor of London and London Councils in 2006 to identify ways to reduce, and eventually eliminate, child poverty in London. Tackling child poverty in London will be key to reducing the national child poverty figures.

Recent policy analyses suggest that to reduce child poverty in London, there needs to be both a substantial package of national policy changes to benefits and tax credits, combined with London-specific measures to significantly improve parental employment rates. However, strategies to address child poverty need to take account of the wider context of inequalities and life chances, encompassing education, housing and regeneration.

Introduction

Economic well-being is fundamental to children's ability to enjoy positive outcomes in other areas of their lives. There is a strong relationship between relative wealth and life chances with child poverty a key determinant of other long-term outcomes such as health and educational achievement, as well as material well-being in adulthood.

Since 1999, the government has set targets to reduce child poverty – to halve it from its 1998/99 level by 2010/11 and to eliminate it entirely by 2020. There has been progress across the UK as a whole, with 600,000 children taken out of poverty, and the child poverty rate (after housing costs) reduced from 33 per cent in 1998/99 to 27 per cent in 2004/05, although this has risen slightly again to 28 per cent in 2005/06. There is still some way to go to reduce poverty for children across the country as a whole. For children in London, the journey may be even longer.

At the same time, the wealth of the City means London has the highest average incomes of any metropolis outside the United States, with a recent analysis showing that the income generated by London's 7.5 million people is equivalent to the gross domestic product of Sweden or Switzerland. With growth expected to average three per cent a year between 2005 and 2020, London is expected to rise above its current place at sixth in the league table of the world's richest cities¹.

Yet in London today, 41 per cent of children are living in poverty, after housing costs are taken into account, with no consistent improvement in poverty rates since 2000. In inner London the rate is even higher at 51 per cent².

This chapter explores what data tell us about the economic well-being of London's children in 2007, and provides a commentary on how London compares with the rest of the UK, the variations in economic well-being of children in different parts of London, and those groups of children who are particularly disadvantaged by poverty.

The chapter focuses mainly on income poverty and associated issues such as worklessness, benefits and relative material deprivation. However, both the causes and experience of child poverty need to be understood in the wider context of inequalities and life chances. Similarly, strategies to address child poverty need to incorporate investment in early years, education, housing and communities, alongside employment and fiscal policies. This includes the life chances of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), a particular area of concern nationally and regionally, which is discussed in Chapter 5. The information in this chapter, therefore, needs to be considered in conjunction with broader poverty-related issues addressed in other chapters in this report.

An important development since the 2004 State of London's Children Report has been the establishment of the **London Child Poverty Commission**, in February 2006, to identify ways to reduce and eventually eliminate child poverty in London. The Commission is an independent body set up by the Mayor of London and London Councils. Part of the Commission's work is to report on the capital's progress towards the government's child poverty targets and it is monitoring child poverty using fifteen indicators³.

The London Child Poverty Commission suggests three broad reasons for London's particularly high rates of child poverty⁴. First, London's combination of high living costs – rents, childcare, transport – and highly concentrated employment may create particular barriers to work for families who are confined to lower-paying jobs. Second, while every year there are many families who move out of the capital, those most likely to move are families with incomes high enough to access the private housing market. Those on lower incomes are far more likely to remain in London, living in social housing, especially if they have children. Third, many Londoners belong to disadvantaged groups with low employment rates, including lone parents and some ethnic minority groups. By no means all migrant and ethnic minority groups experience disadvantage, but outcomes for black,



Pakistani, Bangladeshi and many other groups are worse than for the majority population, and London has more people in these groups. Because of the younger age structure of ethnic minority populations, families are much more likely to include children, so labour market disadvantage translates into high levels of child poverty. London also has a higher percentage of lone parent families, but employment rates in London are significantly worse than elsewhere in the country, and this seems to be largely due to fewer opportunities for part-time working – or possibly living costs in London which make part-time working unsustainable.

Children in income poverty

Figures for 2005/06 show that 41 per cent of children in London (1.6 million) live under the poverty line after housing costs are accounted for, compared with 28 per cent of children in the UK as a whole⁵. Housing costs are particularly significant in the London context because they form a larger proportion of household expenditure than in many other parts of the UK.

Table 2.1 Low-income groups of children 2005/06, percentage of children living in households with below 60 per cent median income⁶

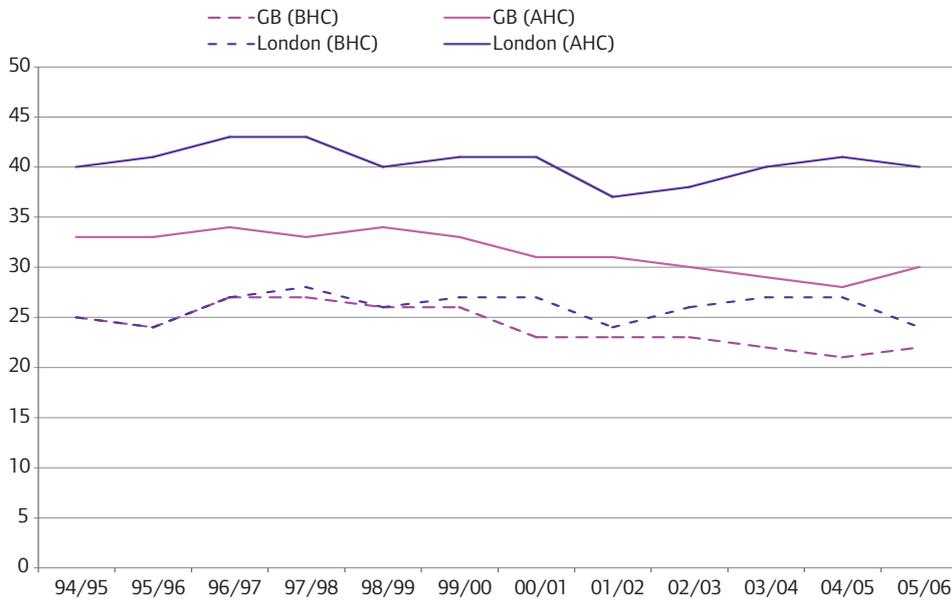
Region	Three-year average 2003/04 – 2005/06	
	Before housing costs	After housing costs
England	22	29
London	26	41
– inner London	35	51
– outer London	21	35
UK	20	28

Source Department for Work and Pensions, Households Below Average Income

Inner London rates are even higher, with over half of all children living in inner London households with incomes below 60 per cent of median income, after housing costs are taken into account, and over a third in such households before housing costs.

Based on three-year averages, in 2005/06 London had the highest rate of child poverty after housing costs of any region or country in the UK. The chart below shows single-year figures over time and illustrates that there has been little consistent improvement in child poverty in London since 1998/99, the level of which fell in the early 2000s only to rise again from 2002/03.

Chart 2.1 Child poverty in London, single-year figures 1994/95 – 2005/06



Source DWP, Households Below Average Income (based on single year figures and using the OECD scale for equivalisation)

What poverty means to families

Table 2.2 shows the poverty line for different sizes of families after housing costs are accounted for, and the current safety net entitlements from benefits and tax credits. As the table shows, a substantial gap remains between the two. A recent report by Barnardo’s⁷ illustrates how this gap results in severe restrictions on almost every aspect of families’ lives. As subsequent chapters of this report show, poverty impacts on children’s health, safety, education, leisure, play and recreation and their opportunities to contribute equally as young citizens.

Table 2.2 After housing cost poverty line and benefit rate, weekly figures, 2007/08

	Equivalised poverty line ⁸ £	Safety net entitlement ⁹ £	Safety net as a percentage of the poverty line
Couple with a baby	227	167.34	74
Lone parent with a baby ¹⁰	147	133.69	91
Couple with a 4-year-old child	227	156.86	69
Lone parent with a 4-year-old child	147	123.21	84
Couple with two children (5 and 14 years)	306	204.44	67
Lone parent with two children (5 and 14 years)	227	170.79	75
Couple with three children (baby, 5 and 14 years)	344	262.50	76
Lone parent with three children (baby, 5 and 14 years)	265	228.85	86
Couple with four children (8, 11, 14 and 16 years)	423	299.60	71
Lone parent with four children (8, 11, 14 and 16 years)	344	265.95	77

Source Child Poverty Action Group

In March 1999 the government pledged to end child poverty by 2020 – reducing it by a quarter from its 1998/99 level by 2004/05 and by half by 2010/11. A rising employment rate, increased child benefit, the introduction of Tax Credits (intended to ‘help make work pay’ for low-income families), and the minimum wage (which rose to £5.35 in October 2006, benefiting around 1.3 million people), have meant that 600,000 children in the UK have been lifted out of relative income poverty since 1998/99. However, this was 300,000 short of the 25 per cent target.

National policies aiming to have an impact on child poverty include: **The New Deal programmes (including the New Deal for Lone Parents)**, alongside the creation of Jobcentre Plus, which brings together benefit services, employment advice and tailored support in finding work; **the Childcare Act**, which introduces a duty for local authorities from 2008 to secure sufficient childcare for parents wanting to work; and **the childcare element of the working tax credit**, through which the government is providing financial support for the costs of childcare for low and middle income families.

The Department for Work and Pensions is also piloting other measures to help increase lone parent employment, in particular **in-work credit**, introduced in April 2005 to all parents in London who have been out of work and certain benefits for more than one year.

To meet the government's target to halve child poverty, the number of children in poverty in the UK needs to fall from 3.4 million in 1999 to 1.7 million in 2010. It is currently 2.8 million and needs to fall by a further 1.1 million. The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) has estimated that the additional £1 billion spending on tax credits announced in the 2007 Budget will reduce child poverty by a further 200,000 by 2010. This will mean the government missing its target by some 900,000 children. IFS has calculated that a further £3.8 billion more is needed to meet the 2010 target¹¹.

Similarly for London, a recent analysis of demographic and economic trends published by the London Child Poverty Commission¹² concludes that the continuation of current policy will not result in a reduction of child poverty in London. The authors estimate that in 2010/11, taking account of policy changes up to 2006/07 and projected population changes, child poverty rates would be little different from their current level.

The London Child Poverty Commission is highlighting the importance of greater strategic co-ordination of initiatives to reduce child poverty across the capital¹³. The Commission's Interim Report was published in autumn 2007.

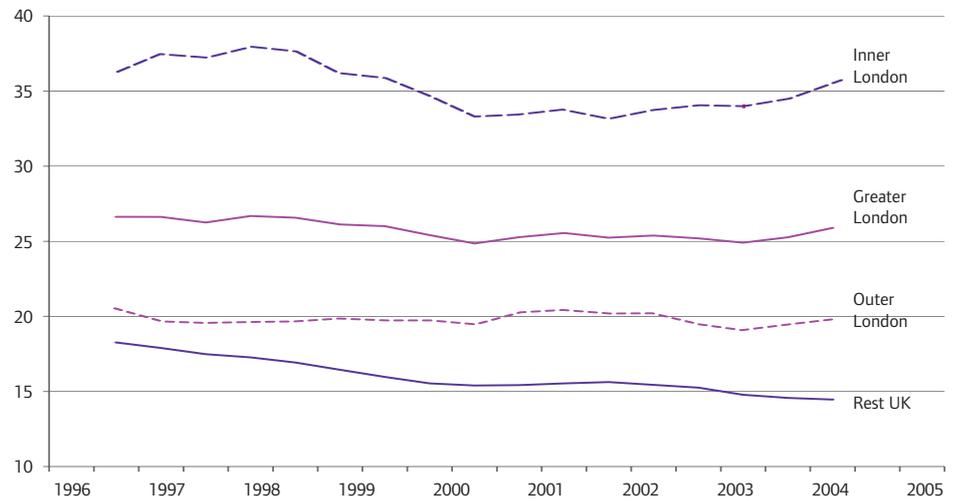
Children in workless households

Lack of paid employment in families is one of the major factors in child poverty in London. London's high cost of living, including travel, housing and childcare have a major impact on incomes of parents. Of all children in poverty, 59 per cent are in workless households.

London has, by far, the highest percentage of children living in workless households of all regions. London's rate is almost twice as high as the rate in the rest of the UK (27 per cent and 14 per cent respectively). Rates are very high in inner London, where 38 per cent of all children live in workless households. While the rate is lower in outer London (21 per cent), it remains well above the national average¹⁴.

Looked at the other way round, London has the lowest rate of children living in families where all adults are employed (38 per cent) compared with the rest of the UK (56 per cent). In inner London, only 28 per cent of children live in households where all adults of working age are in employment.

Over the ten-year period, 1996 – 2005, the proportion of children in workless households in London has remained well above the rate in the rest of the UK.

Chart 2.2 Percentage of children living in workless households, 1996–2005

Source Labour Force Survey household datasets, 1996–2005 (Spring and Autumn quarters only)
Note Data are two year moving averages (comprising the average of four estimates. Spring and Autumn data from each year.)

There is a relationship between worklessness and housing tenure. Overall, around one in five (19 per cent) of London's working age households are workless. However, almost half (46 per cent) of households in the social rented sector are workless compared with only seven per cent of owner-occupied households, and 19 per cent of privately rented households¹⁵. In addition, for those at the bottom of the housing ladder, the high costs of temporary accommodation can make it difficult to make working worthwhile financially, trapping homeless families in unemployment¹⁶. Housing issues are discussed further in Chapter 7.

Employment rates of parents

Poverty is not confined to those out of work. Two in five children living in poverty in London have at least one parent in work, so employment alone is not a guaranteed route out of poverty. While earnings are generally higher in London, the gap between the highest and lowest paid has increased in the last 20 years. Low wages and the high costs of living in the capital have also had an impact on family incomes. However, increasing employment among parents is an important element of London's strategy to reduce child poverty.

The Mayor of London has made a commitment to a London Living Wage, calculated (in 2007) at £7.20 per hour¹⁷. Altogether around one in seven of employees in London receive less than poverty level wages and around one in five receive less than the living wage. The single biggest factor in

the higher proportion of employees in London receiving below poverty threshold wages is high housing costs.

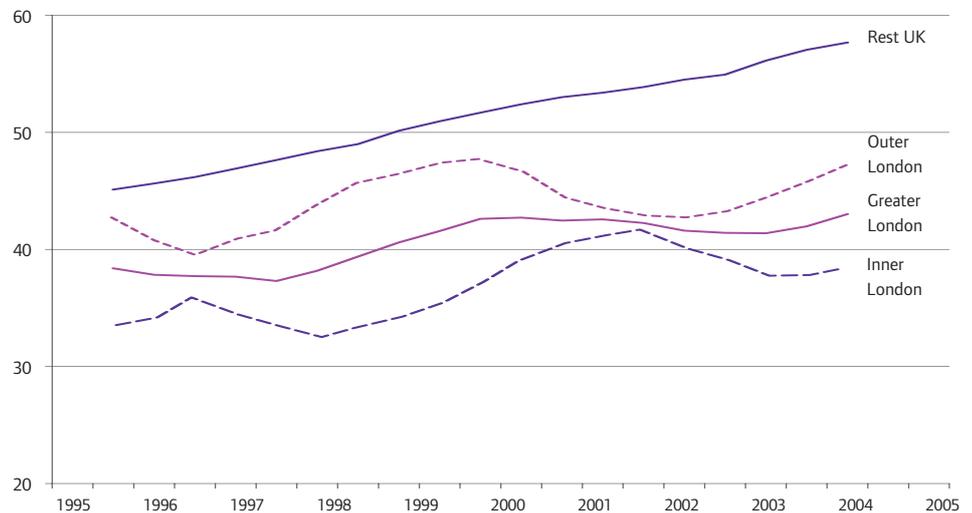
Parents living in London have far lower employment rates than those living in the rest of the UK, and differentials are most pronounced among mothers. Just over half of all London's mothers (55 per cent) are in employment compared with 69 per cent in the rest of the UK. Of London's fathers, 84 per cent are in work compared with 91 per cent of those in the rest of the UK¹⁸.

The employment rate for lone parents living in London (43 per cent) is well below the rate for lone parents outside London (58 per cent). For mothers in couples, the differential is similar, though levels of employment are higher (60 and 73 per cent). The employment rate for mothers living in inner London (44 per cent) is far lower than the rate for those in outer London (61 per cent). The difference in rates in inner and outer London is strongest for couple mothers: less than half (48 per cent) of all couple mothers in inner London are in work compared with two-thirds in outer London and 73 per cent in the rest of the UK.

While the employment rate of London's lone parents has risen, the rise has been far less pronounced than nationally. Outside London, the rate rose by 28 per cent between 1995 and 2005. In London, rates increased by only 12 per cent. Overall, the gap in lone parent employment rates between London and the rest of the UK has doubled over the last ten years.

Likewise, over the same period, the employment rate for mothers in couples living in inner London has fallen, while rates have increased for those living in outer London and in the rest of the UK. In inner London, the employment rate of couple mothers fell from 51 to 47 per cent between 1995 and 2005, whereas in outer London the rate increased from 63 to 66 per cent, following national trends.



Chart 2.3 Employment rates of lone parents, London and UK 1995–2005

Source Labour Force Survey household datasets, 1996–2005 (Spring and Autumn quarters only)
Note Data are two year moving averages (each year comprises two estimates for Spring and Autumn)

The difference in employment rates between mothers in London and the rest of the UK is in large part due to the lower rates of part-time working. Part-time working can provide a way of combining work and family responsibilities, but it appears to be less of an option in London than elsewhere. Only 25 per cent of mothers in London work part-time, compared with 40 per cent in the rest of the UK, while full-time rates are similar. It is acknowledged that policies to help lone parents into work have not been as effective in London as elsewhere, and a particular problem is that part-time work is often low-paid in comparison with the cost of living, making it less worthwhile to move from benefits into work¹⁹.

The government has a long-term aspiration of an 80 per cent employment rate overall and 70 per cent for lone parents. **The Welfare Reform Act 2007** includes reform of incapacity and housing benefit and the roll out of the Pathways to Work employment scheme right across the country by 2008.

In March 2007, **the DWP published its child poverty strategy 'Working for Children'**²⁰. Measures proposed in the strategy include: piloting a **'New Deal for Families'** approach so more families get access to support that is often only available for lone parents; extending the New Deal for Lone Parents Plus scheme to help more lone parents benefit from this service; and providing more support to families, particularly in London, where employment rates lag, by widening and improving the in-work credit scheme which provides additional financial support for lone parents as they make the transition to work.

Following the 2007 Budget Statement, **HM Treasury** published a report '**Employment opportunity for all: tackling worklessness in London**'²¹. The report's recommendations for future policy direction include the need for an explicit focus on policies to relieve congestion in London's low-skilled labour market including improving labour market connections between inner and outer London; efforts to increase occupational mobility through investment in skills; better co-ordination between employment services across boroughs; a more strategic Londonwide approach to employment programmes; and a greater focus on the employment needs of parents, including efforts to improve the functioning of the capital's childcare market. It suggested that a strategic, London-wide approach, bringing together all levels of government and other partners, is important to co-ordinate policy.

Take-up of tax credits

In 2004/05, 378,000 families with dependent children in London, with at least one adult working, received tax credits. This represents 44 per cent of all families in London – the lowest rate for any region in England and Wales. In London, 31 per cent of all families who received tax credits were lone parent families. This is the highest proportion in England and Wales, where the average was 23.5 per cent. Estimates of take-up rates have been calculated by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) for the year 2003/04. These relate to recipients of tax credits in 2003/04, as a proportion of the number of families estimated to be eligible for them. These estimates show London as having the lowest take-up of all regions, with a rate around 65 per cent in 2003/04, compared with around 78 per cent in the rest of the UK²².

The 2006 budget included a commitment to increase the child element of child tax credit at least in line with earnings until the end of this Parliament. This will mean an additional £200 million for families in 2008/09 – and at least as much again each year until the end of this Parliament.

Children in families on key benefits

In August 2005, over a quarter (27 per cent) of children in London lived in families with at least one adult claiming a key benefit²³, around 460,000 children. London's children are more likely to live in families on benefits than those in any other region. Although the percentage of such children fell from 34 to 27 per cent between 1995 and 2005, London's position relative to the rest of Britain has shown no improvement, remaining around 50 per cent higher than national rates throughout the period²⁴.

Rates are very high in inner London, where over one third (35 per cent) of all children live in families on key benefits. Of 376 local authority areas in

England and Wales, the London boroughs of Tower Hamlets (46 per cent), Islington (45 per cent) and Hackney (41 per cent) have the highest percentage of children in families on benefits. Seventeen out of 32 London boroughs appear in the top ten per cent of authorities where benefit receipt is highest in England and Wales.

Relative material deprivation

Material deprivation reflects aspects of poor living standards by indicating the inability to afford or access items including food and meals, clothing and shoes, consumer durables and leisure activities. A family is defined as deprived of an item if it did not have it and wanted it but could not afford it.

As the table below shows, London has the highest level of material deprivation for all items of any region. For clothes and shoes, consumer durables and leisure activities, London has a higher relative material deprivation score than any other region. Only for food and meals do two other English regions (East Midlands and Eastern) have higher scores²⁵.

Table 2.3 Mean relative material deprivation score (RMDS) 2004

	Food and meals mean	Clothes & shoes mean	Consumer durables mean	Leisure activities mean	All item means
North East	2.96	4.66	4.09	10.82	5.08
North West	3.29	5.00	3.75	10.36	5.01
Yorkshire & The Humber	3.73	6.04	4.56	10.83	5.73
East Midlands	4.49	7.53	3.87	13.39	6.35
West Midlands	3.76	4.75	3.33	9.00	4.66
South West	3.14	4.99	3.02	9.38	4.51
Eastern	4.96	7.08	3.26	11.44	5.77
London	4.21	8.53	6.19	17.57	8.15
South East	3.07	4.59	3.17	10.92	4.73
Wales	5.49	7.91	5.33	16.86	7.81
Scotland	5.53	6.54	4.25	14.79	6.74
Great Britain	3.98	6.08	4.02	12.18	5.79

Source Families and Children's Survey, DWP, 2004

London's geography of poverty

There are variations in levels of poverty and deprivation across London. One measure of this is the Index of Multiple Deprivation, a summary measure for small local areas (Super Output Areas, or SOAs) across income, health, housing, education and crime. London contains 462 of the ten per cent most deprived SOAs in England. London has 4,765 SOAs in total, so just under ten per cent of its SOAs are in the ten per cent most deprived. 1,260 (26.4 per cent) of London's SOAs fall within the 20 per cent most deprived in England. London's most deprived areas are mostly concentrated in inner London Boroughs, particularly (though not exclusively) to the inner north east, such as Tower Hamlets, Newham and Hackney. This spatial pattern of deprivation across London spreads westward north of the river with severely deprived areas in Islington, Haringey, Camden, Westminster and Brent, and south of the river in Southwark, Lewisham, Greenwich and Lambeth²⁶.

The Department for Work and Pensions has introduced a Cities Strategy

to contribute to the government's aims of increasing the number of people in work and tackling child poverty in the most disadvantaged communities – many of which are in major cities and other urban areas. The strategy will test how best to provide the support jobless people need to find and progress in work. It is based on the idea that local partners can deliver more if they combine and align their efforts behind shared priorities, are given more freedom to try out new ideas and to tailor services in response to local need. The first two pathfinders, announced in April 2006, are operating in East and West London.

As part of the **National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal**, 20 London boroughs received Neighbourhood Renewal Funding, 22 per cent of the total allocation of £400 million.

Child poverty among disadvantaged groups in London

Child poverty rates are particularly high among some groups. Barriers to paid work, inadequate access to appropriate and affordable childcare and discrimination can disadvantage some people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, lone parents and disabled people.

The national Equalities Review, 2007, showed that progress towards greater equality in the labour market has impacted on disadvantaged groups differentially. Original research for the report showed that over the last 30 years disabled people, mothers, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi women stood out as suffering particularly persistent disadvantages. These

three groups were all significantly more likely to be out of work, regardless of their qualifications or where they live²⁷.

The recent **Equalities Review, 2007** identifies four of the areas in which equality gaps are most likely to cause further inequalities: early years and education, employment, health, and crime and criminal justice. It also identifies the groups most at risk of experiencing large and persistent equality gaps in relation to each. For example, in employment it particularly highlights women with children, disabled people and Bangladeshi and Pakistani women. Narrowing employment gaps for these groups is an obvious strategy in reducing poverty for some of the most disadvantaged children.

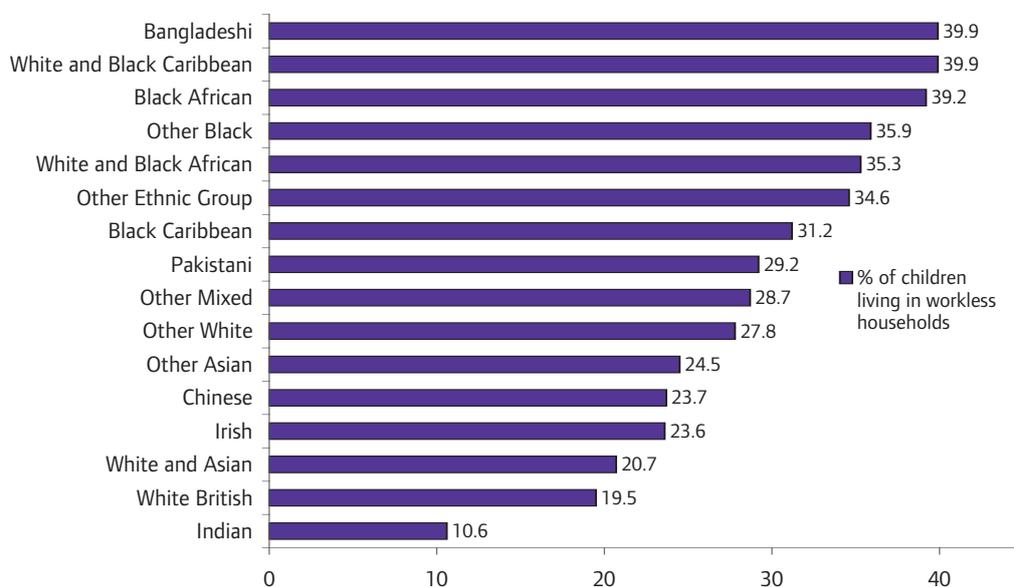
Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities

Nationally, there are stark differences in poverty rates according to ethnic group. A recent review from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation²⁸ identified that risks of poverty are highest for Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and black Africans, but are also above average for Caribbean, Indian and Chinese people. Muslims face much higher poverty risks than other faith groups. The high rates of child poverty in some groups are of particular concern, with over half of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and black African children growing up in poverty in this country.



London has the most ethnically diverse population of any region in Britain. A high proportion of people who are out of work in London are from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. The lack of paid employment is one of the main reasons for the high levels of child poverty among minority ethnic families in London. The 2001 Census found that 40 per cent of children from Bangladeshi groups lived in workless households. Children from black ethnic groups also faced very high levels of household worklessness, all above 30 per cent²⁹. Rates were lowest for Indian (11 per cent) and white British children (20 per cent). Employment rates are very low for black, Asian and minority ethnic mothers overall (45 per cent) and those mothers born outside the UK (43 per cent).

Chart 2.4 Percentage of dependent children living in workless households by ethnic group, Greater London 2001



Source 2001 Census (Theme Table TT012)

Of the ethnic groups for which there are data, the highest risk of child poverty by far is in the combined Pakistani/Bangladeshi group. Poverty affects nearly 70 per cent of the children in these communities in London, after housing costs. London's Pakistani and Bangladeshi community experience high levels of worklessness and discrimination in relation to ethnicity, faith and culture³⁰.

Diversity Works for London (DWfL) is the Mayor of London's campaign involving a four-year programme to help companies to develop and enjoy the benefits of having a diverse workforce. It is based on an understanding that diversity is one of London's strengths and embracing it will enable employers to gain new customers, markets, suppliers and investors; find, motivate and retain skilled employees; and increase creativity and innovation. It includes practical measures to assist both large corporate and small businesses, including subsidised consultancy, and an advisory service on compliance with equality related legislation, leadership programmes for senior managers, secondment schemes and training programmes³¹.

Children of lone parents

Children in workless lone parent families face a higher risk of living in poverty than children with a working lone parent. Lone parents in both inner and outer London have very low employment rates (39 and 47 per cent) relative to lone parents in the rest of the UK (58 per cent). Forty-seven per cent of children in poverty in London are in lone parent households and 53 per cent in couple households³². The lack of affordable childcare and limited access to paid employment that allows a good work–life balance both contribute to the high poverty levels of children in lone parent households. As we note in Chapter 7, childcare costs in London are higher than the national average.

The government has recognised the particular problems facing lone parents in London. In the **2007 Budget**, it announced that the **in-work credit, available to lone parents** who have been on benefits for more than 12 months for their first 12 months back in work, will be paid at a higher rate of £60 a week in London, compared with £40 per week elsewhere.

The Department for Education and Skills and the Mayor of London jointly set up the **Childcare Affordability Programme** to pilot ways of reducing the costs of quality childcare and enable parents to remain in, or return to work or training. The London Development Agency Childcare Team is delivering the three-year £33 million programme which should benefit up to 10,000 families in London (see Chapter 7).

Children in larger families

The latest poverty data for 2005/06 (DWP 2007) shows that the risk of a child being poor is much higher if they are in a family with three or more children. After housing costs, the risk of poverty is 27 per cent for a child in a one child family compared with 34 per cent in a three child family and 47 per cent in a family with four or more children. Children in families with three or more children only constitute 29 per cent of all children, but they are 40 per cent of all poor children before housing costs and 38 per cent after housing costs. Bradshaw et al (2006) explored the characteristics of children in larger families. They found that London had the highest proportion (35.7 per cent) of children in families with three-plus children of any part of the UK, apart from Northern Ireland. Family size is associated with other factors that also influence child poverty – families tend to be larger when neither parent is working, if they are Pakistani or Bangladeshi, the mother was younger at first birth, if she left school at a younger age and if there is a child under five in the family. The report argues that the UK tax and benefit system favours smaller families. In other countries, when tax and benefit systems vary with the number of children, higher benefits are paid to larger families³³.

Children in families affected by disability

Disabled parents have far lower employment rates than non-disabled parents. The employment rate for disabled mothers in London is 34 per cent compared with 57 per cent for non-disabled mothers³⁴. Disabled Londoners experience a range of factors that can contribute to social exclusion including discrimination and harassment as well as a shortage of good quality, appropriate advice and services. For example, there are strong links between being out of employment and mental illness. DMAG analysis of the Labour Force Survey found that people with mental illness have lower rates of employment compared with people with other disabilities, at 18 per cent compared with 44 per cent (76 per cent for non-disabled people)³⁵. For a quarter of London's children in families on benefits, the main adult claimant was sick or disabled.

A recent report from Contact a Family³⁶ points out that current poverty statistics indicate that over a million children in England and Wales living in poverty are affected by disability and argues that this is an underestimate. A quarter of all poor children have a disabled parent. According to the measures used in this report, over half of disabled children live on or near the margins of poverty. Half a million children live in households that contain both disabled adults and disabled children where the risk of poverty is particularly high³⁷. Drawing on comments from families, the report indicates that access to disability benefits – triggered by an award of disability living allowance (DLA) – improves childhood experiences and life chances for disabled children. It argues that increasing take-up of DLA is an effective way of targeting support to the poorest families.

Aiming High for Disabled children: better support for families, May 2007, which is part of the government's wider policy review of children and young people, provides additional support for disabled children and their families – see Chapter 7.

Refugee and asylum seeking children

The children of refugee and asylum seeking families are one of the most vulnerable groups in London. Adults are not allowed to work while they wait for a decision on their asylum application and there are high levels of worklessness and under-employment among refugees who are allowed to work³⁸. A major study for DWP in 2002³⁹ found that refugees and asylum seekers had an employment rate of 29 per cent – half the overall rate for ethnic minorities. In particular, the children of families who are refused asylum and have exhausted the appeals process are at risk of literal destitution as they have no recourse to public funds. As a report produced by Amnesty in 2006 shows⁴⁰, while the numbers of such children are small, the impact on individual families is profound.

Endnotes

- 1 PricewaterhouseCoopers, 'UK Economic Outlook report', March 2007
- 2 Source: DWP, 'Households below average income 2005/6'
- 3 The 15 indicators are: percentage of children living below the poverty line, after housing costs; percentage of children living below the poverty line, before housing costs; percentage of children in families on key benefits; percentage of children living in workless households; take-up of working tax credit and child tax credit by entitled in-work families; employment rates of lone parents; percentage of couple mothers in employment; relative material deprivation; infant mortality; life expectancy at birth; teenage conceptions; GCSE performance; young people not in education, employment or training; children living in temporary accommodation; percentage of families with children in overcrowded accommodation
- 4 London Child Poverty Commission: Monitoring Child Poverty in London, September 2006
- 5 A key measure of child poverty is the proportion of children living in households with disposable income below 60 per cent of the median (midpoint) of the national income distribution for households, after taking account of differences in household size and composition. Disposable income is presented in two ways – before (BHC) and after housing costs (AHC).
- 6 GLA, adapted from DMAG update 03-2007, revised May 2007
- 7 N. Sharma, 'It doesn't happen here: the reality of child poverty in the UK', Barnardo's, 2007
- 8 Poverty line estimated forward from 2005/06 assuming one per cent growth per year. Equivalisation is with OECD companion scale. Equivalisation is a process of adjusting income to take into account variation in size and composition of households
- 9 The safety net entitlement is the sum of income support, child benefit and child tax credits. These assume full entitlements – certain migrant groups will have less
- 10 Lone parents assumed to be 18 years old or older. Babies defined as less than a year old
- 11 D. Hirsch, Institute of Fiscal Studies in 'It doesn't happen here: the reality of child poverty in the UK', Barnardo's, 2007
- 12 London Child Poverty Commission, 'Tackling child poverty in London: Implications of demographic and economic change', February 2007
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<http://mayor.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/factsandfigures/dmag-briefing-2006-19-summary.pdf>
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- 19 Westminster Hall debate 1/5/07 on lone parents and employment, concentrating specifically on issues in London. The full debate can be found here: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmhansrd/cm070501/halltext/70501h0009.htm#07050143000005
- 20 The Strategy can be accessed here:
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2007/childpoverty/childpoverty.pdf>
- 21 www.hm-Treasury.gov.uk/media/70A/50/bud07_london_1421.pdf
- 22 HM Revenue and Customs, 2003, cited in *Monitoring Child Poverty*, London Child Poverty Commission, September 2006
- 23 Key benefits are: Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Disability Living Allowance
- 24 GLA, 'Who Benefits?' 2006
- 25 The Relative material deprivation score (RMDS) is calculated using the consumption of goods and the enjoyment of leisure activities and weighted according to ownership/enjoyment among all families. Higher scores imply greater deprivation
- 26 The English Indices of Deprivation 2004 (revised) ODPM
http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/446/Indicesofdeprivation2004revisedPDF2198Kb_id1128446.pdf
- 27 The Cabinet Office, 'Fairness and Freedom: The Final Report of the Equalities Review, 2007. <http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/theequalitiesreview//publications.html>
- 28 L. Platt, 'Poverty and ethnicity in the UK', Joseph Rowntree Foundation/The Policy Press, April 2007

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- 31 [http://www.diversityworksforlondon.com./](http://www.diversityworksforlondon.com/)
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<http://mayor.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/factsandfigures/dmag-briefing-2006-19-summary.pdf>
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<http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/9781861348777.pdf>
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- 38 National Refugee Integration Forum Employment and Training sub-group, 'Re-building lives – groundwork; progress report on refugee employment', Employability Forum, 2006
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3 Being healthy

Summary

The health of London's children has steadily improved over the past 50 years, though serious health inequalities remain, with poverty a strong determinant of health. Most children in London, as elsewhere in Britain, report feeling happy about their health.

At 5.1 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, London is close to the overall England rate. Boroughs with high levels of deprivation such as Southwark, Hackney, Brent, Haringey and Newham have higher infant mortality rates than London overall. London has a slightly higher standardised rate of child death than England as a whole.

Research suggests that young Londoners are less likely to drink alcohol than their peers in other parts of the country. The proportion of 16 to 24-year-old Londoners who reported using any drug in the year in 2005/06 was lower than that for the national sample in this age group (20.3 per cent, compared with 25.2 per cent).

The 2002 Health Survey for England found that London children were more likely to consume the recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables than elsewhere in England, which may be influenced by the ethnic diversity of the population though more in-depth research is needed to understand this. The 2004 Families and Children Survey reports similar findings. However, in 2003, London had the highest percentage of obese children aged two to 15 years of all English regions and significantly lower levels of physical activity among children and young people than the England average.

In London 88 per cent of schools are engaged in the Healthy School initiative and 55 per cent are accredited Healthy Schools.

Levels of immunisation in London are unsatisfactory, and below the targets set by WHO. Problems are reported to have worsened following the implementation of new child health information systems.

London has the worst air quality in the UK. Air pollution is a major environment-related health threat to children and a risk factor for both acute and chronic respiratory disease.

London still has a higher conception rate for under-18-year-olds than the England and Wales rate, although 2005 data suggest a downward shift since 2002. Some London boroughs, however, show a considerable reduction in unintended teenage pregnancies.

New diagnoses and prevalence of HIV in England remains highest in London. In 2005, 42 per cent of all new HIV diagnoses were from the London area including 319 16 to 24-year-olds.

Rates of chlamydia and gonorrhoea are higher in London than elsewhere in England. Nationally, in 2005, 16 to 24-year-old men accounted for 57 per cent of all chlamydia cases in men; young women aged 16 to 24 made up 75 per cent of all chlamydia diagnoses in women.

Survey evidence on diagnosable mental disorders is inconclusive in identifying clear differences between children and young people in London and those elsewhere in the UK. There is also insufficient data to show differences between ethnic groups, although a study in East London found that Bangladeshi children reported lower rates of psychological distress than those from other ethnic groups.

Introduction

The health of children has steadily improved over the past 50 years across a range of measures. Medical advances and public health improvements have led to substantial reductions in infant and child mortality rates and the virtual eradication of many childhood illnesses of the past. However, while the health of the child population as a whole has improved, serious inequalities in health still exist with poverty in early life affecting health well into adulthood.

Any consideration of child health inequalities has to take account of three factors: inequalities in access to, or the provision of, determinants of health (such as poverty and housing); inequalities in access to health care; and inequalities in health outcomes.

Children's health cannot be considered in isolation from other aspects of their lives. There is a range of broader determinants of child health, such as poverty, education, access to play and recreation opportunities and safe environments, discussed in other parts of this report, which are also relevant here. This chapter reviews data on children's physical and mental health and considers both lifestyle and environmental influences on health. It summarises what we know about variations in child health in the context of policy initiatives to reduce health inequalities.

The structure of NHS provision in London, as elsewhere, continues to undergo some major changes both at Strategic Health Authority and Primary Care Trust level (although we do not discuss the detail of these changes here). There are two major policy initiatives being developed in London during 2007. The Greater London Authority Bill, 2007, includes a new duty for **the Mayor to develop and lead a statutory pan-London health inequalities strategy**. Government is also proposing that existing partnership arrangements for health should be formalised and strengthened. Preparatory work for this strategy has already begun. At the same time, London NHS, the new Londonwide strategic health authority, is leading development of a **London Healthcare Strategy**. The Department of Health, the GLA and London NHS are working together to co-ordinate the evidence base and stakeholder engagement across these strategies.

Infant and child deaths

While the number of infants and children who die in the UK is relatively small, as stark indicators of inequalities in health outcomes the rates of infant and child mortality are important to monitor.

Infant and child mortality has shown a consistent downward trend over the past 25 years and has continued to fall in London as well as the rest of the UK since the first State of London’s Children report in 2001. As the table below shows, the infant mortality rate for London was 5.1 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2005¹. This is a slightly higher rate than some other regions but is close to the overall England rate.

Table 3.1 Rates of infant mortality, London and rest of UK, 1981 – 2005

	1981	1993	2003	2004	2005
England	10.9	6.3	5.3	5.1	5.0
North East	10.4	6.7	4.7	4.9	4.5
North West	11.3	6.5	5.9	5.4	5.8
Yorkshire and the Humber	12.1	7.3	5.8	5.5	6.1
East Midlands	11.0	6.6	5.9	5.1	4.7
West Midlands	11.7	7.1	7.3	6.8	6.4
East	9.7	5.4	4.5	4.2	4.0
London	10.7	6.5	5.4	5.2	5.1
South East	10.3	5.3	4.3	3.9	3.9
South West	10.4	5.8	4.0	4.7	4.5

Infant mortality is linked to social deprivation. Higher than average rates have been found in babies whose mothers were born outside England and Wales, babies of young mothers, babies whose fathers are manual workers, babies born with low birth weights, babies registered to the mother alone and babies born in deprived areas. It is not, therefore, surprising that there are differences in infant mortality rates between boroughs, with Southwark, Hackney, Brent, Haringey and Newham having significantly higher rates than the overall London rate. The generally wealthier boroughs of Kingston, Wandsworth, Barnet and Bromley have significantly lower rates.

Death in childhood has also become less common in the last 50 years. In London in 2005, there were 312 deaths of children aged one to 19 years. The main cause of death among children who were sick was cancer, equivalent to 16 per cent of deaths. However, the majority of child deaths were not the result of illness, but of injury. Road traffic injuries, self-inflicted injury, assault and other injuries resulted in a total of 31 per cent of all deaths in one to 19-year-olds. While there are signs of a reduction in the number of deaths and injuries caused by road traffic (see Chapter 4), the pattern of deaths by social class indicate that poorer children are still much more likely to die as the result of a road traffic accident or a house fire than a better-off child².

Table 3.2 Cause of death, one to 19-year-olds, London and England & Wales, 2005

Cause of death	London	England & Wales
Infectious & parasitic diseases	18 (6)	100 (4)
Cancers	51 (16)	379 (15)
Diseases of the immune, endocrine, metabolic & nervous system	47 (15)	404 (16)
Mental & behavioural disorders	4 (1)	45 (2)
Circulatory, respiratory, digestive, skin & musculoskeletal diseases	53 (17)	330 (13)
Pregnancy & associated conditions & diseases of the GU system	4 (1)	18 (1)
Accidents & other external causes	97 (31)	1000 (40)
Other	38 (12)	239 (10)
Total	312 (100)	2,515 (100)

Source ONS, VS3 figures, 2005. Numbers (percentages in brackets)

London does slightly worse for child deaths than England overall, but London's rate is lower than that of four other English regions. Child mortality rates are linked to deprivation. The higher levels of deprivation in London compared with other regions, therefore, may be one explanation for the slightly higher mortality rate³.

Low birth-weight

A major cause of infant mortality is being born too small – low birth-weight (defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a birth-weight less than 2,500 grams). Low birth-weight is a well-established risk factor for immediate and long-term health problems. An analysis of ONS birth-weight statistics in 2004⁴ found a range of associated factors including father's occupation (the proportion of low birth-weight babies born to fathers in manual occupations was higher than to fathers in non-manual occupations); ethnicity (the mean birth-weight of babies born to black and Asian mothers was lower than those born to white mothers); and age (teenage mothers and mothers over 40 were more likely to have low birth-weight babies).

Low birth-weight varies according to socio-economic status. Macfarlane et al analysed births in England and Wales between 1991 and 1995 and found that the percentage of low birth-weight births was 5.4 per cent in social class I compared with 8.2 per cent in social class V. Mothers living in the most deprived areas had a higher risk of having a low birth-weight baby compared with mothers living in the least deprived areas after taking account of their age at the time of the birth, ethnicity and limiting long-term illness.

At 8.1 per cent, London had a higher percentage rate of low birth-weight babies born in the period 2003 to 2005 than England as a whole (7.6 per cent) with similar rates in both inner and outer London⁵.

Self-reported health

As the table below shows, the majority of children in London, as well as Britain as a whole, who responded to the 2004 Family and Children Survey reported feeling happy about their health⁶.



Table 3.3 How children feel about their health (children aged 11 to 15)

		Very/ extremely happy	Happy	Neither happy nor unhappy	Unhappy	Very/ extremely unhappy
GO region	North East	59 (90)	23 (35)	12 (19)	2 (3)	4 (6)
	North West	62 (229)	25 (93)	8 (30)	3 (13)	1 (6)
	Yorkshire and Humber	73 (195)	18 (48)	6 (17)	1 (4)	1 (2)
	E. Midlands	63 (79)	24 (59)	9 (23)	3 (7)	
	W. Midlands	30 (153)	22 (56)	7 (18)	3 (8)	2 (6)
	South West	68 (169)	22 (53)	6 (14)	3 (6)	1 (4)
	Eastern	67 (213)	18 (57)	12 (37)	2 (7)	2 (5)
	London	64 (213)	25 (85)	9 (29)	2 (6)	1 (4)
	South East	66 (312)	21 (100)	8 (38)	3 (13)	2(9)
	Wales	67 (100)	22 (33)	7 (10)	4 (6)	0 (0)
	Scotland	68 (164)	19 (45)	9 (21)	5 (11)	
	All children in Britain	66 (2003)	22(664)	8 (257)	3 (84)	2 (41)

Source Families and Children's Survey, 2004. Percentages (numbers in brackets)

Healthy lifestyles

Diet and Exercise

The previous State of London's Children report used the 2002 Health Survey for England data to show that children in London were more likely to consume the recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables than children in other regions. The updated HSE data are not yet available but the 2004 Families and Children Survey asked families if they could afford fruit and vegetables on most days. The table below suggests that London families are slightly more likely than those in other regions to buy vegetables. The findings for fruit are similar. It may be that the pattern of consumption in London is influenced by the ethnic diversity of the population, but more in-depth research is needed to understand this.

Table 3.4 Whether child lives in a family that can afford fresh vegetables on most days, by region

		We have this	We would like to have this but cannot afford it at the moment	We do not want/need this at the moment
GO region	North East	86 (525)	2 (12)	12 (76)
	North West	88 (1352)	4 (57)	8 (127)
	Yorkshire and Humber	86 (896)	3 (30)	11 (118)
	East Midlands	87 (859)	4 (41)	9 (86)
	West Midlands	89 (1,017)	3 (37)	8 (89)
	South West	90 (952)	3 (33)	7 (77)
	Eastern	86 (1,077)	6 (71)	9 (107)
	London	93 (1,407)	3 (44)	4 (64)
	South East	90 (1,627)	2 (34)	8 (142)
	Wales	84 (544)	4 (26)	12 (74)
	Scotland	85 (868)	5 (47)	10 (101)
All children in Britain		88 (11,124)	3 (432)	8 (1,062)

Percentages (numbers in brackets). Only weighted data shown. Base: Dependent children in families who took part in FACS in 2004. Government Office regions.

Data from the Health Survey for England (2002) shows London as having significantly lower levels of physical activity among children and young people than the England average⁷. A higher proportion of boys than girls achieve the recommended levels of activity, of at least 60 minutes of at least moderate intensity activity per day (70 per cent compared with 61 per cent). Activity levels in boys tend to be maintained from early childhood to the mid-teens. In girls, however, activity levels begin to decline from about the age of 11 years. The HSE did not show any significant difference in overall activity levels among children living in deprived and less deprived areas. However, there were differences in the type of activity undertaken, with children from more deprived areas less likely to participate in organised sport and exercise.

Not all young people have an active interest or engagement in sport, which is one factor being taken into account by Sport England which has contributed £171,800 toward developing a scheme across five London boroughs, targeting children aged 7 to 13 and their families. The scheme will support children and their families to make life changes in terms of sport and exercise, food, self-confidence and personal development.

A more recent Health Survey for England includes a boosted London sample but the analysis from this will not be available until 2008. However, a survey in North London⁸ of children in Year 6 (N=7,850) and Year 9 (N=6,491) asked about their attitudes to and participation in sport and physical activity and their awareness of facilities and opportunities. The survey found that only 32 per cent of boys and 20 per cent of girls were doing the recommended seven hours per week of activity and around half were doing five hours or less. There is a drop in participation in physical activity between Years 6 and 9. However, 80 per cent of children said they liked sport and physical activity a lot, and 54 per cent of boys and 34 per cent of girls said they would be interested in doing more. The main barrier to participation identified by the children was having 'no one to go with'.

London's successful bid to host the **2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games** provides an opportunity to increase the level of involvement in sport and physical activity. The Mayor of London, Sport England and a range of other partners are working to develop a network of multi-sport community environments across London and have set targets to increase the number of sports coaches as well as opportunities to participate in everyday physical activities such as walking and dance. By 2008, the aim is for most Londoners to live within a 20-minute walk of somewhere where they can engage in organised physical activities.

Obesity

Childhood obesity has become a major national concern. Obesity in English children aged under 11 increased from 9.9 per cent in 1995 to 13.7 per cent in 2003⁹. Obesity in children is a particular issue in London, which, in 2003, had the highest percentage of obese children aged two to 15 years of all English regions¹⁰. Eighteen per cent of London's children are classified as overweight – two per cent higher than the national average.

The prevalence of obesity has trebled since the 1980s, and well over half of all adults are now either overweight or obese – almost 24 million adults. The risk of childhood obesity is significantly increased when a parent is obese. If the current trend continues unchanged, obesity in both boys and girls in London is forecast to increase by 2010, with the predicted increase among London boys the highest of all regions.



The Mayor's Food Strategy, Healthy and Sustainable Food for London, launched in 2006, sets a vision to 2016 to ensure that London's food system works in a way that embraces the priorities of health, equality and sustainable development. One of the key aims of the strategy is to improve all Londoners' health and reduce health inequalities via the food they eat. One of the priority areas for action in the strategy is delivering healthy schools, including a NHS/GOL project, 'Delivering the Healthy Eating Strand of the Healthy Schools Standard'. This aims to work with Healthy Schools Partnerships to assist and accelerate progress by schools towards the Healthy Eating Theme of Healthy Schools Status, including support on whole-school food policies and meeting the new school food standards. The London Development Agency is piloting a project to develop a training centre for public sector and community catering staff to be supported in skills development surrounding sustainable food procurement and preparation.

Cigarette smoking, alcohol and drugs

Headline figures recently released from a 2006 survey reveal that at national level nine per cent of pupils aged 11 to 15 were regular smokers in 2006, a proportion unchanged since 2003. In 2006, 21 per cent of pupils (aged 11 to 15) drank alcohol in the previous week, maintaining the decline in the prevalence of drinking among children recorded in recent years. Seventeen per cent of pupils reported that they had taken drugs in the last year, down from 19 per cent in 2005. Nine per cent of pupils had taken drugs in the last month, also lower than the proportion who reported that they had done so in 2005. Four per cent of pupils said they usually took drugs once a month or more often, a decrease from six per cent in 2005¹¹.

Reliable London-specific data on alcohol consumption among different age groups is not currently available. However, a recent report from the Greater London Alcohol and Drug Alliance¹² cites research carried out for Young People Now and the Office of the Children's Commissioner in spring 2006, which surveyed 2,334 young people aged 11 to 16 across England and Wales (including 157 Londoners) about alcohol use. This research suggests that young Londoners are less likely to drink alcohol than their peers in other parts of the country. Of the young Londoners participating in the survey, 38 per cent reported that they had never tried alcohol, compared with only 18 per cent of the sample as a whole. The 2004 Family and Children Survey supports this finding with 58 per cent of London boys aged 11 to 15 saying they had never drunk alcohol.

The Research with East London Adolescents Community Health Survey (RELACHS) study of 2,789 adolescents living in East London, aged 11 to 14 in 2001, found that 2.2 per cent of boys and 1.7 of girls in Year 7 (11 to 12-year-olds) were regular drinkers compared with 7.2 per cent of boys and 4.5 per cent of girls in Year 9 (13 to 14-year-olds)¹³. These figures are significantly lower than those recorded in the Young People Now survey, the most likely explanation being the high proportion of minority ethnic communities in the RELACHS study area.

While analysis of self-reported drug use in 2005/06 suggests that adults in London had a higher level of drug use than those in England and Wales as a whole, this was not the case for young Londoners. The proportion of 16 to 24-year-old Londoners who reported using any drug in the year in 2005/06 was lower than that for the national sample in this age group (20.3 per cent, compared with 25.2 per cent)¹⁴.

Some young Londoners may be more vulnerable than others; for example the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers can be risk factors for future problematic drug use¹⁵.

Volatile substance abuse is particularly common among young people. In 2004, six per cent of UK pupils reported having deliberately inhaled glue, gas aerosols or solvents¹⁶. Among 11 and 12-year-olds, misuse of volatile substances was more common than using cannabis. London-specific data from the RELACHS study suggests that levels of volatile substance misuse are lower in East London than in other parts of the UK. In the RELACHS sample 3.2 per cent of young people had tried inhaling glue, gas or solvents at least once.

The National Healthy Schools Programme is a long-term government initiative between the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department of Health aiming to achieve significant improvements in the health and achievement of children and young people. This is done by taking a whole school approach, working with children, young people, parents, staff and the whole school community from which developments and improvement are embedded in a systematic way. The four core themes¹⁷ relate to both the school curriculum and the emotional and physical environment in school. In each London borough there is a Healthy Schools Partnership based in either health or education working directly with schools. In London 88 per cent of schools are engaged in Healthy Schools, 55 per cent of schools have been accredited as Healthy Schools and 33 per cent are working towards it. The national target is to have 100 per cent of schools participating in Healthy Schools by December 2009 and 75 per cent accredited with Healthy Schools status.

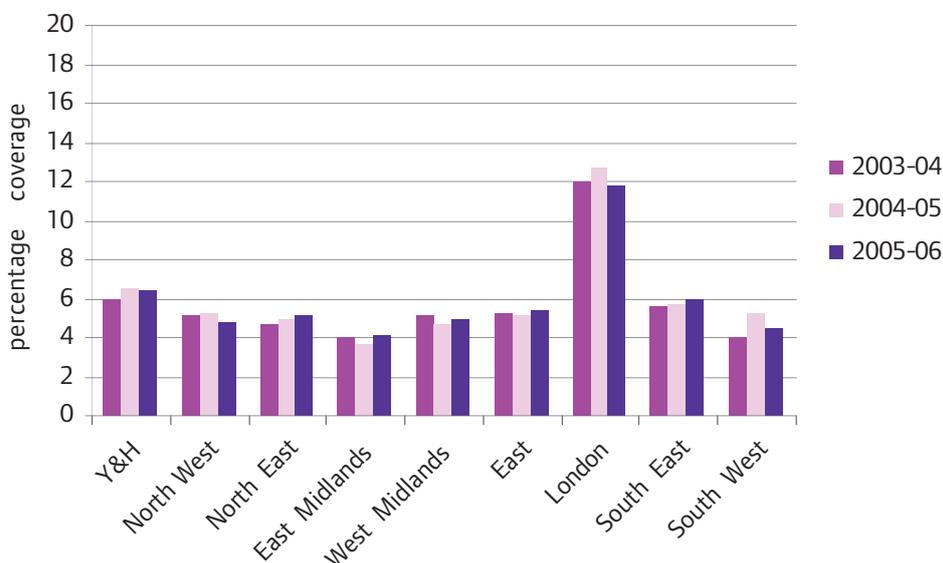
Childhood immunisations

Immunisation is one of the most important health measures worldwide for keeping children healthy. Figure 3.1 below suggests that we have some way to go in protecting London children.

There are concerns about the quality of the data on immunisation coverage for children in London¹⁸. However, audits have shown that although the true levels of immunisation in London are higher than those reported, they are still unsatisfactory and below the current recommendations by the WHO that at least 95 per cent of children receive three primary doses of diphtheria, tetanus, polio and pertussis (whooping cough) in the first year of life; that at least 95 per cent receive a first dose of a mumps containing vaccine (eg MMR) at age 12 to 18 months; and that at least 95 per cent receive a measles vaccine by two years of age.

A number of difficulties face those trying to improve immunisation cover in London, some related to patients and some to services. These include health service re-organisations, and the new child health information systems which have the potential to improve immunisation cover but which are currently creating some delivery challenges. In addition, high mobility, large families, high levels of socio-economic deprivation, young mothers, and families with a child who has medical problems have all been associated with children having delayed or partial vaccination. At the same time, some older and more highly educated mothers are choosing not to vaccinate their children.

Figure 3.1 Percentage NOT immunised against third dose diphtheria, tetanus and polio at 24 months, by English regions



Source Annual cover report 2005 – 2006, Health Protection Agency

Illness in children

The 2004 Family and Children Survey asked parents about longstanding illnesses or disability in their children¹⁹. Table 3.5 shows London as having the lowest reported rate of illness or disability of any region, though the sample size means that we cannot draw conclusions from these data.

Table 3.5 Longstanding illness or disability in children (as reported by parents), by region

		Yes	No	
GO region	North East	16 (98)	84 (512)	
	North West	15 (225)	85 (1272)	
	Yorkshire and Humber	16 (164)	84 (879)	
	East Midlands	14 (134)	86 (847)	
	West Midlands	15 (167)	85 (964)	
	South West	17 (175)	83 (884)	
	Eastern	16 (202)	84 (1039)	
	London	12 (177)	88 (1334)	
	South East	15 (268)	85 (1531)	
	Wales	16 (101)	84 (542)	
	Scotland	17 (171)	83 (840)	
	All children in Britain		15 (1881)	85 (10643)

Percentages (numbers in brackets). Only weighted data shown. Base: Parents with dependent children who took part in FACS in 2004. Government Office regions.

Respiratory illness

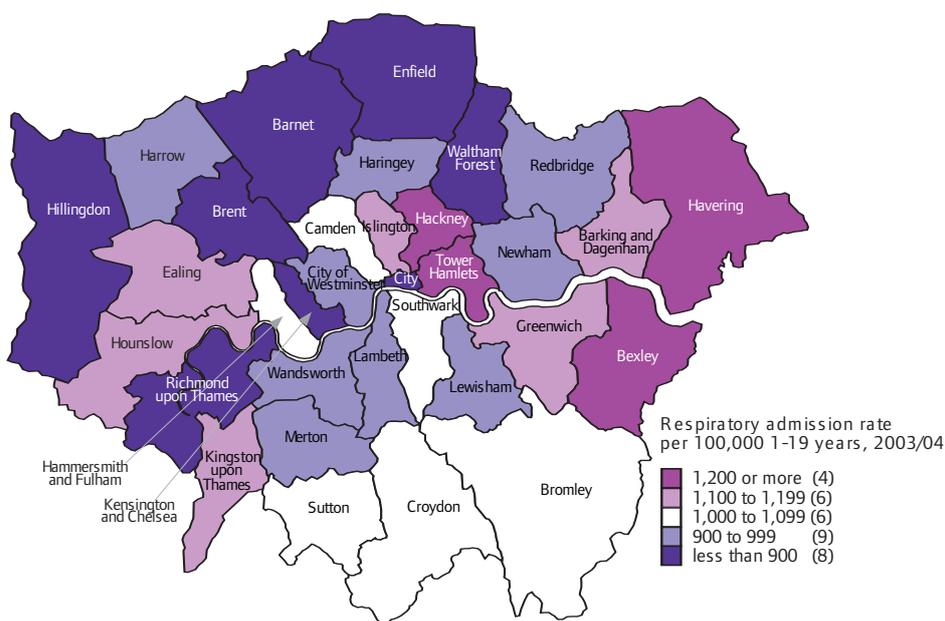
London has the worst air quality in the UK²⁰. Respiratory illness is a particular cause for concern in London and many emergency hospital admissions are related to asthma. The map below shows hospital admission rates for respiratory illness by borough and indicates that there are variations between boroughs, though whether this is due to differences in prevalence between boroughs or of the management of the illness is difficult to determine.



Air pollution is a major environment-related health threat to children and a risk factor for both acute and chronic respiratory disease. Children are particularly at risk due to the immaturity of their respiratory systems. A 2005 WHO report highlights concern about the longer-term implications of lung injury during childhood. Exposure to air pollution may well lead to enhanced susceptibility during adulthood to pollutants, such as tobacco smoke and occupational exposures²¹. Some children are more susceptible than others – particularly vulnerable are those who live in overcrowded conditions with poor internal air quality, and those who have pre-existing conditions such as asthma. The reduction of children's exposure to air

pollution is identified by the 'children action plan for Europe' (CEHAPE) as one of the four priority goals for the WHO European Region. In most countries, air pollution is the largest single environment-related cause of ill-health among children and cities are responsible for three quarters of global emissions.

Map 3.1 1 to 19-year-olds 2003–2004



The Mayor's Air Quality Strategy Progress Report to March 2005 (Mayor of London, 2007) predicted that up to 1,000 deaths would have occurred in 2005 due to health problems caused by breathing London's polluted air, containing two main pollutants, nitrogen dioxide and fine particles. Road transport is responsible for around half of these emissions.

The government's draft **Climate Change Bill** issued in March 2007, will make Britain one of the first countries to tackle climate change via specific legislation.

Since the introduction of the **Mayor's Air Quality Strategy** in 2002, a range of measures have been introduced to improve air quality. In February 2007, London became the first major city to publish a comprehensive plan to cut carbon emissions. Through a partnership with Bill Clinton's Climate Initiative, the C40 group of Mayors, chaired by the Mayor of London, agreed a deal in May 2007 to create an immediate \$5 billion fund to allow cities to cut emissions from municipal buildings using the services of the four biggest energy services companies in the world. It is estimated that over 10 per cent of London's total emissions could be saved if every commercial and public sector building becomes involved in this scheme.



The Mayor has identified that a **Low Emission Zone** in London will be the most effective way of quickly reducing pollutants that are among the most harmful to human health. It is estimated that by 2012 London's Low Emission Zone will deliver reductions of around 16 per cent in the area of London where the air quality exceeds European Union pollution objectives, and will deliver over £250 million of health benefits²².

Diabetes

The London prevalence rate (all ages)²³ of type 1 and type 2 diabetes (4.37 per cent) is slightly lower than the England rate (4.41 per cent). However, the rate for some age groups, including those aged 0 to 29 is slightly higher than the corresponding rate for England. There are borough variations for this age group ranging from 0.31 per cent for Bexley, Bromley and Havering to 0.46 per cent in Tower Hamlets²⁴.

There is a clear difference in rates between ethnic groups, with rates highest for Asian groups, then black groups, followed by white groups with the 'other' category being the lowest. The London 'Asian' prevalence is slightly higher than the England 'Asian' rate.

Type 2 diabetes is a metabolic disorder associated with increasing levels of obesity and overweight. The rate of type 2 diabetes has increased significantly over recent years and accounts for the vast majority of diabetes cases among adults. The increasing rate among children and young people is a cause of great concern. The London Health Observatory has highlighted that as obesity levels are increasing in all groups, there is now an emerging epidemic of type 2 diabetes in young people and children, as well as older people.

Oral health

Socio-economic deprivation is recognised as being the key determinant of oral health status. Nationally there have been dramatic improvements in oral health over the last 30 years. However inequalities in oral health across London persist.

Five-year-olds in inner London have some of the worst levels of dental decay in England and Wales. Over one-third (35 per cent) of five-year-olds in London have active dental decay. The national target for oral health in five-year-olds is that they should have an average of no more than one decayed, missing or filled primary tooth (dmft) and that 70 per cent of five-year-olds should have no experience of tooth decay. The London Health Observatory report that only two PCTs in London have an average dmft of less than one and only three PCTs have 70 per cent or more children with no dental decay²⁵.

Teenage pregnancy and sexual health

The rates of teenage pregnancy in the UK are higher than other countries in Western Europe. In England, there are around 40,000 conceptions a year to girls aged under 18 years, of which nearly 60 per cent result in live births. London has a higher conception rate for under-18-year-olds than the England and Wales rate, although 2005 data suggest a downward shift since 2002. A higher proportion of under 18 conceptions in London end in abortion compared with the England average: 59.7 per cent in London in 2005 and 46.9 per cent in England²⁶.

Table 3.6 Under 18 conception rates per 1,000 female population aged 15 to 17, 1998–2005 by region

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
England and Wales	47.1	45.1	43.9	42.7	42.8	42.3	41.7	41.3
England	46.6	44.8	43.6	42.5	42.6	42.1	41.5	41.1
North East	56.5	55.3	50.8	48.3	51.0	52.1	50.6	49.6
North West	50.3	48.8	47.5	45.1	45.2	45.0	45.6	46.4
Yorkshire & the Humber	53.1	51.0	47.9	47.1	47.0	46.8	47.3	47.7
West Midlands	51.7	49.3	49.0	47.2	46.8	47.2	45.0	45.3
East of England	37.9	36.4	35.1	34.2	34.6	33.3	32.8	32.7
London	51.1	50.5	50.4	50.3	52.0	50.8	48.3	44.6
South East	37.8	35.9	36.0	35.0	34.4	33.1	33.5	34.2
South West	39.4	37.5	36.3	37.1	35.4	34.1	34.5	34.2

Source ONS and Teenage Pregnancy Unit

There is considerable variation across London – some boroughs' rates of unintended teenage pregnancy have reduced considerably, while others have seen their rates increase. Of 21 authorities recently highlighted by the government as having high and increasing conception rates, seven are in London. The average conception rate for under-18-year-olds in inner London is 52.6 per 1,000 compared with a national average of 41.3 per 1,000.

A high proportion of vulnerable young people live in London including care leavers, homeless and asylum-seeking young people, and young people from deprived communities. Teenage pregnancy tends to be higher amongst vulnerable groups and those with poor educational attainment. Despite these underlying factors, latest government figures reveal reductions in teenage pregnancy rates in some London boroughs. Inner London rates have fallen by 21.6 per cent between 1998 and 2005. In Hackney the under-18 conception rate fell by 28 per cent, and in Hammersmith and Fulham by 46 per cent between 1998 and 2005.

HIV and sexually transmitted infections

New diagnoses and prevalence of HIV in England remains highest in London. In 2005, 42 per cent (3,142 of 7,450) of all new HIV diagnoses were from the London Strategic Health Authority area. Nationally, people aged 16 to 24 accounted for 11 per cent of all HIV diagnoses. In London 319 16 to 24-year-olds were diagnosed with HIV in 2005.

In 2005, the rate of chlamydia infections was higher in London for both men and women than any other region in England. Rates of chlamydia are higher among sexually active young people. In 2005, 16 to 24-year-old men accounted for 57 per cent of all chlamydia cases in men. Young women aged 16 to 24 made up 75 per cent of all chlamydia diagnoses in women.

Rates of gonorrhoea have fallen in young people over the last three years. However, in 2005, 16 to 24-year-olds accounted for 39 per cent of all diagnoses in men and 70 per cent in women. The highest rates were in London²⁷.

Emotional well-being and mental health

Concerns about children and young peoples' emotional well-being and mental health encompass a wide spectrum, from initiatives to ensure that children have access to support in their daily lives to feel emotionally secure and to develop resilience, through to specialist services for those young people who experience acute or chronic mental health difficulties.

Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) is a national programme (2005) designed to develop children's social and emotional skills to promote positive behaviour, attendance, learning and well-being. Family SEAL workshops are starting to share the approach with all parents. The SEAL programme is being implemented in half of primary schools and the DfES expect two-thirds of primary schools to be using the programme by July 2007. The secondary SEAL programme is to be rolled out, starting in September 2007, and the guidance encourages schools to engage with parents to support a shared approach to the promotion of social and emotional skills. Alongside the development of this programme are established third sector counselling services in London schools provided by organisations including The Place2Be and the NSPCC.

National evidence points to a substantial rise in psychosocial disorders affecting young people over the past 25 years²⁸. An Office of National Statistics (ONS) report (Green et al, 2004²⁹) describes the prevalence of mental disorders among five to 16-year-olds and notes changes since the previous survey in 1999 (Meltzer et al 2000³⁰). The survey concentrated on the three common groups of disorder: emotional disorders such as

anxiety, depression and obsessions; hyperactivity disorders involving inattention and over-activity; and conduct disorders characterised by awkward, troublesome, aggressive and anti-social behaviours. In 2004, one in ten children and young people (ten per cent) aged five to 16 had a clinically diagnosed mental disorder of whom four per cent had an emotional disorder (anxiety or depression), six per cent had a conduct disorder, two per cent had a hyperkinetic disorder, and one per cent had a less common disorder. Girls were more likely to have an emotional disorder and boys a conduct disorder. Overall, boys were more likely to have a mental disorder than girls.

Mental health is more profoundly affected by socio-economic factors than many other dimensions of health. The prevalence of mental disorders has been found to be greater among children: in lone parent families; in reconstituted families; in families whose interviewed parent had no educational qualifications; in families with neither parent working; in families with a low weekly household income; in households in which someone received disability benefit; living in the social or privately rented sector; and living in socially deprived areas. There is also evidence to suggest co-morbidity between physical ill-health and emotional well-being and mental health problems.

In England, the only difference in the rates recorded by the 2000 and 2004 surveys was a small decrease in emotional disorders among five to 10-year-olds. There were no differences in the prevalence of mental disorders between the metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas of England in 2004. A similar finding was reported in the 1999 survey. Some variations might have been expected given the associations between prevalence rates and socio-economic measures discussed above. It may be that the area groupings cover such a heterogeneous range of areas that any variations with type of area are masked.

Ethnic differences are difficult to interpret from this source because of the small numbers of minority ethnic children in the survey. However, the data suggest that Indian origin children had a relatively low rate of mental disorder (three per cent compared with seven to ten per cent in other groups). Similar findings for Indian children were reported in 1999 and have been observed in clinical practice, suggesting that they are real variations.

Young people at greater risk of mental health problems include looked after children and homeless young people. Data from the ONS survey on the mental health of looked after children aged five to 17 years (Meltzer et al 2003) found that 45 per cent of those interviewed (1,039) were assessed as having mental health problems and 37 per cent had symptoms





that warranted a clinical diagnosis. Those in care were five times more likely to have a mental disorder (42 per cent compared with eight per cent), with particularly notable differences in conduct disorder. This may also be the case for young people in detention, where studies have shown the experience of incarceration to have been detrimental to mental health and emotional well-being. The Department of Health stated in key guidance that young offenders have *'many social, educational and mental health needs and research suggests that these needs are not being met'*³¹.

A study conducted by Centrepoin and the Mental Health Foundation³² of young homeless people in London (aged 16 to 25) and their experiences of mental health support found that over two-thirds (69 per cent) had mental health problems. Half had experienced regular feelings of anxiety and depression as a result of being homeless, and a fifth (19 per cent) had received a psychiatric diagnosis for schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or clinical depression prior to becoming homeless. Of those, half (ten per cent) were forced to leave the family home because of their mental health problem. The report concluded that young homeless people with mental health problems are not getting adequate support.

The above surveys are inconclusive in identifying clear-cut differences between children and young people in London and elsewhere in the UK – rates of diagnosable mental disorders among children and young people in inner and outer London are not necessarily higher than in other parts of the UK.

A recent review of evidence on emotional well-being and mental health carried out for Young London Matters by researchers at the Thomas Coram Research Unit³³ considered a range of sources to describe some of the gaps between need and service provision in London. Based on data and reports received from ten London boroughs, the review highlighted a shortfall of CAMHS provision to young people, although with some differences between areas. For example, Greenwich estimated that more than half of children and young people requiring CAMHS support are not currently receiving it, and Kingston estimates close to three-quarters of those in need are not accessing CAMHS. Hounslow concluded Asian children and young people were under-represented in their CAMHS services, while Southwark found black African children/young people to be under-represented and black British, black Caribbean and mixed white and black Afro-Caribbean were over-represented. Southwark found that waiting times for CAMHS were similar to the national average, while Hounslow had lower than national average waiting times.

The Research with East London Adolescents Community Health Survey (RELACHS) reported rates of psychological distress in East London considerably higher than national rates³⁴. This study also found that, despite high levels of poverty, Bangladeshi children had lower rates of psychological distress than white peers. This supports the ONS 2004 finding that while the odds of having a conduct disorder for boys were almost twice those for girls, children of Indian or Pakistani origin were considerably less likely to be affected than white children.

Bullying is a significant issue identified by young Londoners with a potential, long-term impact on emotional health and well-being (see Chapter 4). This includes the impact of homophobic bullying in schools on the mental health and social development of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people³⁵.

There is an established body of evidence that shows a significant association between parental mental health problems and adverse outcomes for their children (see Chapter 7). An estimate of the number of incapacity support claimants with a mental health problem who have dependent children in London is around 16,000 (with around 31,000 dependent children)³⁶. By another route, it has been estimated that 28 per cent of 300,000 lone parents in London have mental health problems (n= 84,000)³⁷.

Self-harm

Young people may deliberately harm themselves in a variety of ways including substance misuse, cutting or burning themselves. There are quite large disparities between boroughs on hospital admissions rates for self-harm with Waltham Forest, Lewisham, Islington and Hillingdon showing particularly high rates, and Bexley and Sutton the lowest rates. However, these differences will be partly due to variations in diagnosis and coding between hospitals³⁸. It is important to note that many young people who have harmed themselves will not be admitted to hospital – either because they are treated in a primary care setting or because they do not have contact with any part of the health service.

Suicides

There were 13 suicides during 2001 – 2003 of people aged under 15 years in London. Within the 15 to 19 year age group, there were 59 deaths from suicide and undetermined injury (41 young men and 18 young women) during 2001 – 2003. This comprises three per cent of the total number of deaths from suicide and undetermined injury in London. This rises to 142 (7.4 per cent of the London total) of people aged 20 to 24 years³⁹.

Young London Matters has the emotional well-being and mental health of children and young people as one of its four priority strands. The group responsible for this strand is working to develop the capacity of local authorities and children's trusts to develop effective infrastructure, networks and pathways for children and young people to access quality and timely support and services to improve their emotional well-being and mental health. By 2008, the aim is to have moved towards this by: enabling London's frontline and middle managers (working in schools and other settings) to have access to a pan-London resource for practice sharing, identifying at least one emotional health and well-being target for LAAs to support schools and boroughs to make progress in this area.

This is also a priority for the **London Health Commission**, which in 2005 consulted with a range of statutory and voluntary sector stakeholders on how the commission partners and other agencies should focus work on an overarching framework for improving young Londoners' emotional well-being and mental health. Responses emphasised the importance of broad determinants of health and the need for preventive support to young people.

Endnotes

- 1 Table adapted from Regional Trends 39, 2006 Edition. The IMR refers to deaths of children under one year per 1,000 live births
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- 7 Department of Health, Health Survey for England, 2002: The Health of Children and Young People. London: The Stationery Office
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- 16 London: 'The highs and the lows 2', a report from the Greater London Alcohol and Drug Alliance, January 2007
- 17 Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), including Sex and Relationships and Drugs Education; Healthy Eating; Physical Activity; Emotional Health and Wellbeing, including bullying
- 18 In the past two years the data problems have become worse following the implementation of new child health information systems as part of the NHS National Programme for IT implemented by Connecting for Health. Data have either been unavailable from some PCTs or of poorer quality, and statistics have therefore become more unreliable. Whether or not immunisation uptake has also fallen during this time is currently unknown; an investigation is ongoing via the Health Protection Agency
- 19 Question asked: Does (child's name) have any long-standing illness or disability? By longstanding I mean anything that has troubled (child's name) over a period of time or that is likely to affect (child's name) over a period of time
- 20 Source: Health in London, review of the London Health Strategy high level indicators, 2007 update, London Health Commission
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- 24 http://www.lho.org.uk/Download/Public/8983/1/PBS_London_Summary_4.pdf
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- 36 Based on GLA estimates derived from making an assumption that the disease profile of income support incapacity claimants is the same as for incapacity benefit claimants on May 2006 DWP data
- 37 GLA DMAG, Workless Households in London, August 2005; Memorandum by Rethink to the Work and Pensions Committee
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- 39 Source: Health in London, review of the London Health Strategy high level indicators, 2005 update, London Health Commission

4 Staying safe

Summary

A series of high profile child abuse inquiries over the past 30 years has increased awareness of the potential risks to children from adult carers.

If you ask children themselves what their primary safety concerns are, they frequently refer to the importance of feeling safe in their neighbourhoods, schools and communities.

Bullying is a priority concern for children and young people, with racial bullying identified as a particular issue. In a recent London survey 37 per cent of Year 7 and 28 per cent of Year 10 pupils felt that bullying was a problem in their school. A review of Children and Young People's Plans suggests that bullying is now being taken more seriously as a local policy issue, although the lack of good information on the incidence of bullying makes it difficult to monitor and report progress.

Crime also concerns children. Children and young people are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of crime. A 2005 survey in England and Wales found that over a quarter of 10 to 25-year-olds reported having been a victim of personal theft or assault in the previous 12 months. Equivalent figures for London alone are not available but as London has the highest rate of recorded crime per head in England, we can infer this proportion of young victims will be similar or higher for London.

It is difficult to estimate accurately how many children and young people in London are subjected to abuse. A national study of young adults (in 2000) found that 13 per cent of a large randomised sample identified themselves as having experienced some form of abuse in childhood.

Research in London in 2005 estimated that there were 1,000 young people likely to be at risk of sexual exploitation across the capital, double the number being identified by services.

In 2005 the legal definition of harm was extended to include the effects on children of living in households where there is domestic violence. In Greater London the Metropolitan Police Service attends around 300 incidents of domestic violence every 24 hours.

The rate of child protection registrations in London has remained consistent at 29 per 10,000 children under 18 since 2004. This rate is higher than the England rate of 24 per 10,000 children and the second highest of all English regions. Changes in categorisation in London have followed national trends with an increase in registration for 'neglect' and

'emotional abuse'. London has markedly reduced the number of children's names remaining on the register for two years or more, although inner London still has the highest rate of registration nationally.

Unintentional injury or 'accident' remains a leading cause of child death and causes more children to be admitted to hospital each year than any other reason. The risk of accidental injury is strongly associated with socio-economic status and deprivation.

Road traffic injuries are of particular concern. In London in 2006, there were 2,241 child casualties over a half of which were child pedestrians. Although the rate of serious child casualties has gradually declined over recent years, the decline for black African and black Caribbean children has been slower, resulting in black children being at twice the risk of death or injury as white children. By the end of 2005 severe casualties in London were 62 per cent below the baseline for the national casualty target of a 50 per cent reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured by the year 2010. As a result of this progress, the Mayor has introduced new targets to reduce the number of children killed and seriously injured on London's roads by 60 per cent by 2010.

Introduction

A series of high profile child abuse inquiries over the past 30 years has heightened public and political consciousness of the plight of children physically and sexually abused by their families and others close to them. We now have increased awareness of the potential risks to children from trusted adults. In recent years, the inquiry following the death of Victoria Climbié influenced the development of the *Children Act 2004* and the Every Child Matters agenda which has 'staying safe' as one of its five core outcomes for children.

However, children's safety can also be jeopardised by factors other than abuse. Although it tends to cause less of a public outcry, accidental injury remains the biggest risk to children's safety and the main cause of deaths of children in the UK. Injury caused by road traffic is a particular cause for concern, and although the number of deaths of child pedestrians has fallen in London in recent years, some commentators observe that this may be due more to the greater restrictions on children's freedom than to safer roads.

If you ask children themselves what their primary safety concerns are, they frequently refer to the importance of feeling safe in their

neighbourhoods, schools and communities. Bullying and victimisation are key concerns for young people, who, despite the headlines, are far more likely to be victims of crime than to offend against others.

This chapter reviews the evidence on these issues and considers what the data tell us about child safety in homes and communities in London.

Safeguarding children

Child abuse

We have no reliable data on how many children are abused in Britain or in London today. Despite the growth in awareness in recent years, it remains difficult for children and adults to disclose abuse. The child protection statistics we report below tell us more about levels of reporting and the trends in organisational responses to reported abuse than about the number of children suffering ill-treatment.

A key piece of UK research for information on prevalence was conducted by Cawson et al for the NSPCC¹. A large random sample of young adults (18 to 24) in the general population were asked about their experiences of abuse and mistreatment both inside and outside the family. Thirteen per cent of respondents regarded themselves as having experienced some form of abuse in childhood.

Across all types of maltreatment researchers were more likely to assess respondents as abused than the respondents were to consider themselves abused. Although 17 per cent of respondents who had experienced physical discipline or violent treatment said that their treatment was too strict and harsh for a child, only seven per cent said that they now considered the treatment they had at home to have been abuse.

Seven per cent of the sample were assessed by the research team as having experienced a serious level of physical abuse from parents or carers, 14 per cent an intermediate level of abuse, and three per cent at a level to be a 'cause for concern'.

Sexual abuse and assault

The Cawson study reported one per cent of the sample as having experienced sexual abuse by parents/carers, almost all of which involved physical contact, and three per cent by other relatives. Sexual abuse by 'other known people' was the most common (11 per cent), with four per cent having been abused by a stranger or someone they had just met. The study also identified a 'borderline group' (five per cent) who had consensual sexual activity with an adult other than a parent when they were aged 13 to 15. This was primarily with known non-relatives.



Young women are particularly vulnerable to rape and sexual assault. In 2006, Metropolitan Police Service data show that 29.3 per cent of recorded rape victims were aged under 17. Of other sexual offences, 41.3 per cent were committed against individuals under 17.

Table 4.1 Victims of rape and sexual offences by age group, 2006/07

	Age Range						Total
	0 – 17	18 – 29	30 – 39	40 – 49	50 – 60	60+	
Rape	684	981	381	215	57	16	2,334
	29.3%	42.0%	16.3%	9.2%	2.4%	0.7%	100.0%
Other sexual	2,808	2,194	1,034	477	193	101	6,807
	41.3%	32.2%	15.2%	7.0%	2.8%	1.5%	100.0%

Source Metropolitan Police Service Data

Sexual exploitation and trafficking

Sexual exploitation is one of the most complex forms of child abuse, not least because many of the children and young people involved do not initially recognise or acknowledge that they are being abused. Much progress has been made in recognising that children who are often referred to as being '*abused through prostitution*' are children in need; but the sexual exploitation of children takes different forms, and many of the children involved are not visible '*on the streets*' but are nevertheless at great risk and subject to grave abuse.

Research carried out by Barnardo's in 2005 identified cases of sexual exploitation of young people known to professionals in every London borough. It also extrapolated numbers of young people likely to be at risk in each borough, based on a set of risk indicators (including numbers of young people in care, numbers going missing, levels of STDs and teenage pregnancy). It estimated around 1,000 young people were likely to be at risk across London, double the number being identified by services. The estimates suggest that some boroughs were likely to be under-identifying young people at risk by up to 80 per cent².

In the course of the last decade there has been increasing recognition of sexual exploitation as a form of abuse, and of children who are exploited as vulnerable and in need. However, there is concern that despite the introduction of three new offences³, there have been extremely low numbers of related prosecutions. This suggests that there are barriers to their use or that prosecutions are not being proactively pursued⁴. A report from Barnardo's suggests there remain serious shortcomings in the protection of children from sexual exploitation in London. However, it also highlights some positive initiatives including: the new London

Safeguarding Children Board protocols; a Barnardo's pilot of a preventative education programme (funded by London Councils); and the multi-agency initiatives involving both police and children's services which have been developed in several boroughs.

In terms of trafficking, research with asylum teams and social services departments, conducted in 2003, identified 35 documented cases of trafficking of children and young people in 17 London boroughs. These included 14 cases involving sexual exploitation⁵. Thirteen cases in 12 boroughs were identified in the above-mentioned Barnardo's research covering the same time period.

The Palladin scoping study of child migration to the UK via Heathrow Airport (involving the Metropolitan Police, NSPCC, Hillingdon social services, ADSS and the Immigration Service) reported that it had not identified any widespread exploitation of migrant children in the UK. The focus was on unaccompanied minors, although many trafficked children are likely to be accompanied by a trafficker. During the three-month study period, 1,738 unaccompanied minors arrived; 551 (30 per cent) were 'risk assessed in' by the Palladin Team for follow-up enquiries. During the period, the London Borough of Hillingdon received 39 referrals of which 31 resulted in a young person being accommodated.

At the point of the study's publication, social service departments had been unable to account for 28 of the unaccompanied minors notified to them. Fourteen of these were subsequently located by police investigations. They had either left the country or had presented themselves to claim asylum. The largest group of unaccounted for unaccompanied minors were African girls in their teens, which could add plausibility to fears that this group fall victim to exploitation in domestic servitude or abuse through prostitution.

The London Safeguarding Children Board (the London Board) has produced a **London Procedure for Children Abused through Sexual Exploitation**, recognising that sexually exploited children are children in need of services under the *Children Act 2004*. They are also children in need of protection. It specifies that a multi-agency network or planning meeting should take place for all children considered at risk of sexual exploitation.

Trafficked children are vulnerable to sexual exploitation, and the London Board has also developed a **Procedure for Safeguarding Children Abused through Trafficking and Exploitation**. This procedure provides practitioners with criteria to assist them in identifying a child who has been trafficked and sets out a good practice response for each agency. Both

procedures will be incorporated in the new third edition of the London Child Protection Procedures to be published in September 2007.

The London Board has also set up a **child sexual abuse sub-group** to support London Local Safeguarding Children's Boards in improving the quality of multi-agency practice and to co-ordinate services for sexually abused/exploited children, and services for children who harm others sexually. The sub-group is sponsoring a co-ordinator for a **London Stop it Now! campaign** calling on all adults to take responsibility to protect children from sexual abuse.

The issue of child trafficking has been included in the **UK Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking** launched in March 2007. This provides the UK with measures in the area of prevention, enforcement and prosecutions, and most importantly the protection and support of adult and child victims. Its measures include: establishing specialist teams at ports of entry into the UK to spot traffickers at work; creating a child trafficking telephone advice line to help social workers, police and immigration staff deal with the complex problems caused by trafficking; and creating a national referral system that will act as a single point of contact for cases of trafficking, to stop traffickers and help their victims.

London has established the **Community Partnership Project**, commissioned by the London Safeguarding Children Board and scheduled to run for 12 months from June 2006. The project has a number of objectives, but largely aims to improve the safeguarding of children through increased collaboration between statutory services and communities in eight London boroughs (Brent, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Newham and Southwark). The project also aims to gather information about the nature and prevalence of four specific areas of child abuse; female genital mutilation, trafficking of children, abuse associated with belief in spirit possession, and abuse linked to so called 'honour' violence. Once this information has been gathered it is hoped that the findings will be mainstreamed into safeguarding work across the capital⁶.

Children affected by domestic violence

There were 55,903 domestic violence offences recorded by the Metropolitan Police in 2006. Of these 24,492 resulted in a summons, a caution or were taken into consideration at court when a separate offence was being considered (recorded as detections in MPS data). Domestic violence is under-reported, but even so, domestic violence represents 25 per cent of all recorded violent crime. The Metropolitan Police Service attends around 300 domestic violence incidents every 24 hours⁷.

Table 4.2 Domestic violence incidents, offences and detections in London 2000 – 2006

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Incidents	91,872	92,796	102,791	102,731	109,282	111,516	103,042
Offences	54,107	55,709	60,993	59,367	61,729	61,675	55,903
Detections	16,877	16,065	16,811	17,068	30,797	38,043	24,492

Source Metropolitan Police Service

Domestic violence is a feature in the lives of three-quarters of children on the child protection register⁸ and is a significant factor in disputed child contact cases. In at least 35 per cent of disputed contact cases, there are concerns about the safety of the child⁹.

A study commissioned by the Women's Equality Unit at the DTI¹⁰ estimated the cost of domestic violence to services. Applying the same formula to London, the estimated total cost of all services is £435.26 million per annum. The total cost of services and of lost economic output is £809.1 million per annum and if one considers the additional human costs, the total figure rises to £3,199.61 million per annum. The cost to social services is £31.9 million a year¹¹. This last cost is overwhelmingly for children rather than for adults, especially those caught up in families where there is both domestic violence and child abuse.

Long-term trends in all violent crime, as measured by the self-report British Crime Survey, have shown a significant decline since a peak in 1995. In particular, there have been large falls in numbers of both domestic and acquaintance violence. Between 1995 and 2005/06 BCS, domestic violence fell by 64 per cent and acquaintance violence by 55 per cent, although numbers of violent crimes have fallen less sharply in recent years¹².

According to the British Crime Survey, around one in 20 women (six per cent) and men (four per cent) had experienced some form of partner abuse, of a non-sexual nature, in the last year¹³. Prevalence varied between age groups. In general, both young men and women reported higher levels of victimisation for intimate violence. Women with disabilities were more likely than average to have experienced abuse from a partner of a non-sexual nature, and stalking. Women from households with higher levels of income and those living in owner-occupied properties were at lower risk of victimisation than average, whereas their counterparts from households with lower incomes had a higher risk of different forms of intimate violence than average.

In March 2005, a survey by *Sugar* magazine and the NSPCC of 2,000 girls found that more than 40 per cent of girls would 'consider giving a boy a second chance' if he hit them. It also found that 20 per cent of teenage girls had been hit by their boyfriends, with four per cent of girls subjected to regular attacks¹⁴.

From January 2005, the legal definition of harm to children was extended to include the impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another – particularly in the home. This amendment, **Section 120 of the 'Adoption and Children Act 2002'**, was in response to evidence that children can suffer serious long-term damage through living in a household where domestic violence and abuse is taking place even if they are not being directly assaulted themselves. Domestic violence is also identified within Every Child Matters as having a negative impact on children's ability to achieve their full potential.

Since 2001, London Councils has been supporting boroughs with the implementation of the **Domestic Violence Minimum Standards (DVMS)**. In a GOL 2007 survey¹⁵, 90 per cent of boroughs have or plan to set up Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference Panels to manage high risk cases of domestic violence; all boroughs reported that domestic violence work was linked to Local Safeguarding Children Boards; 45 per cent of boroughs reported that they have a local contact centre offering supervised contact; two thirds of boroughs had incorporated domestic violence into their Children and Young People's Plan; and finally 23 boroughs were doing work with young people in local schools.

The second **London Domestic Violence Strategy** was published in November 2005 based on developing or strengthening provision for children affected by domestic violence. A stand alone multi-agency procedure for assessing the risk to children (as well as their mother) in households where domestic violence is occurring has been developed by the London Board and will be incorporated in version three of the London Child Protection Procedures to be published in September 2007¹⁶.

Project Umbra is a multi-agency initiative led by the Metropolitan Police Service and forms the delivery arm of the London Domestic Violence Strategy. Project Umbra is made up of a series of working groups seeking solutions to some of the intractable issues around protecting women and children affected by domestic violence. Strand 3 is concerned specifically with the protection of children and young people exposed to domestic violence.

An example of progress is that throughout 2006 the pioneering community-based children's programme for children who have experienced domestic violence, developed by the London Borough of Sutton, has been widely promoted. Several London boroughs are now in the process of developing their own local services¹⁷.

London has also experienced a significant reduction in domestic violence related homicides between 2003/04 and 2006/07 (estimated at 52 per cent). This reduction is being widely attributed to greater co-ordination and partnership processes such as the introduction of Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC).

The physical punishment of children

The majority of professional bodies and children's organisations now support the position that children should be afforded the same legal protection against assault as adults and that physical punishment or 'smacking' should be unacceptable. In a national survey of parental discipline, more than half the parents reported the use of smacking or slapping¹⁸. No London-specific data is currently available.

The debate was given fresh impetus during the passage of the *Children Act, 2004*, during which the '**Children are Unbeatable!**' Alliance sought to abolish the legal defence of 'reasonable chastisement' and thus give children equal protection from assault. This outright abolition was rejected by the government, and instead the Children Act was passed with the inclusion of **section 58** which still allows parents to use 'reasonable punishment'.

In July 2005, the Council of Europe body responsible for monitoring conformity with the European Social Charter issued its conclusion on the latest UK report (submitted in June 2004). It found UK law in breach of human rights obligations on the basis that Article 17 of the Charter requires a prohibition in legislation 'against any form of violence against children, whether at school, in other institutions, in their home or elsewhere'. In Europe 16 countries have now passed legislation to give children equal protection (plus Italy by Supreme Court ruling). A further six countries are committed to taking action.

Children whose names are entered on child protection registers

Child protection registers provide information about trends in child protection intervention rather than indicating incidence of child abuse and some differences in levels and types of registration will be due to differences between authorities on their approach to managing cases. The rate of registering children on the child protection register (CPR) has remained steady in England at around 24 per 10,000 of the under-18

population for the last five years. In London it has remained steady at 29 per 10,000. Table 4.3 shows that London continues to have a higher rate of registration than all other English regions, except for the North East.

Changes in categorisation and recording practices in London over the last three years follow national trends with increases in the proportions of children recorded under 'neglect' and 'emotional abuse' and fewer cases recorded under 'multiple' or 'not recommended' categories.

Table 4.3 Children and young people on child protection registers at 31 March 2000 to 2006

	Rate per 10,000 children aged under 18 years						
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
North East	37	33	35	35	32	31	30
North West	26	21	22	24	22	22	22
Yorks and the Humber	30	25	25	25	26	24	25
East Midlands	33	28	25	26	24	23	24
West Midlands	29	25	24	24	25	27	27
East of England	24	21	21	21	20	20	21
South East	21	21	17	18	19	20	20
South West	24	20	20	21	20	19	20
London	30	29	28	28	29	29	29
England	27	24	23	24	24	23	24

Source Adapted from DfES Statistics of Education: 'Referrals, Assessments and Children and Young People on Child Protection Registers: Year ending March 31st 2006'

Child protection reviews and duration on the register

The purpose of registration on the Child Protection Register is to devise and implement a child protection plan leading to lasting improvements in the child's safety and overall well-being. Some re-registrations are essential in responding to adverse changes in circumstance, but high levels of re-registration may suggest a lack of effective intervention or planning for the child's long-term care. A very low level of re-registrations, however, may mean that a council is not re-registering some children who are at risk. In London the level of re-registrations is slightly lower than for England as a whole but similar to unitary or other metropolitan authorities¹⁹. The significance of the number of registrations and de-registrations needs to be considered in relation to factors such as the mobility of families whose children have been subject to child protection processes and the size of council areas. Difficulties in recruiting and retaining key social work staff, which are particularly acute in London, may also have an impact on this indicator.

Reviews play a key role in ensuring child protection plans are delivered. In line with the rest of the country London is now reviewing 99 or 100 per cent of cases requiring review. The rate of improvement on this indicator has been greater in London than in any other part of England.

There is a target to reach outcomes for children and families that permit de-registration within two years. In line with the rest of the country, London authorities have markedly reduced the percentage of children whose names remain registered for two years or more. However, inner London boroughs continue to have the highest proportions nationally of children whose names remain on the register for two years or more.

Table 4.4 Percentage of children de-registered from the child protection register who had been on the register for two years or more, 2000/01 – 2005/06

	England (%)	Metropolitan Districts (%)	Shires (%)	Unitary authorities (%)	Inner London (%)	Outer London (%)
2000/01	11	13	8	10	16	16
2001/02	10	11	7	8	16	17
2002/03	8	9	7	7	13	11
2003/04	7	7	5	6	12	9
2004/05	6	7	4	5	10	6
2005/06	6	6	5	5	11	6

Source Performance Assessment Framework indicators for children’s social services, CSCI

In **‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2006** the government announced that the maintenance of a separate child protection register would be phased out by April 2008. The current function of the register will be superseded by the Integrated Children’s System (ICS) and, more specifically, through the existence of a child protection plan. Children currently identified as being on the ‘child protection register’ will in future be identified as children with a child protection plan.

Bullying

When children and young people are asked about the issues of most significance to them, bullying is at the forefront of their concerns. In the Young Londoners survey almost one in four respondents (22 per cent) said they had been bullied, rising to 29 per cent of those who are disabled. The majority of respondents believed that there is a problem with bullying at school (61 per cent) and in their neighbourhood (54 per cent), although less than half (46 per cent) said it was a problem on public transport²⁰.



The findings of Cawson et al (2000) suggest that bullying and discrimination, especially at school, is one of the most common forms of harmful aggression experienced by children and young people in the UK. In all, 43 per cent of young people in their sample had experience of bullying or discrimination. A fifth of respondents who had experienced bullying and discrimination said that it had occurred 'regularly over the years' and a quarter said it had long-term harmful effects on them. This amounted to one in ten of all respondents.

The contexts and mechanisms of bullying are changing. UK studies indicate that around 20 per cent of young people have suffered cyber-bullying, with 14 per cent harassed by text message and four per cent by emails²¹. Such bullying extends out of school hours, and the technology makes it possible to magnify the impact of a single attack by circulating it to others. The vulnerability of different groups also changes according to changing political context and public attitudes. Reports from Muslim children and young people suggest that the bullying and harassment to which they are subjected has increased sharply in the last few years²².

These findings are supported by a school-based survey in London²³, which found that 37 per cent of Year 7 pupils and 28 per cent of pupils in Year 10 felt that bullying was a particular problem at their school. Three per cent of pupils in London said that they were bullied every day and a further three per cent every week. Most pupils in London had seen another pupil being bullied at school. Thirty per cent of pupils said that this happened 'sometimes'; a further 17 per cent said that they had witnessed other pupils being bullied on a daily or weekly basis. Less than 40 per cent of pupils in London agreed that most teachers dealt effectively with bullying or were good at dealing with poor pupil behaviour if and when it occurred.

In London, 24 per cent of Year 7 pupils and 19 per cent of pupils in Year 10 said that racism was a particular problem at their school. In 2006, the survey indicates that pupils in London were less likely than in 2004 to indicate that racism was not a particular issue at their school and more likely to respond that they were unsure.

There are strong concerns about the levels of homophobia in London schools. Homophobic school environments mitigate against lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) young people feeling comfortable to be open about their identity and sexual orientation, which can have direct, adverse impacts on educational and health outcomes (see Chapters 2 and 5). A 2007 Stonewall report cites a 1996 survey of 1,145 secondary school pupils conducted by the Schools Health Education Unit, that 65 per cent

of LGB pupils had experienced homophobic bullying (verbal abuse in 92 per cent of cases, 41 per cent physical bullying and 17 per cent had experienced death threats made against them)²⁴. A more recent Stonewall survey of 307 secondary schools found that 51 per cent of schools surveyed reported one or two incidents of homophobic bullying as having occurred in the previous term²⁵.

Stand up for us, published in November 2004 by the DfES and DoH, makes it clear that schools will have to include a policy on tackling homophobia in anti-bullying action plans.

In 2006 over 3,000 copies of 'Spell It Out', an anti-homophobic bullying DVD, were sent to London's secondary schools and professionals working with young people, as well as to institutions who offer youth work, social work and teacher training courses. This was produced as part of Stonewall's **Education for All** campaign, with the help of the Mayor of London²⁶.

A 2007 UK-wide survey by The National Autistic Society found that 41 per cent of children with autism from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities had been bullied, and many parents commented on the devastating effects of bullying on their child's educational progress, relationships and mental health²⁷.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner recently analysed a sample of Children and Young People's Plans from 27 Children's Trusts²⁸. All mentioned bullying, and all but two set out clear commitments to tackling it. This universal recognition is an encouraging sign that anti-bullying activity is now part of the core work of children's services across England. However, only a small minority of the Plans present evidence of the extent of their local problem with bullying (where they do, figures are broadly similar at 25 – 30 per cent). Despite the array of policies and practices described, and the promise of reductions for the future, none of the Trusts are actually in a position to monitor trends or evaluate their efforts to reduce bullying. There is wide recognition of a need for baseline information and good monitoring. The report recommends that schools should conduct an annual survey of children and young people's experience of bullying. It is clear that expectations arising from the Every Child Matters outcomes have strongly influenced the Plans. However, because currently the key indicators for bullying focus on secondary school aged children, the ECM targets may have inadvertently led to primary aged children being disregarded. None of the Plans included targets for reducing bullying among primary age children.

London's children and young people also experience bullying outside school. In a YouGov survey, 32 per cent of adults living in London said they had witnessed bullying of children and young people on the streets – 64 per cent of whom also said they had taken action to stop it²⁹.

The campaign **Bully Watch London** aims to heighten awareness of the problem of bullying and the practical steps that Londoners can take to stop it. The 2006 campaign was a joint initiative between the Mayor's Office, the charity Beatbullying, London Councils and Transport for London. Activities included: Bully Watch London packs being sent out to schools, shops, businesses and sporting and leisure centres across the capital; adverts on the tube and on bus stops; a dedicated campaign website – www.bullywatchlondon.org and phone line (0845 338 5070) to which a total of 1,751 calls were made. Fifty per cent of calls to the Bully Watch London helpline have been from parents/carers, 236 calls from children and young people, and 105 from school-based staff.

BBTunes is a Bullywatch project that enables the 'voices and views' of young people across London and the surrounding counties to be heard, and allows young people to express their feelings and experience of bullying through the production of music. The project plans to deliver BBTunes projects in 32 London boroughs over a four-year period. An additional project focusing on inter-faith bullying will run over 26 months in six London boroughs. It will highlight the differences experienced by young people of differing faiths, those who are new exiles and those who are seeking asylum.

Many London Boroughs now have anti-bullying web sites. Designed and written by young Londoners for young Londoners, the sites form the basis of community-based campaigns co-ordinated by Beatbullying Peer Activists who, together with Beatbullying staff, are working with thousands of young people to set up peer activism, peer listening, mentoring and awareness raising programmes.

Safety in the community

Crime is a major issue for children and young people: 51 per cent of young people in the 2006 Survey of Londoners put crime at the top of their list of concerns. While youth offending is of widespread concern, there has until recently been little interest in children as victims of crime. The previous SOLCR was therefore unable to report on the victimisation of young people.

Yet, a large London borough survey reported that the majority of children felt safe in their local neighbourhoods: 63 per cent of early years children, 73 per cent of primary children and 73 per cent of secondary children (Westminster Children and Young People’s Survey³⁰). Moreover, recent research funded by the ESRC shows that children contribute to the perceived safety of their neighbourhoods. The more social networks children have in a neighbourhood, the greater parents’ confidence in the safety of that area. The research challenges previous theories that social networks are largely determined by parents, and shows that children are active – both indirectly and directly – in forging neighbourly relationships and connections³¹.



Children as victims of crime

London has the highest rate of recorded crime per head of population in England. Most crime is committed against adults, but children are often its secondary victims as the most vulnerable members of the families and communities affected. Perceived and actual levels of crime affect children’s freedom to play and to travel independently, and influence how young people are regarded by adults. Fear of crime often translates into fear of young people on the streets. In London robbery, violence and vehicle crime are all above the national average (although burglary and criminal damage are not). However, many categories of crime are lower in 2005/06 than they were in 2002/03.

Table 4.5 Crimes reported in London 2002 – 2007

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Murder	189	204	182	168	162
Rape	2,731	2,571	2,446	2,398	2,304
GBH	4,935	4,908	5,254	5,437	5,102
Gun crime	4,276	3,966	3,653	3,807	3,375
Robbery		45,771	45,311	39,033	40,640
Burglary		59,933	64,174	63,084	67,996
Vehicle crime		129,736	137,772	136,190	159,057

Source Adapted from Metropolitan Police Crime Statistics³²

When asked for their views, young people themselves emphasise community safety issues and their own fear of crime (see Chapter 8). Some groups are particularly vulnerable. For example, many young refugees face experiences that increase the risk of crime and victimisation such as racism, language problems, isolation, arriving in London without a parent or guardian, and the location in which they live.



Surveys and analysis of their views indicate young refugees' profound concern with community safety³³. The issues they highlight include: the degree of racism they experience; their desire for young refugees' voices to be heard when action to tackle crime is planned; their isolation and sense of not being accepted and not fitting in; and alienation because of negative portrayals of refugees and asylum seekers.

Metropolitan Police data on reported crime shows that in 2005/06 a total of 68,637 of London's crime victims were aged under 18. In 2006/07 it was 64,468. The risk varies considerably between boroughs. In 2006/07 there were over 2,500 young crime victims in each of Croydon, Greenwich, Haringey, Lambeth, Newham and Southwark, but less than 1,000 in each of Kensington and Chelsea and Kingston upon Thames. Police victimisation figures available for 2006/07, show that children and young people up to the age of 17 (22 per cent of total population) accounted for nine seven per cent of the total of all victims of crime in London. The majority of victims under 17 are aged between 10 and 17. Older children are more likely to be victims of crime and they are more likely to understand crime and report it. This age group is still slightly under represented for victimisation overall, accounting for 7 per cent of victims compared to 9 per cent of the population. However, worryingly, they are over represented as victims of sexual offences (41 per cent of victims), robbery (38 per cent), and violent crime overall (21 per cent).³⁵

The Offending, Crime and Justice Survey (OCJS) is a national longitudinal, self-report offending survey for England and Wales. It now provides a valuable evidence base, though data are not available at London level³⁵. The survey was first conducted in 2003 and was repeated annually until 2006. The main aim of the survey is to examine the extent of offending, anti-social behaviour and drug use among the household population, particularly among young people aged 10 to 25. However, the OCJS also covers the personal victimisation of children and young people.

The most recent figures are for 2005 and show that over a quarter (27 per cent) of young people aged 10 to 25 had been a victim of either personal theft or of assault in the last 12 months. Ten to 15-year-olds were more likely to have been a victim than 16 to 25-year-olds (31 per cent versus 25 per cent). Thirteen per cent of young people had experienced at least one personal theft (robbery, theft from the person, other personal thefts) in the last 12 months.

Boys and young men were significantly more likely than girls and young women to have been victims of a personal crime in the last 12 months (32 per cent versus 22 per cent). Just under a fifth (18 per cent) of young

people had been a victim of some assault in the last 12 months (ten per cent had been the victim of an assault resulting in injury and 11 per cent an assault that did not result in injury). Males were significantly more likely than females to have been a victim of assault (22 per cent compared with 13 per cent).

Similar to the locations of personal theft incidents, assaults against 10 to 15-year-olds were most likely to happen at school, while for assaults against people aged from 16 to 25 years a pub, bar or nightclub or the street were most common locations. Sixty-one per cent of assaults with injury and 68 per cent of assaults without injury against 10 to 15-year-olds took place at school. Assault victims aged 10 to 15 were more likely than 16 to 25-year-old assault victims to know the perpetrator in some way (93 per cent compared with 56 per cent, respectively, for assault with injury). Perpetrators against 10 to 15-year-olds were mainly fellow pupils or friends.

The 2005 findings were compared with those from the previous waves of the survey (2003 and 2004). Overall the proportion of 10 to 25-year-olds who were victims in the last 12 months remained broadly similar across the three waves and this was true for males and females and both age groups. There were some minor decreases within crime types but no evidence of an overall trend.

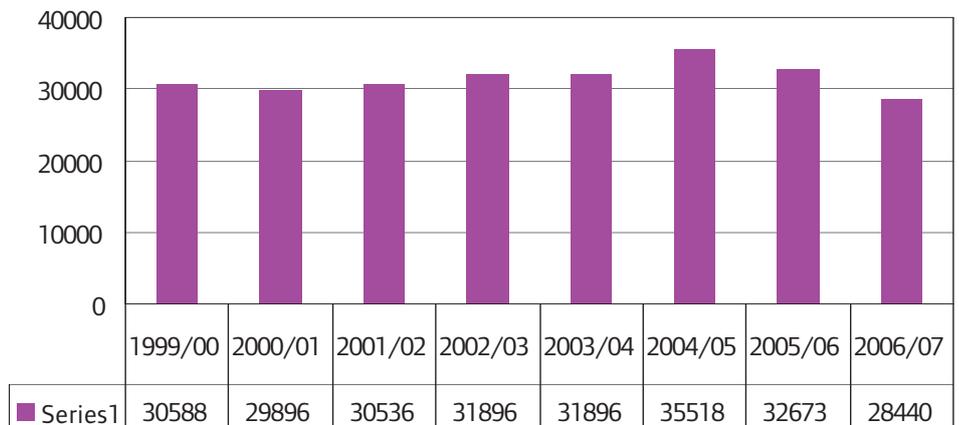
Table 4.6 Trends in victimisation (in the last 12 months) of young people aged 10 to 25, 2003 – 2005

	10 to 15			16 to 25			All 10 to 25		
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
Any personal victimisation	35	38	35	32	32	31	33	34	32
Any personal theft	22	24	21	18	17	17	19	19	19
Robbery	3	4	2	4	3	3	4	3	3
Theft from the person	8	8	6	8	8	**4	8	8	**5
Other personal thefts	15	16	15	9	10	10	11	12	12
Any assault	21	24	21	19	20	19	20	21	20
Assault (no injury)	15	18	15	12	11	9	13	15	*11
Assault (with injury)	11	13	13	12	12	13	12	13	13
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>2,035</i>	<i>864</i>	<i>392</i>	<i>2,539</i>	<i>978</i>	<i>424</i>	<i>4,574</i>	<i>1,842</i>	<i>816</i>

Notes
 2004 and 2005 are based on fresh respondents only
 * indicates significant differences against the 2004 OCJS
 ** indicates significant differences against the 2003 and 2004 OCJS

The number of young people (aged 10 to 17) accused of violent crime in London has increased only slightly in recent years (up six per cent since 1999/2000 to 5,275 in 2006/07). During the same period there has been a decrease in the number of young people in London who are victims of violent crime (down seven per cent from 30588 to 28440).

Chart 4.1 Young people who have been victims of violence 1999-2007



Source Metropolitan Police Service



Weapons and gangs

A report commissioned by Bridge House Trust in 2004 highlighted the widespread carrying of weapons by young people³⁶. It identified that most young people carried them for ‘defensive’ purposes, but that fear, status and ‘glamour’ – particularly in certain peer group and gang contexts – encouraged the weapon carrying choices of boys and young men. One in ten boys aged 11 and 12 were reported to have carried a knife or other weapon in the previous year and eight per cent said they had attacked someone intending serious harm. By the age of 16, the figures had risen to 24 and 19 per cent respectively³⁷. A MORI youth survey in 2003 reported that pupils attending schools said that offences typically happen at school while excluded young people appear more likely to experience crime in the local area where they live³⁸. Under-reporting due to fear of reprisals and the difficulties of engaging with victims provides ongoing challenges for services. A number of London initiatives were identified by the Bridge House Trust report as ‘promising practice’ including Southwark YOT’s Gang Reduction Project and Islington Victim Support’s direct work in schools.

The age of both victims and offenders involved and affected by gang and group offending in London has decreased. In 2004, the peak age for victims was 24, by 2006 this age had decreased to 19, with a substantial number of younger individuals. The increase in the number of young people under the age of 20 who are victims of gang-related murders and

shootings has increased from 31 victims in 2003 to 82 in 2005 and 79 in 2006. This represents a substantial increase in the proportion of teenage victims of shooting. In 2003, they formed 16 per cent of all victims, in 2006 they formed 31 per cent³⁹. According to Metropolitan Police Service data, the most current, available data (April-June 2006) that those aged 10 to 17 years accounted for over a quarter of people accused of gun crime and over a third of people accused of knife crime (overall, across all age groups, the trend is for knife-enabled crime to be recorded at over three times the rate of gun-enabled crime)⁴⁰.

Between January and August 2007 there were 33 young people (under the age of 20) murdered in London. Of these 12 (all under the age of 13) are under investigation by the Child Protection Command; six are under investigation by Operation Trident. Six of the murders were gun-enabled and 13 knife-enabled. In eighteen of the cases victims and suspects were both under the age of 20 (two more than for the same criteria and same period last year).

In 2006/07, 22 children and young people (under the age of 18) were murdered in London. In 2005/06 there were 12, but in previous years this decade there have been up to 20 such murders. While the London (and national) instances of fatal gun and knife crime is cause for serious concern, the murder of children and young people is still thankfully rare (1 in 100,000 of the youth population) and a substantial proportion of these result from violence in the home.

The charity Communities that Care (2005) produced the 2004 Safer London Youth Survey⁴¹, a self-report survey using a sample of 11,400 young people aged 11 to 15 living in six areas of London. Defining membership of a gang as 'belonging to a gang with a name and territory', about four per cent of the young people that participated in the study were classified as gang members. However, self-identification is problematic as some young people will ascribe the term to friendship groups, which are not involved in criminal activity, whereas others who are involved in relatively serious group-related offending may not see themselves as a gang.

Using a different definition of 'delinquent youth group', national data from the OJCS suggested that six per cent of young people were members of such a group, and two per cent were members of such a group involved in 'more serious' criminal activity⁴².

A report from the Youth Justice Board emphasises that distinctions need to be made between 'real' gangs and groups of young people which may

commit low-level anti-social behaviour and crime, and that mislabelling of youth groups as gangs runs the risk of glamourising them. The report notes that young people may be 'groomed' for gang membership and may be exploited within them. As far as gangs did exist, youth justice practitioners, whose views informed the report, saw them as marked out from more typical delinquent groups by the intensity and seriousness of their offending behaviour. Interviewees acknowledged that gangs were operating in three out of the five urban areas covered by the study. However, they tended to associate them with young adults rather than the age range covered by YOTs, and these gangs of young adults, in turn, might be connected with older, organised crime groups⁴³.

There is a strong multi-agency, strategic approach to young people's victimisation and crime prevention in London. This is a key focus for the **London Community Safety Partnership**, and a stream of work to be led by the **London Youth Crime Prevention Board**. There is also relevant work being developed around promoting acceptable behaviour across all communities, including young people, through the **London Anti-Social Behaviour and Respect Board**.

The Metropolitan Police Service is developing a youth strategy that will be used to drive activity to tackle youth violence and address the risks to young people of becoming victims of crime or being drawn into violent crime offending. The **Guns, Gangs and Weapons Reduction Board** is developing a Strategic Policy Framework in relation to London's multi-agency response to gun, gang and weapon criminality. A Five Borough Project is identifying effective responses to gang related criminality, both in terms of intelligence, prevention and enforcement.

The developing MPS Serious Violence Strategy aims to reduce serious violence in London, focusing on the most violent offenders, vulnerable victims and dangerous places. This includes reducing the involvement of young people under 20 as victims or offenders of serious violence. Protecting young people and increasing engagement in local youth engagement schemes are recognised as key to ensuring the involvement of fewer young people in serious violence, as victims and offenders, and increasing feelings of safety within their local communities.

In 2006, the GLA, with the Metropolitan Police Authority, Victim Support and Young Voice, convened a high-level, round table to respond to the lack of systematic data collection of young people's victimisation highlighted in previous SOLCRs. A conference was also held at 2006, organised by the Mayor, Youth Justice Board and Nacro, on 'A better alternative: Reducing the level of custody for children in London'.

Child accidents

Unintentional injury is a leading cause of death and illness among children and causes more children to be admitted to hospital each year than any other reason. With the exception of the fire and rescue service, national data on rates of unintentional injury have not been collected since 2003 and there is a paucity of local data. However, we do know that in England in 2004/05, unintentional injury resulted in approximately 120,000 admissions to hospital in the 0 to 14 age group alone. Half these injuries happened in the home.

Between 1999 and 2003 there was a decrease of 19 per cent in the death rate of children under five, and a decrease of 31 per cent in the rate of serious injury. The breakdown for children under 15 years similarly shows improvement, with a decrease of 29 per cent in the death rate, and a decrease of 34 per cent in serious injury⁴⁴.

Overall, child deaths from unintentional injury have decreased. However, there are persistent and widening inequalities between socio-economic groups. Children of parents who have never worked, or who have been unemployed for a long time, are 13 times more likely to die from unintentional injury than children of parents in higher managerial and professional occupations⁴⁵.

The **White Paper Saving Lives (1999)**⁴⁶ made reduction of accidents a priority but did not set a target specifically for children. Subsequent documents on health policy from the government have not given the same priority to injury prevention. At present, there is no single, governmental statement drawing together what has to be done to reduce unintentional injury. As a result, those charged with developing and implementing strategies face a challenge in maintaining the profile of the issue at local level.

A recent review conducted by the Audit Commission and the Health Care Commission⁴⁷ found that, with no clear direction from government, local work often reflected the preferences of those charged with shaping strategy. For example, where directors of public health took a lead, programmes often had a strong focus on promoting health. Elsewhere, where directors of children's services led the work, activities often focused on the welfare of children and family relationships. In addition, the lack of national and local data caused difficulties in identifying local needs and hence targeting resources appropriately. ROSPA now hosts the home accidents surveillance system, the development of which was funded by the DTI. However, only data up to 2003 are contained within it and at the time of publication there were no plans or funding to update these databases.



One source of London specific information is the risk profiles of London boroughs prepared by London Fire Brigade. Their data on deaths from fire covering the period 2000 – 2005 showed that, of 243 accidental fire deaths⁴⁸, six per cent were of children 0 to 9 years and two per cent 10 to 19 years. In the previous five-year period there were 279 deaths involving the same proportions of children. Forty per cent of the fires were caused by cigarettes/tobacco.

London Boroughs of Camden and Hackney have the highest rate by population of fatalities occurring in accidental dwelling fires for the period 1999/2000 to 2004/05. Both of these boroughs score high on the Multiple Indices of Deprivation. However, Southwark, which also scores high on the Multiple Indices of Deprivation, has the lowest rate of fatalities occurring in accidental dwelling fires.

London Fire Brigade is undertaking projects that cut deaths from accidental home fires including: a team of community safety officers to work with partners who have contact with those most at risk from fire; a schools education programme aimed at primary school children; and advocacy for the installation of smoke alarms, not dependant on batteries, in all homes and to include domestic sprinkler systems in building regulation requirements for new or refurbished buildings where the risks justify this.

Road traffic injuries

In London in 2006, there were 2,241 casualties of children aged 0 to 15 of whom 55 per cent were pedestrians, 26 per cent were car occupants and ten per cent were pedal cyclists. Sixteen children were killed, 376 were seriously injured and 1,849 slightly injured⁴⁹.

Compared with 2005, child serious casualties increased by nine per cent in 2006, but overall child casualties decreased by 14 per cent. This follows a 14.2 per cent decrease in 2005 and 8.4 per cent in 2004. Higher severity child casualties (fatal and serious combined) fell by 27.1 per cent from 487 in 2004 to 355. This means that by the end of 2005 these higher severity casualties were 62 per cent below the baseline for the national casualty target of a 50 per cent reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured by the year 2010. On this basis, and with other targets having already been met, the Mayor announced new lower targets in March 2006, to be achieved by 2010, to include a 60 per cent reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured.

One explanation for the reduction in child deaths from unintentional injury could be the improvements made in road safety as a result of the

Public Service Agreement (PSA) set for a reduction in road traffic accidents. However, *Road Casualties Great Britain 2005* indicates that in 2004 the UK still had one of the worst child pedestrian fatality rates among European countries, with a rate twice that of the best performing countries, including France, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. However, there is some evidence that the relative position of the UK is improving⁵⁰.

Children in the most deprived neighbourhoods are at greatest risk. The report *Streets Ahead*, produced in 2002 by the Institute of Public Policy Research⁵¹, found that children in the ten per cent most deprived wards in England were more than three times as likely to be pedestrian casualties as children in the ten per cent least deprived wards. The differential is compounded because more people live in deprived wards and children are a larger proportion of the total.

There are also ethnic differences in child pedestrian injury. In London, children from black African or Caribbean minority ethnic groups are more likely to be injured or killed than children from other ethnic groups. While the number of serious child casualties is steadily declining, the decline is slower for black African and Caribbean groups, resulting in a widening gap in casualty rates. In 2003, London Road Safety Unit estimated that black child pedestrians had twice the risk of being killed or seriously injured than white children⁵². A qualitative study commissioned by Transport for London suggested some possible risk factors and led to a number of proposals including increased school involvement and more community engagement with strategies to reduce risk⁵³.

In February 2007, the **Department for Transport and the Audit Commission** issued a new **Child Road Safety Strategy** incorporating a specific action point on creation of safe routes to play areas as well as to schools⁵⁴. Local authorities and the Highways Agency should include child road safety in all highways works. In particular, they should consider wider use of 20 mph zones in areas where children are active, traffic calming measures in these zones and other areas, and changes to residential street layouts to minimise through traffic.

Transport for London Safety and Citizenship provides a free of charge transport education service to all schools within Greater London. Funded by TfL and delivered through the London's Transport Museum, the aim is to promote safety and citizenship on and around London's transport system. The service prepares children aged 10 to 11 for independent travel before they move to secondary school. Led by trained School

Liaison Officers, school presentations focus on ways to make safe journeys confidently and with respect for fellow passengers.

'Working Together to Safeguard Children', 2006⁵⁵, sets out new responsibilities for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) to conduct a **Child Death Review** for the deaths of all children normally resident in their area. It introduces two interrelated processes: a rapid response by a group of key professionals who come together for the purpose of enquiring into and evaluating each unexpected death of a child; and an overview of all child deaths in the area, undertaken by a panel. Either of these processes can identify cases requiring a Serious Case Review. The LSCB is responsible for sharing learning to ensure that relevant review findings inform the Children and Young People's Plan and make any recommended improvements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. LSCBs should supply data to the Department for Education and Skills to inform an annual national analysis and enable a more robust understanding of why children die and identify what can be set up to prevent this. The new procedures become mandatory from April 2008.

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5 Achievement

Summary

Educational achievement in London is influenced by several distinct characteristics. Schools may be in areas where extremes of wealth and deprivation exist side by side. London schools have a high proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (39 per cent in inner London compared with 14 per cent nationally). At the same time ten per cent of pupils attending schools in London attend independent schools compared with only seven per cent nationally.

Three-quarters of London boroughs had an increase in average school size between 2003 and 2005. London primary schools generally have over 100 more pupils on roll than elsewhere in England.

Compared with England as a whole, schools in inner London have particularly high proportions of pupils with a black, Asian or other ethnic minority heritage. In inner London, 22.4 per cent of primary pupils of compulsory school age and above were white British in 2006, compared with 78 per cent of the English total. The equivalent figure for secondary schools in inner London was 23.7 per cent compared with 81 per cent in England as a whole.

London has the highest pupil mobility in the country, with large numbers of children joining or changing schools at non-standard times. International migration, housing problems, family break-up and low income are some key factors, often interrelated. Many of these children need additional language or learning support in order to achieve well.

The percentage of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) has changed little in England or London since 2002. In London primary schools, 1.7 per cent of pupils had a statement of SEN in 2006. More secondary school pupils have statements, and in London the percentage has remained the same since 2002 at 2.5 per cent.

In 2006 attainment levels at key stage 1 were lower in London than for England by one or two percentage points in each subject. At key stage 2, London pupils achieved levels of attainment equal to or only just below the national levels, with improvement being particularly marked in inner London.

At KS3 results improved faster in London than in England between 2001 and 2005, with the combined percentage of pupils achieving level 5 improving by 38 points in inner London schools, a 25.3 per cent increase.

In 2006, 58.3 per cent of London pupils achieved the equivalent of five or more A* – C grades at GCSE compared with an England average of 57.5 per cent.

Post 16 attainment figures suggest that young people in London are attaining level 3 qualifications at slightly above the national average but are doing so at a slightly older age. Nationally, success rates in the Further Education sector increased considerably in 2005/06. The national FE success rate was 77 per cent; in London it was 74 per cent.

In inner London schools 37 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and inner London also has the lowest attainment gap for the proportion of pupils obtaining five-plus A* – C at GCSE – a gap of 12.9 percentage points compared with a national average of 23 percentage points. This partly reflects the fact that non-FSM pupils in deprived areas such as inner London are likely to be relatively more deprived themselves. However, inner London also has the highest results nationally for FSM pupils.

A 2006 report from Ofsted noted that London schools had improved 'dramatically' and standards are rising faster than in schools nationally, particularly at keys stages 3 and 4.

Overall there has been a drop in pupil absences, and London secondary schools in 2005 had a lower rate of absence than schools in England, with particular improvement in inner London schools. The rate of permanent exclusions in London is higher than for England, and is considerably higher for black Caribbean young people.

In 2006, London ranked fifth out of nine English regions for its percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). Recent Connexions data suggest that London boroughs are making good progress in reducing this number of young people NEET.

Introduction

Education is fundamental to achieving good outcomes in later life. In London, children's school experience and educational achievement are influenced by several distinct London characteristics. Many schools in London are located in areas where extremes of wealth and deprivation exist side by side, with London schools having a high proportion of their pupils eligible for free school meals (39 per cent in inner London compared with 14 per cent nationally). In contrast, while an average of seven per cent of pupils in England attend independent schools, in inner London the figure is 14 per cent. Regional comparisons show a much larger proportion

of children in London schools who do not use English as their first language. Factors such as these combine to present major challenges to those engaged in educating London's children and young people.

This chapter reviews the available data on schools and schooling in London. The headline finding is that while major challenges remain, London is making significant progress in raising the attainment of young people, and in narrowing the gap in attainment for the least advantaged pupils.

Schools and pupils in London

In January 2006 there were 3,038 schools in London, including 83 local authority maintained nursery schools, 1,831 primary, 401 secondary and 151 special schools. This number includes independent schools, pupil referral units, city technology colleges and academies¹.

There were 1,213,870 pupils on roll in all schools in London in January 2006. Three quarters of London boroughs had an increase in average school size between 2003 and 2005. The average size of a secondary school in London has grown to 1,041 since 2001. London primary schools have just over 100 more pupils on roll than primary schools in England as a whole.

There were 63,500 full-time teachers in London maintained schools in 2006, compared with 60,900 in 2003. Pupil-teacher ratios are similar in London to those in England as a whole. However, London Challenge has identified teacher recruitment and retention as a key issue for London. London has more vacancies for teachers than nationally: the vacancy rate is falling in London but still remains roughly double the national rate. London's teachers tend to have less experience than nationally: 35 per cent of London teachers (and 37 per cent of inner London teachers) have less than six years' service, compared with 29 per cent of teachers in England. Nearly 40 per cent of teachers leaving schools in London are aged under 30 – much higher than the 25 per cent leaving nationally, and at 22.3 per cent London also has a high turnover of teaching staff².

In January 2006, 68.4 per cent of London teachers were white British, 7.4 had a black heritage compared with 1.7 per cent of the English total, and 6.3 per cent had an Asian heritage compared with 2.2 per cent of the English total. The 2006 GLA report 'Black Teachers in London' reported that the highest percentages of black teachers in London could be found in the boroughs of Hackney, Lambeth and Southwark (16 – 18 per cent), followed by Haringey and Brent (14 per cent). In Lambeth and Southwark, 48 – 50 per cent of the pupil population is black. Westminster, Camden and Kensington and Chelsea have a black teaching



workforce of five per cent or less and a black pupil population of 20 per cent or more. Based on consultations undertaken with black teachers and parents, the report highlighted issues of recruitment, retention, promotion, racism and support needs³.

The education market

London differs from other parts of England in a number of ways. While other major cities each have one local authority to maintain schools, London has 33 (including the City of London which maintains one primary school). Additionally, schools in London, and secondary schools in particular, are more likely to be responsible for their own admissions policies than elsewhere in England. The education market is more developed in London and competition for places is more intense. In 2001, researchers found⁴ that London parents were the least likely to be offered places at their favourite school – 68 per cent compared with 85 per cent nationally. The social class background of children was also found to impact on their success in the competition for places in a similar way. However, a review of secondary schools' admissions criteria in 2006 by the LSE for the GLA⁵ concluded that although a quarter of secondary schools in London used at least one 'potentially selective' admissions criterion, the majority could be considered to be fair in that they did not appear to be designed to select any particular categories of pupils at the expense of others. Proportionately more voluntary aided and foundation schools, responsible for admissions, reported the use of criteria that could be seen as potentially selective.

Research commissioned by the GLA and undertaken by the LSE⁶ ('Secondary School Admissions in London', 2006) identified a number of concerns about admissions policies of London schools particularly in relation to 'covert selection'. The borough-led **Pan-London Co-ordinated Admissions scheme** was introduced in 2005 to make the schools admissions systems more straightforward and result in more parents getting an offer at one of their preferred schools earlier. In 2007 almost 93 per cent of children starting secondary school in London in September have been offered a place at a school of their choice. The system also ensures that fewer parents now get no offer at all. Parents can now apply online through a pan-London portal which links to all 33 London local authorities. Over 14 per cent of parents in the capital did so in 2006. The scheme won the 'Best Shared Service Award' at the annual conference of the e-government agency London Connects.

The government's **Schools Admissions Code** came into force on 28 February 2007. This Code has a stronger statutory basis than its predecessors. All admission authorities are required to act in accordance with its mandatory provisions (whereas they had only to have regard to

earlier versions). The **Education and Inspections Act 2006** ends the practice of schools interviewing children and their families for school places. The Code rules out completely a number of unacceptable oversubscription criteria such as taking account of a parent's occupation, financial or marital status and ends the 'first preference first' criterion that made the system unnecessarily complex for parents. Parents also have important new rights to object to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator if they believe that any aspect of a school's admission arrangements fail to comply with the law or mandatory requirements imposed by the Code⁷.

Independent schools provide a further key difference between schools within London and between London and the rest of the country. Approximately ten per cent of pupils attending schools in London attend independent schools, compared with approximately seven per cent nationally. Nationally, the numbers of children attending private schools has risen from 505,450 last year to 509,093 in 2007. Most of the increase is in Sixth Form and nursery education⁸.

Pupil diversity

London's population is hugely diverse in terms of race, culture and country of origin, more so than any other British city and most world cities. Substantial numbers of schoolchildren speak a language other than, or in addition to, English at home and fluency in English is immensely varied. The ethnic composition of school communities, and the languages spoken, change continuously over time. Many aspects of this diversity bring educational benefits but it presents schools and classroom teachers with great challenges in seeking to ensure that all children get the most out of their education.

Compared with maintained primary and secondary schools in England as a whole, those in inner London have particularly high proportions of pupils with a black, Asian or other ethnic minority heritage. In inner London, 22.4 per cent of primary pupils of compulsory school age and above were white British compared with 78 per cent of the English total. The equivalent figure for secondary schools in inner London was 23.7 per cent compared with 81 per cent in England as a whole. Pupils with black African ethnicity composed 17 per cent of primary pupils, black Caribbean 10.6 per cent, and Asian 18.8 per cent. There were 0.8 per cent of primary pupils with Chinese heritage in inner London in 2006⁹.

Although the proportion of pupils with English as a first language has grown in London since 2003, fewer primary school pupils in inner London have English as a first language compared with schools in outer London and in England as a whole. In London overall, 39 per cent of primary

pupils (52 per cent in inner London) have English as an additional language compared with 12.5 per cent of primary pupils in England as a whole. In secondary schools 33.5 per cent of pupils (47.4 per cent in inner London) had English as an additional language compared with 9.5 per cent of secondary pupils in England.

Child poverty

Children in London's maintained schools are drawn from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds but a much higher proportion come from low income families than in the country as a whole, as the Free School Meals (FSM) figures indicate¹⁰. Circumstances associated with poverty, such as ill-health, overcrowded housing and homelessness, can affect children's capacity to thrive and achieve, with wide-ranging implications for their education.

Pupils in local authority maintained primary and secondary schools in inner London are more than twice as likely to be eligible for free school meals than pupils in England as a whole. In London primary schools 25.5 per cent of pupils were eligible for free school meals in 2006 compared with 16 per cent in England as a whole.

Pupil Mobility

London has a highly mobile population (as discussed in Chapter 1). One important aspect of this is high pupil mobility – that is, children joining and leaving schools at non-standard times. Ofsted data show that mobility rates in London overall are higher than anywhere else in the country, particularly so in inner London and in secondary schools¹¹. Some schools take in over a hundred children in the course of a year, in addition to those joining at the normal starting age, while other pupils move on¹². International migration, housing difficulties, family break-up and low income are significant factors, often interrelated.

A large body of evidence shows that the academic achievement of mobile pupils is lower, on average, than those who remain in the same school. While the specific effect of changing schools is debated, it is clear that many children who join London schools at non-standard times need additional language or learning support if they are to achieve well. At the same time, the pressure on schools to manage high levels of pupil movement, assess and support new arrivals, get to know parents and follow up sudden disappearances, can take time and resources away from teaching and learning¹³.

In January 2003, approximately 3,000 pupils in each age group in the age range 6 to 15 were recorded for the first time on the London Pupil Dataset¹⁴, indicating the extent of inward mobility to London. Not

surprisingly, inward mobility was at its lowest among pupils aged 15 (the last year of compulsory schooling), and highest among pupils aged 11 (first year of secondary schooling).

Young people's mobility within London can involve either moving home or changing school, or both. Each can have educational implications. Children who move home are less likely than children who move neither home nor school to reach nationally expected levels of attainment at key stage 3: 53.2 per cent achieving level 5 or above, compared with 65.5 per cent of non-movers. Those who move both home and school performed worst at 31.2 per cent¹⁵.

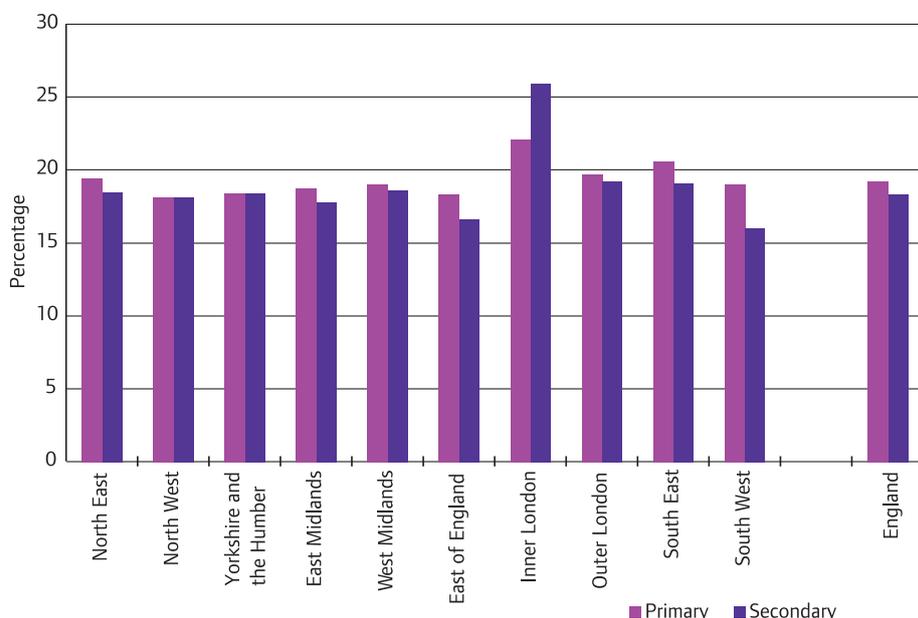
Pupils entitled to free school meals are more likely than other pupils to move home. It is evident that for some pupils there is a connection between poverty, moving home within the same locality and low levels of educational attainment, with large numbers not having a record of key stage assessments.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The percentage of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) has changed little in England or London since 2002. In London primary schools, 1.7 per cent of pupils had a statement of SEN in 2006. More secondary school pupils have statements, and in London the percentage has remained the same since 2002 at 2.5 per cent, although this includes a slight rise in the number of stated pupils in outer London and a slight drop in inner London.



Chart 5.1 Pupils with SEN in primary and secondary schools as a percentage of all pupils by Government Office region, England, January 2007



In 2004, approximately one in five children in the London Pupil Dataset, had a record of support being provided to meet a special educational need (not all of whom will have had a Statement of SEN)¹⁶. Just under 99 per cent of those attended mainstream primary or secondary schools, consistent with the national policy that children with special educational needs should, wherever possible, be educated in mainstream schools.

In 2005, 43 per cent of pupils attending special schools in London were entitled to free school meals, compared with 27 per cent in mainstream primary schools and 24 per cent in mainstream secondary schools. Fifty-six per cent of pupils with a severe learning difficulty and 71 per cent of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties attended special schools.

Type of special educational need in London also varies by pupil background. In 2005, 27 per cent of all pupils with a record in the London Pupil Dataset either had free school meals or had a home postcode where the estimated income was less than £18,000 (60 per cent of the median). However, 47 per cent of all pupils with a moderate learning difficulty fell into that low-income category, as did 47.3 per cent of pupils with a behavioural, emotional and social difficulty. With the exception of autistic spectrum disorder, pupils in the lowest income bracket were, in practice, over-represented in all types of special educational need.

An analysis of PLASC data by researchers from the University of Warwick in 2006 shows that poverty and gender have stronger associations than ethnicity with overall prevalence of SEN. However, after controlling for the effects of socio-economic disadvantage, gender and year group there is still significant over- and under-representation of different minority ethnic groups relative to white British pupils. Black Caribbean and mixed white and black Caribbean pupils are around 1.5 times more likely to be identified as having Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties than white British pupils. Bangladeshi pupils are nearly twice as likely to be identified as having a hearing impairment than white British pupils, and Pakistani pupils are between 2.0 and 2.5 times more likely to be identified as having Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, a Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment or Multi-sensory Impairment than white British pupils. Traveller children of Irish Heritage and Gypsy/Roma pupils are over-represented among many categories of SEN, including Moderate, and Severe Learning Difficulties¹⁷.

Attainment

The Education Reform Act, 1988 provided for the introduction of a national curriculum to be taught to all pupils in maintained schools from the early years of primary education to the end of compulsory schooling. **The national curriculum** was divided into three main key stages, and eight levels of attainment. Pupils are expected to move up by approximately one level over two years. Key stage 1 tests are normally taken by pupils at the end of the year which they begin aged six (these are conducted by teacher assessment). Key stage 2 tests are normally taken by pupils at the end of the school year they begin aged ten, and key stage 3 tests are normally taken by pupils at the end of the school year which they begin aged 13. For the majority of pupils key stage 4 refers to the last two years of compulsory schooling, at the end of which pupils take public examinations.

Nationally, pupils are expected to reach particular levels of attainment at the end of each key stage, while at the end of key stage 4 the majority of pupils are now expected to achieve five or more higher grade passes at GCSE or their equivalent in other examinations (to include English and mathematics as the 'gold standard'). Nationally, the first two cohorts of pupils who could have been assessed at the end of each key stage, took key stage 1 tests in 1991 and 1992. The proportion of pupils in those cohorts who reached nationally expected levels of attainment fell as pupils moved through the school system with, in some cases, particularly low levels of attainment in public examinations. Below we review current data on attainment at each key stage and consider the differential attainment between socially advantaged and disadvantaged groups. (The educational attainment of looked after children is discussed in Chapter 7.)

Early Years

The importance of early years education for longer-term outcomes is now widely accepted. All four-year-olds have been entitled to a funded early education place since 1998 and from April 2004 this entitlement was extended to all three-year-olds. In January 2007, 98 per cent of four-year-olds and 96 per cent of three-year-olds were benefiting from some free early education in maintained schools, the private or voluntary sector or at independent schools across England. The proportion has remained stable since 2005¹⁸.

The available statistics provide a break-down of the numbers of part-time equivalent free places taken up by region and local authority district, but do not provide these in percentage terms. The take-up for such places in London shows a very slight fall from 163,280 in 2006 to 163,236 in 2007, although this was much lower than the decrease in



England as a whole of nearly 0.5 per cent. The breakdown of the London figures shows that a drop in take-up of around 2,000 in the inner London boroughs was largely cancelled out by a corresponding increase in take-up in the outer London boroughs.

Some information on early years achievement is available via the results of the Foundation Stage Profile (FSP) assessments for 2006. The FSP assesses children's progress within the statutory Foundation Stage Curriculum and encompasses 13 areas of assessment in which children are assessed as working towards (1 – 3 points), working within (4 – 7 points), or achieving all of or working beyond (8 – 9 points). They show that nationally the majority of children are working securely within the early learning goals for all assessment areas.

The percentage of children achieving a good level of development (six or more points) across all of the scales relating to Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSE) and Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL) areas of learning is estimated to be 44 per cent in 2006.

For children in the most disadvantaged areas in England, the equivalent figure is estimated to be between 32.5 per cent and 33.9 per cent, compared with 49.3 per cent and 50.4 per cent in other areas¹⁹.

Table 5.1 shows the percentage points for children working within and those achieving all, or working beyond four of the scales (selected for illustrative purposes), for England, inner and outer London. The differences are not great, but children in London are less likely to be working beyond the expected level across these assessment areas, with inner London children least likely to be doing so. These 2006 data need to be interpreted with caution²⁰. However, they provide a further piece of evidence to suggest that inner London schools are generally having to respond to the needs of children with less developed social and communication skills in the early years than is the case elsewhere.

Table 5.1 Percentage of children groups by number of points achieved in four selected scales of the Foundation Stage Profile

Scale score	Social development		Emotional development		Language for communication & thinking		Physical development	
	4 – 7 ²¹	8 – 9 ²²	4 – 7	8 – 9	4 – 7	8 – 9	4 – 7	8 – 9
England	58	51	49	45	54	39	44	52
Greater London	60	35	51	41	56	35	50	46
Outer London	60	35	50	42	56	36	49	47
Inner London	61	34	52	39	57	34	51	44

Source DfES Foundation Stage Profile: England, 2006

Key stage 1

At key stage 1, provisional figures for 2006 show that 82 per cent of London pupils achieved or bettered the nationally expected level of attainment (level 2) in reading. In writing, 79 per cent, and in mathematics, 89 per cent, of pupils achieved the expected level. These attainment levels are one or two percentage points below the average for England in each subject. In inner London levels are four to six per cent lower than for England. While overall performance improved at key stage 1 between 2001 and 2005, the improvement in London schools was less than for England as a whole. However, it should be noted that because key stage 1 data relies on teacher assessment, it is generally regarded as a less reliable source of national comparative data than KS2 and KS3.

Table 5.2 Achievement at key stage 1 – percentage achieving level 2 and above in 2006, London and England (provisional)

	Reading	Writing	Maths	Science
Inner London	78	75	86	83
Outer London	84	81	90	88
Greater London	82	79	89	87
England	84	81	90	89

Source Adapted from DfES National Curriculum Assessments in England 2003 and 2006

Key stages 2 and 3

At KS2 in 2006, 80 per cent of pupils in London local authority maintained schools achieved the nationally expected level of attainment (level 4) or better in English, 75 per cent in mathematics and 85 per cent in science. KS2 results improved more in London than in England as a whole between 2001 and 2006, resulting in London achieving levels of

attainment equal to or only just below the national levels. The improvement was particularly marked in inner London.

Girls performed better than boys in English and science, the differential being ten percentage points for English. The gap narrowed to two percentage points for science. Boys out-performed girls in mathematics by one per cent.

At KS3 in 2006, 72 per cent of London pupils achieved the nationally expected level of attainment (level 5) or better in English, 71 per cent in mathematics and 68 per cent in science. Results improved faster in London than in England between 2001 and 2005 and the level of improvement was greater in inner London. The combined percentage of pupils achieving level 5 improved by 38 points between 2001 and 2005 in inner London schools, a 25.3 per cent increase.

Girls out performed boys in all subjects, except mathematics where attainment levels were the same. The greatest difference in performance was in English, where as in England generally, the percentage of girls achieving level 5 was 13 points higher than boys.

Table 5.3 compares 2003 key stage 2 and 3 achievement levels in London and England (as published in the previous State of London's Children Report) with those available for 2006. It shows that progress has been made at both key stages in all three subjects across England as a whole. However, the degree of progress has been greater in London, particularly in inner London at key stage 3. While improvement is still needed to match national attainment levels, the gap between inner London and the rest of England has narrowed significantly between 2003 and 2006.

Table 5.3 Achievement at key stages 2 and 3 in 2003 and 2006, London and England

	Key stage 2 percentage achieving level 4 and above						Key stage 3 percentage achieving level 5 and above					
	English		Maths		Science		English		Maths		Science	
<i>London:</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2006</i>
Inner	71	77	67	72	81	82	58	68	59	70	55	61
Outer	77	81	73	76	86	86	69	75	71	77	67	72
Greater	75	80	71	75	84	85	66	73	67	75	63	68
England	75	79	72	76	86	87	68	73	71	77	68	72

Source Adapted from DfES National Curriculum Assessments in England 2003 and 2006

GCSE

In 2006, 57.6 per cent of pupils in London achieved the equivalent of five or more A* – C grades at GCSE, compared with an England average of 57 per cent. The rate of improvement has been faster in London than in England as a whole. The number of children in inner London gaining five A* – C grades at GCSE has doubled in the past ten years²³.

Table 5.4 Percentage achieving GCSE and equivalent at end of key stage 4, all pupils London and England, 2006

	% 5 A* to C grades	% 5 A* to C grades including English and Maths	% any passes
England	57	43.8	97.3
London	57.6	45.5	97.4

Source DfES GCSE attainment by region, 2006

There remains considerable variation between boroughs as well as between individual schools. In Redbridge 71.7 per cent of young people achieved 5 A* to C passes at GCSE in 2006, 64 per cent in Bexley, 61.7 per cent in Hammersmith and Fulham, 53 per cent in Hillingdon, 51.7 per cent in Lambeth and 41.4 per cent of young people in Greenwich.

Nationally, there are variations in attainment at GCSE across ethnic groups. In 2006, 57.5 per cent of white pupils obtained five A* – C grades, as did 56.6 per cent of Bangladeshi and 51.4 per cent of Pakistani pupils. Black African pupils did slightly less well at 51 per cent but black Caribbean pupils’ attainment was 12 per cent lower than their white counterparts at just 44.9 per cent. Black Caribbean boys fared even less well at 36.5 per cent. Attainment rates for Chinese pupils were the highest of all at 80 per cent. At the opposite extreme, just 19 per cent of Traveller Irish and 10.4 per cent of Gypsy/Roma pupils obtained five good GCSE grades.

National evaluation of full service extended schools by the Universities of Manchester and Newcastle for DfES (including ten London schools out of 138 nationally) found that at key stage 4, the percentage of pupils in extended schools achieving five-plus A* – C at GCSE increased by just over 5.0 per cent, compared to a 2.5 per cent increase in the national average over the same period. More broadly, the study found that full service extended schools (FSES) had a positive impact on the attainment of pupils and on engagement with learning, family stability and enhanced life chances and generated positive outcomes for families and local people²⁴.

These variations in attainment have attracted considerable attention in recent years, particularly in London, and we discuss initiatives to narrow attainment gaps below.

Post-16 attainment

At the end of 2005, over three-quarters of 16 to 18-year-olds (76 per cent) nationally were participating in some form of education and training, made up of 89 per cent of 16-year-olds, 80 per cent of 17-year-olds and 59 per cent of 18-year-olds. The proportion of UK young people staying on in education and training post-16 is low: the UK ranks 24th out of 29 developed nations and well behind France and Germany in the proportion of young adults achieving a level 3 qualification in their early 20s²⁵.

Table 5.5 suggests that young people in London are attaining level 3 qualifications at slightly above the national average but are doing so at a slightly older age, ie at 17 and 18 years. A slightly smaller proportion of the London cohort of young people aged 19 in 2004 attained level 3 than in England as a whole, but by the time they reached 21 a slightly higher proportion had attained level 3 than the national average.

Table 5.5 Proportion of young people in England qualified to level 3, by cohort, age and region

		Attained level 3 by age:						
Cohort	Region	16	17	18	19	20	21	Population
19 in 2004	ENGLAND	0.1%	11.8%	36.3%	42.1%	44.9%	46.6%	614,564
	North East	0.0%	10.5%	30.5%	35.8%	38.8%	40.7%	33,931
	North West	0.1%	11.9%	33.3%	38.6%	41.6%	43.3%	91,585
	Yorkshire and the Humber	0.1%	11.4%	32.4%	38.0%	40.8%	42.4%	63,835
	East Midlands	0.1%	10.5%	33.7%	38.9%	42.3%	44.4%	52,253
	West Midlands	0.1%	11.2%	33.6%	39.4%	42.2%	44.2%	69,525
	East of England	0.1%	11.0%	40.2%	45.7%	47.9%	49.1%	66,195
	Greater London	0.1%	8.7%	35.8%	43.1%	46.2%	47.7%	80,118
	South East	0.2%	16.2%	43.3%	48.9%	51.6%	53.0%	97,481
	South West	0.2%	12.0%	38.9%	44.6%	47.4%	49.2%	59,641

Source DfES Level 3 Attainment by Young People in England Measured Using Matched Administrative Data: Attainment by Age 19 in 2006

Nationally success rates in the further education (FE) sector increased considerably in 2005/06. The national FE success rate was 77 per cent exceeding the Learning and Skills Council target of achieving a 76 per

cent success rate by 2007/08. In London the rate of 74 per cent was behind the national rate but consistent with the national benchmark.

Table 5.6 shows the achievements of young people in further education in London compared with national rates or benchmarks.

Table 5.6 Outcomes for young people at FE level in London

	National rates/benchmarks	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07 (estimated)
% of young people reaching level 2 at 19	70% in 2004/05	68%	72%	73%
% of young people reaching level 3 at 19	46% in 2004/05	46%	48%	49%
FE success rate	National benchmark 74% in 2005/06	NA	74%	75%
Work-based learning success rate	National benchmark 55% in 2005/06	NA	47%	55%
Entry to Employment positive progression rate	National benchmark 46% in 2005/06	NA	46%	48%

Source Adapted from London Learning and Skills Council Plan 2007 – 08²⁶

The London Learning and Skills Council plan for 2007/08 includes provision for young people of: 101,780 further education places (including 1,300 additional learners, an increase of 1.3 per cent), 8,710 places in work-based learning (including an additional 300 Average in Learning places, an increase of 3.6 per cent), and 5,850 Entry to Employment places (no increase).

A vision for further education colleges as the engines of social and economic growth, is set out in the government's White Paper, **Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances**, published in March 2006. It includes provisions to drive up the quality of teaching, to reward colleges for success and to make the sector more responsive to the skills needs of individuals and employers. The White Paper sets out measures to benefit learners and employers. Among these are:

- Young people will be benefiting from five new specialised diplomas, with all 14 diplomas available nationwide by 2013.
- Adults will be benefiting from the first stages of a clearer, simpler, qualifications framework, designed by employers and fully implemented from 2010.

- Nine to 25-year-olds will be benefiting from a new entitlement to free tuition for their first full level 3 qualification.
- Adults in pilot regions will be benefiting from a learning account, giving them funds towards the cost of a level 3 course at a provider of their choice.
- Employers throughout the country will be benefiting from training delivered in the workplace. Training for basic skills and level 2 will be free, and there will be access to level 3 and higher education.

The government's **Green Paper 'Raising Expectations: Staying in education and training post-16'** published in March 2007 proposes that all young people should participate in education or training until their 18th birthday. It suggests raising the participation age to 17 in 2013 and subsequently to 18. Participation should be full time for young people not in employment for a significant part of the week, and part time for those working more than 20 hours a week. A Foundation Learning Tier, which will be introduced from 2010, will bring a more coherent approach to qualifications and training below level 2²⁷.

Narrowing attainment gaps

In 2006 the DfES published an analysis of trends in attainment gaps²⁸. Simple attainment gaps based on differences in results between pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM pupils) and those who are not (non-FSM pupils) are generally smaller in more deprived schools and local authorities. In inner London 37 per cent of pupils are eligible for FSM compared with a national average of 13 per cent and inner London also has the lowest attainment gap – for the proportion of pupils obtaining five-plus A* – C, a gap of 12.9 percentage points compared with a national average of 28.3 percentage points. These findings partly reflect the fact that non-FSM pupils in more deprived areas such as inner London are likely to be relatively more deprived themselves.

However, it is possible to measure the difference in progress after controlling for deprivation and other factors. The analysis found that inner London schools had the highest FSM rate and the highest results for FSM pupils. Outer London on the other hand had a slightly lower FSM rate than metropolitan districts, but the results for FSM pupils were also higher.

The results for FSM pupils partly determine the size of the attainment gap. The high performance of FSM pupils in inner London, for example, helps inner London to have a narrower attainment gap than the metropolitan districts. However, it is also the case that *non-FSM* pupils

have slightly lower results in inner London than in metropolitan districts, and this also contributes to the narrower gap in inner London.

School level gaps by region have changed very little from 2002 to 2005. Inner and outer London have experienced similar, or lower, median school gaps, whereas other regions have seen a marginal increase over the last few years.

For example, new research has compared the progress of 1.2 million pupils in English schools for children born in inner cities with those who only later moved to inner cities. This found ‘small but significant benefits’ from education in inner cities (which was ascribed to such factors as greater school choice and inter-school competition between closely co-located institutions found in more urban settings). Yet, such gains are insufficient to ‘close the gap in the level of attainment of pupils in the most urban schools relative to students in more rural areas at the end of secondary compulsory education’²⁹.

Table 5.7 illustrates the progress London is making in supporting the achievement of some of its most disadvantaged pupils. Overall, at 73 per cent, London is one percentage point below the England rate for pupils achieving level 5 in English at key stage 3. However, London is two percentage points higher than the England rate for pupils achieving this level for whom English is an additional language and eight percentage points higher for those eligible for free school meals.

Table 5.7 Local authority achievements 2006 at key stage 3, English level 5 and above, by region and characteristic

	Overall percentage of pupils achieving level 5 & above	Percentage achieving of those eligible for free school meals	Percentage achieving for whom English is a second language
North East	70	45	63
North West	71	48	62
Yorks & Humber	69	44	59
East Midlands	73	47	71
West Midlands	71	49	65
East England	75	52	66
<i>London</i>	73	58	69
South East	75	47	72
South West	74	48	60
England	73	50	67

Source Adapted from DfES: Achievements at KS3 English level 5 and above, 2006

Government plans to help close the attainment gap include the investment of £217 million in 2010/11 so that disadvantaged young people will be able to access two hours a week of free after-school activities such as music, sport and drama as part of the extended schools programme. This will also fund some activities during the school holidays. There are also plans to emulate the successful **London Challenge** programme in two other cities; expand school-based mental health support; and roll out the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning programme across all schools.

Primary and secondary schools in London Boroughs of Bexley and Westminster are among 484 schools across England that have been chosen to run a major two-year pilot from September 2007. Children who are making slow progress will receive a 'short burst' of ten hours of extra one-to-one tuition – in English and/or maths – on top of their normal school hours. Pilot schools will be challenged to make sure that every child makes progress and they will have specific targets to help more children to move up two National Curriculum levels in a key stage. The range of different schools include single-sex and mixed schools, middle schools, grammar schools and academies³⁰.

£1.4m was allocated to support London's 'Summer Unis' in 2007.

These will offer creative educational and vocational activities over the summer holidays in 16 London boroughs. It was funded by the Jack Petchey Foundation and London Challenge, and enabled local authorities to devote almost £100,000 each towards the development of a Summer University in their borough.

Pupil progress by ethnicity

Analysis of a limited set of results for differences between ethnic groups between 2003 and 2005 nationally is included in the DfES analysis. During this period Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils have shown the greatest improvements in English and mathematics and have narrowed the attainment gap with white pupils. However, the improvement in white pupils' results for KS2 mathematics has led to a wider gap between this group and black African pupils. The improvements in mathematics are lower than those for English in all ethnic groups and the proportion of black African pupils reaching level 4 in KS2 mathematics in 2005 is the same as it was in 2003.

For English, Pakistani pupils had the lowest levels of attainment at KS2 in 2003, although by 2005 they had almost reached the same level as the black

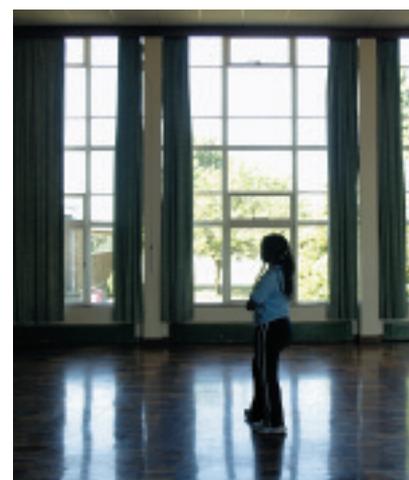
African group. For mathematics, black Caribbean pupils had the lowest levels of attainment with little improvement between 2003 and 2005.

Pakistani, Bangladeshi and black pupils have made the greatest improvement in GCSE results. The biggest improvers are Bangladeshi and black Caribbean pupils with the proportion getting five good GCSEs in 2006 jumping by 3.5 percentage points from 52.7 per cent to 56.2 per cent, and 2.7 percentage points from 41.7 per cent to 44.4 per cent respectively. The proportion of both black Caribbean and Bangladeshi pupils achieving five-plus A* – C at GCSE and equivalent is up ten percentage points since 2003, compared with a national increase of six percentage points³¹.

The picture regarding ethnicity is a little different in London. A London Challenge analysis³² of attainment of pupils by pupil characteristic shows that for key stage 2 in 2004, black African and black Caribbean pupils were achieving the expected level at a lower rate than Pakistani pupils with most groups making a three per cent improvement between 2004 and 2006. (Seventy-five per cent of Pakistani pupils were achieving level 4 or above in London compared with 70 per cent and 74 per cent of black Caribbean and black African pupils respectively³³.)

Pupil progress between key stages by ethnicity is not examined in the DfES analysis but a 2005 analysis found that all minority ethnic groups made greater progress than white pupils between ages 11 and 16 after controlling for a small set of personal characteristics. Most of this improvement came between KS3 and KS4³⁴.

The issue of developing a more inclusive curriculum, particularly in relation to addressing the needs of black, Asian and minority ethnic children has recently been brought to the fore. A London Development Agency report on the educational experiences and achievements of black boys in London schools identified the following steps in terms of raising the educational attainment of African-Caribbean heritage children: developing a more relevant and culturally sensitive curriculum for black pupils; increasing the opportunities for creativity and practical approaches across the curriculum and developing a black perspective in the curriculum³⁵.



Young London Matters Challenge Group work programme for 2007 includes a strand of work focussed on attainment. Strand 3a is concerned with improving black boys' attainment and will involve a review to identify effective practice and the establishment of a regional centre of excellence to support head teachers and other practitioners in London.

The 'Black Teachers In London' report (GLA, 2006) maintains that pupils are more likely to perceive education in areas such as black history negatively where it is evident that those responsible for teaching it are themselves uninterested. The London Development Agency report, 'The educational experiences and achievements of Black boys in London schools 2000-03' (LDA, 2004), recommended that a curriculum support teacher in every school with a specific remit to develop an inclusive curriculum should be given serious consideration, so that those who have the task of teaching the curriculum have the range of skills and understanding of diverse communities to impart knowledge.

The Mayor of London has approved the undertaking of a programme of work in raising **the attainment of Muslim pupils in London schools**³⁶. This programme will comprise a literature review and report on relevant data and findings relating to the under-attainment of Muslim pupils; a conference for policy makers and practitioners to develop recommendations to help address issues of under-achievement; a publication which synthesises the research and conference outcomes; and supporting community specific initiatives from the research and the conference with Muslim pupils from diverse backgrounds.

Improvements in London schools

Ofsted produced a report in 2006 specifically analysing improvements in London schools between 2000 and 2006³⁷. The headline finding was that London schools have improved 'dramatically' and standards are rising faster than in schools nationally, particularly at key stages 3 and 4. About the same proportion of schools required special measures as schools nationally, but fewer required a notice to improve.

Inspection evidence confirms this trend of improvement in secondary schools. The proportion of schools graded as 'good or better' is significantly higher than nationally. Leadership, management and the quality of teaching have improved significantly.

Table 5.8 Inspection judgments of secondary schools in London and England 2000 – 2006

	2000/03		2003/05		2005/06 ³⁸	
Percentage of secondary schools judged 'good or better' for:	London	England	London	England	London	England
Overall effectiveness	67	71	71	68	59	49
Quality of teaching	70	79	71	74	57	51
Leadership and management	85	81	80	75	73	58

Source Adapted from Ofsted data 2006

Ofsted asked head teachers what they believed was responsible for the improvement. Factors identified were recruitment initiatives to attract teachers, high quality leadership training and good opportunities for continuing professional development.

Secondary schools in the five key boroughs targeted by London Challenge (Haringey, Hackney, Islington, Lambeth and Southwark) have done particularly well when their contexts are taken into account. Contextual factors are calculated by considering what pupils can do when they start school and measuring the progress they make, bearing in mind how well other similar pupils do. This is called 'contextual value added' (CVA). No schools in the London Challenge local authorities were significantly below the national CVA rate, a third were in line with it, and 67 per cent were significantly above it. However, this is not the situation in London schools overall. There is still work to do in the *Key to Success* schools where 32 per cent have a declining CVA rate significantly below the national average and only 28 per cent significantly above it.

A **London Challenge** (DfES) team was established in 2003 with a Minister for London Schools, a London Commissioner (Professor Tim Brighouse) and a group of experienced expert advisers. Seventy 'Key to Success' schools, and five 'key boroughs' facing the most challenging circumstances, were identified for intensive support and challenge. Their range of initiatives, with funding made available, has been focusing on making London a good place to teach, and included: a London Leadership Strategy for heads and schools; various schemes for London teachers to promote recruitment and retention; and the renewal or rebuilding over a decade of all secondary schools, alongside the new Academy programme. The London Challenge primary initiative started in September 2006 and the Every Child a Reader (ECAR) is part of this project. It is based on practice developed in Hackney where it has achieved outstanding results.

London Challenge has evaluated this work and provides resources to extend the programme to more schools.

In March 1999 the government launched **Excellence in Cities** in England to try to tackle the educational problems of inner cities. It was intended to raise standards and transform the culture of low expectations and achievement through the use of learning mentors, measures to promote better teaching, leadership and governorship, the development of EiC action zones, a network of school-based learning centres, learning Support Units, and specialist and beacon schools. London boroughs involved in the programme include Camden, Corporation of London, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth, Westminster, Barking and Dagenham, Brent and Ealing.

The Excellence in Cities (EiC) programme was criticised after a government-commissioned evaluation by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) found there was no evidence it improved GCSE grades in English and science. However, an Ofsted report in December 2005 said that the £386 million scheme was highly successful and had contributed to a steady improvement in GCSE results. Schools increased the proportion of pupils who gained five A* to C grades by 5.2 percentage points over the previous three years, narrowing the gap with other schools from 10.4 to 7.8 points. Inspectors said the EiC initiative had improved social inclusion and standards in England's poorest areas. In eight out of ten EiC schools visited, the leadership and management were judged highly effective³⁹.

Children's and parents' views of schooling in London

In 2006, DfES commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)⁴⁰ to carry out a survey of Year 7 and Year 10 pupils and teachers from maintained schools in London. The survey sought to gather information on pupils' and teachers' attitudes, expectations and perceptions of schooling in London, along with a comparison sample from other metropolitan areas in England. The analysis included a focus on the five boroughs targeted by London Challenge.

Overall, London pupils' attitudes to school were broadly similar to the attitudes held by pupils attending schools in other metropolitan areas. The main difference in attitudes was between pupils in Year 7 and pupils in Year 10, with younger pupils tending to respond more positively than older pupils.

On average, just over two-thirds of pupils in London and other metropolitan areas (69 per cent) considered their school to be a good school. Pupils in key boroughs (particularly Year 10 pupils) tended to be less positive: 55 per cent of pupils in Year 10 agreed that their school was a good school compared with 67 per cent of Year 10 pupils in non-key boroughs. Most pupils in London (81 per cent of Year 7 pupils and 74 per cent of pupils in Year 10) felt that their school was giving them a good education. However, the percentage of pupils in key boroughs who agreed that they were getting a good education was markedly lower (71 per cent of Year 7 pupils, 68 per cent of pupils in Year 10).

In London, a substantial minority of pupils said that lessons were dull and boring (29 per cent of Year 7 pupils and 37 per cent of pupils in Year 10). These views differed from the view held by the majority of teachers in London (74 per cent) that most lessons were motivating and challenging.

In London, there was a significant increase in the proportion of pupils with access to the Internet at home (from 80 per cent in 2005 to 85 per cent in 2006). The majority of pupils received help and advice with their schoolwork from parents or carers (84 per cent of pupils in London, 85 per cent of pupils in other metropolitan areas).

Bullying (see Chapter 4) and **racism** were concerns of pupils in London schools. There is some research evidence to suggest that **homophobic bullying** has a direct impact on educational outcomes for children and young people⁴¹.

The 2005 Schools White Paper '**Higher Standards, Better Schools for All**' included a commitment to transform the support available to every child by providing personalised forms of teaching and learning throughout their education. This includes measures to ensure that children who fall behind in English and maths receive intensive support to help them catch up, and those who have a particular gift or talent receive extra challenge. Over £1 billion has been provided for **personalised learning**, between 2005/06 and 2007/08. In addition, in the Pre-Budget Report in December 2006, the Chancellor announced further funding through the Schools Standards Grant of £130 million in 2007/08 to be paid directly to schools to help them deliver personalised learning and extended services.

In the **2007 Comprehensive Spending Review** settlement, additional investment in schools will be focussed on personalisation and progression. In particular, the CSR settlement provides substantial resources to support the recommendations of the Teaching and Learning in 2020 Review Group that are accepted by the government.

A report on personalised learning entitled **2020 Vision** was published in January 2007. It presents a vision for teaching and learning for children and young people aged 5 to 16 and recommends ways in which the school system needs to change in order to deliver a more personalised approach for all pupils⁴².

Views of parents and carers⁴³

In 2006, 86 per cent of parents and carers of secondary age school children living in London were satisfied with their child's school, compared with 87 per cent in 2005, 85 per cent in 2004 and 88 per cent in 2003. Despite this slight decline in satisfaction since 2003, slightly more parents in 2006 thought that their child's schooling had improved over the past 12 months: 47 per cent compared with 45 per cent in 2005, 44 per cent in 2004 and 39 per cent in 2003.

The overall level of satisfaction with a child's secondary school among parents and carers living in inner London was similar to those living in outer London (85 per cent compared with 86 per cent); however, those in outer London were more likely to be very satisfied (49 per cent compared with 44 per cent of those in inner London). However, those in inner London were more likely to report improvement in the quality of their child's schooling over the last 12 months (52 per cent compared with 44 per cent). A higher proportion of parents and carers whose child attended school in one of the five key boroughs perceived an improvement (58 per cent) compared with parents and carers whose child attended school in other boroughs (45 per cent). Parents and carers whose child attended an independent school were more likely to be satisfied with the school than those whose child attended a maintained school (95 per cent compared with 84 per cent respectively). Some of the groups of parents and carers living in London most likely to be dissatisfied with their child's school (parents and carers from a minority ethnic background, and those from lower socio-economic groups) were also the groups most likely to report improvement in their child's school.

Parents and carers of secondary age school children in the rest of England were distinctly more satisfied with secondary schools in their area of residence than parents and carers in London (71 per cent compared with 48 per cent). Parents and carers in London were more likely to report dissatisfaction with local schools compared with those in the rest of England (24 per cent compared with ten per cent). Over the four years of the study, parents and carers in London appear to demonstrate slightly higher levels of satisfaction overall with their child's school when compared with those in the rest of England; 2006 saw the fourth consecutive increase in the perceptions of improvement in the quality of a

child's schooling among parents and carers in London. In the rest of England, perceptions of improvement fluctuated over the four years, with fewer parents and carers in 2006 who felt that the quality of their child's school had improved over the last 12 months.

Parents and carers living in London with primary age school children demonstrated similarly high levels of satisfaction to those with secondary age school children (86 per cent of both groups). However, when comparing all parents and carers of primary school children, those living in the rest of England were more likely than those living in London to be satisfied with their child's primary school (93 per cent satisfied, compared with 86 per cent of those in London). This difference was not evident between the views of parents and carers of secondary age school children. Over the four years of the survey to date, the proportion of parents and carers satisfied with their child's primary school increased among parents and carers living in the rest of England (from 89 per cent to 93 per cent), while among those living in London, it decreased, from 91 per cent to 86 per cent. This is in contrast to a picture of relative stability in the views of parents and carers of secondary age school children.

Absence and exclusion

Attendance in secondary schools is improving nationally. Improvements in inner London are particularly significant. Pupil absence is higher in secondary than in primary schools in both England and London. Overall, there has been a drop in pupil absence and London secondary schools had a lower rate of pupil absence in 2005 than schools in England, following a drop of 1.3 percentage points since 2002. Inner London has done particularly well, with four inner London boroughs having a decrease in absence of 2.0 percentage points since 2002. Despite these improvements, inspection evidence shows that attendance was inadequate in 17 per cent of London schools in 2005, although this had fallen from 40 per cent in 2001.

Table 5.9 Attendance rate in London maintained primary and secondary schools between 2001 and 2005

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Primary schools					
Inner London	92.6	92.9	93.3	93.9	93.9
Outer London	93.5	93.8	93.8	94.2	94.2
All London schools	94.0	94.2	94.2	94.5	94.6
Secondary schools					
Inner London	90.1	90.7	91.6	92.2	92.4
Outer London	91.0	91.4	91.9	92.2	92.4
All London schools	91.0	91.3	91.8	92.0	92.2

Source Ofsted 2006

Figures for the number of persistent absentees as a proportion of pupil enrolments for 2005 – 2006 show London with a rate of 6.6 per cent (inner London 7.2 per cent) compared with England at 7.1 per cent. However, there are variations between boroughs ranging from 4.5 per cent to 9.1 per cent⁴⁴.



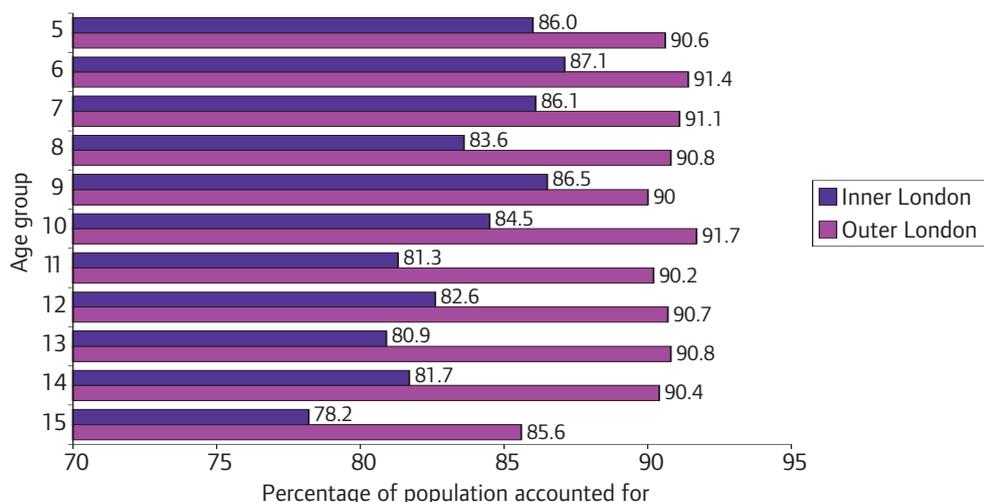
Recently published data present secondary school attendance figures for 2006/07 collected at pupil level rather than at school level. For this reason the data are not easily comparable with previous years, over which it shows a significant rise in unauthorised absences⁴⁵. However, key findings include a fall in persistent absenteeism of up to 20 per cent in schools subject to targeted intervention. Pupils eligible for free school meals have almost three times the level of unauthorised absence of other children. There is a strong correlation at both school and student level between free school meals and rates of absence. However, there is wide variation between absence rates in schools with similar numbers of children on free school meals, suggesting that some schools are significantly more successful than other similar schools in the way that they manage attendance⁴⁶.

There has also been a reduction in permanent exclusions in inner London secondary schools, though there has been a slight increase in outer London schools. Despite this, the rate of permanent exclusions in London remains higher than for England (0.32 per cent compared with 0.25 per cent). Pupils in special schools are more likely to be excluded (0.44 per cent). The rate of permanent exclusion is considerably higher for black Caribbean young people.

Children and young people 'missing' from state schooling

Chart 5.2 compares the maintained school roll in London with population figures provided by the Office for National Statistics, to estimate the proportion of children missing state schooling in the capital.

Chart 5.2 Percentage of population in 2001 accounted for by the maintained school roll



Source 2002 LPD and 2002 mid-year estimates

The chart points to differences between the situation in inner London and in outer London, and for different age groups. Pupils of secondary school age are more likely than pupils of primary school age to be missing from the maintained school roll, and children aged 15 are most likely to be missing from state schooling.

At least some of those children will be attending independent schools: some ten per cent of pupils attending schools in London attend private, independent schools. They are 'missing' from state schooling, but not missing education as such.

Chart 5.3 shows the percentage of pupils who were recorded as being on roll in a maintained school in 2004 who had no similar record in 2005. The chart is based on pupils in high, intermediate and low-income category using income estimates at postcode level.

During the primary school years, children from high-income areas were most likely, and children from the lowest income areas were least likely, to 'go missing' from state schooling. This is particularly among pupils aged 10, who were in the last year of primary schooling and at the point of transferring to secondary school. The opposite applies for young people in secondary schools, where children from the lowest income areas aged 14

were most likely to be missing from state education in the last year of compulsory schooling. In all, 3,842 pupils aged 14 in 2004 had no record of being on roll in a maintained school in the following year. This exceeds the number aged 15 who received alternative provision in a Pupil Referral Unit in 2005. It is highly unlikely that all these pupils, and especially pupils in the lowest income areas, transferred to private, fee-paying schools, or that they were entered for public examinations as private candidates.

Scoping research commissioned by the London Child Poverty Commission⁴⁷ highlights the links between intergenerational poverty and the lack of achievement through missed educational opportunities for children missing from education in London. It describes the category as including children who have left provision with no known destination as well as those who are waiting placement, and others who may be vulnerable because they need admission to another school or are at risk of exclusion. It notes that many are from mobile families and are at risk of becoming young people 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) at age 16. Some of the consequences of not being in education are discussed in the next section.

Chart 5.3 Percentage within selected income groups on roll in 2004 but with no 2005 record



The Education and Inspection Act, 2006 places a statutory duty on all local authorities to make arrangements to identify children missing education in their area. The duty came into force on 27 February 2007. The overall aim at national and local level is to ensure that fewer children drop out of education, and those that do are drawn back and engaged quickly with lasting success.

Statutory guidance ('Statutory guidance for local authorities in England to identify children not receiving education')⁴⁸ has been produced to support the duty and reflects practices that local authorities have already found to be effective for identifying children missing education. The core objectives are to:

- reduce the likelihood that children fall out of the education system, utilising audits of the rolls and registers of schools;
- identify and locate children who are not receiving education, via effective tracking including truancy sweeps and the provision of named points of contact to receive notification of children from other agencies;
- re-engage the children with appropriate educational provision, for example through the use of multi-agency panels to broker admissions.

The DfES is providing funding for over 400 schools with high levels of persistent absence to use a new text alert system. The system links to an electronic register and automatically texts parents and pupils when they do not show up to school.

Young people not in education, employment or training ('NEET')

The term 'NEET' refers to young people aged between 16 and 19 who are not in education, employment or training. Among all 16-year-olds nationally, seven per cent are NEET. This rises to 11 per cent of 16-year-olds from the lowest social class groups, 13 per cent of disabled young people, and 74 per cent of teenage mothers⁴⁹. Rates are also higher for those with a history of school exclusion and persistent truancy. However, NEET young people are not a static population. It is estimated that just one per cent of those NEET at 16 remain so from 16 to 18.

Government estimates that nationally the percentage of young people NEET has remained at around ten per cent of the 16 to 18 year old population across England since 2001. The overall NEET figure for all 16 to 18 year olds in 2006 was 10.3 per cent, down from 10.9 per cent at the end of 2005.⁵⁰

In London, at March 2007, London's NEET cohort was 7.7 per cent of London's 16-18 year-olds (equating to 14,537 young people), compared to 9.2 per cent at March 2006.⁵¹ Regional comparisons for 2006/07 are not currently available. At March 2006, London ranked fifth out of nine English regions for its percentage of NEET young people (better than the North East, North West and West Midlands but worse than the East of England, South West and South East)⁵². This ranking partly reflects the regions' employment and economic activity rates and may have improved over the past year. However, in London the picture is made more complex by the impact of localised labour markets with increasing demands for high skilled workers creating fewer opportunities for low skilled young people and increasing their difficulties in entering the labour market.

Borough level data is not available. However, a report for the GLA on NEET young people⁵³, using Connexions data from January 2007, highlights the variation between boroughs in young people NEET. The report also notes significant achievements in the reduction of young people NEET across the capital. According to these data, London boroughs have almost all achieved reductions well in excess of the national average of 4.2 per cent since 2004, although concentrations of young people NEET remain within particular parts of London, with Hackney, Haringey and Southwark all having high rates of young people NEET. There are however some limitations in the data available including the likely exclusion of some young people NEET who move to London in their late teens⁵⁴.

Reducing the number of young people who are NEET is a government priority with a target to reduce the proportion of 16 to 18-year-olds considered to be NEET by two percentage points by 2010. This is currently the responsibility of DfES via Connexions partnerships, but from April 2008 responsibilities will be devolved to local Children's Trusts. Given the particular challenges in addressing the needs of young people who are NEET in London, the GLA report recommends the development of a strategic pan-London approach in order to maintain the positive progress achieved since 2004. Such a strategic framework is provided by the development of the NEET strand of the European Social Fund (ESF) Programme for London 2007-13.⁵⁶

A key London measure to support young people to continue studying, improve employment prospects and promote the use of public transport was the **Mayor's introduction of the free bus and tram OysterCard scheme** for under-18s in full-time education from September 2006. Up to 130,000 16 and 17-year-olds could benefit from the policy, where they permanently reside within a London Borough and are in full-time education or unwaged training (see footnote for definition). The Oyster photocard also allows 16 and 17-year-olds to travel at half the adult fare on the Tube and DLR on top of free travel on buses and trams.⁵⁵

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6 Enjoyment

Summary

Since the previous State of London's Children Report in 2004, there has been a range of national and regional policy initiatives aimed at increasing children and young people's play and recreation opportunities. This has included a £155 million investment in play allocated to local authorities in England via the Big Lottery Fund, and new policy initiatives aimed at giving young people 'more things to do' and 'places to go'.

There are some early indications that these developments are starting to make a difference to policy and planning locally. In 2004 only eight boroughs had developed a play strategy, rising to 33 being developed by local play partnerships in 2007.

The 2006 Playday survey reported most children preferring to play outdoors. Fewer than one in five children said they preferred to play computer games than play outside.

London currently has 79 adventure playgrounds, which compares very favourably across the UK and internationally (though they are concentrated in a small number of London boroughs).

Outdoor play includes opportunities for children to access open, and particularly, green spaces. Many children in London do not have easy access to parks or other open spaces. As well as proximity, other access factors include the number of roads children have to cross and the prevailing attitude of adults towards children using public space.

Ensuring inclusive play facilities for disabled children and young people is a priority objective for many organisations including Play England and the Big Lottery. However, feedback from families with disabled children suggests there is still considerable progress to be made on developing accessibility of play, recreation and leisure facilities.

In relation to provision for older children and young people, National Youth Agency data on the average per capita spending by local authorities shows London overall to be the biggest spender on youth services of any English region, although there is considerable variation between boroughs.

Participation in youth services by young people also varies, from around 30 per cent of young people in Bexley, Havering and Southwark participating in youth services in 2005/06 compared with six per cent or less in Haringey, Barnet and Enfield. The national average is a participation rate of 16 per cent.

Access to affordable transport is a vital element to enable young people to access facilities and enjoy London, and consultations with young people identify transport as a priority issue for them. Trends in transport use between 2001 and 2005/06 are not uniform, but Transport for London data show a clear increase in the relative use of buses. In inner London, this seems mainly to represent a transfer from car to bus use, whereas in outer London, car use is fairly static and there is a suggestion of some switching from walking to bus use.

A major development since SOLCR 2004 has been the introduction by the Mayor of the free bus and tram scheme for under-16s from September 2005, for under-18s in full-time education from September 2006, and free and concessionary arrangements for families, including free tube travel for accompanied under-11s from April 2007.

An evaluation of the first six months of the free scheme for under-16-year-olds reported an increased use of buses by young people and positive feedback from both young people and adults.

Introduction

Play and recreation are key to children and young people's quality of life and it is increasingly recognised that free play and informal recreation, as well as opportunities for more structured activities, are important for children's development. It is also acknowledged that there are barriers to children's play and recreation, especially in relation to outdoor activities. Traffic, crime (and the fear of crime), decreasing open space, and changing pressures on children and families, all restrict children's freedom.

Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises the rights of children to 'rest and recreation, to engage in play and recreational activities and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts'. Through the Every Child Matters *Change for Children* agenda, the government has acknowledged the importance of children and young people's enjoyment and its links with other outcomes such as keeping healthy, staying safe and making a positive contribution. In March 2006, the government published *Youth Matters: Next Steps*, which highlighted the importance of 'places to go' and 'things to do' for young people.

Since the previous State of London's Children Report in 2004, there has been a range of national and regional policy initiatives aimed at increasing children and young people's play and recreation opportunities. There has been a national investment in the Children's Play Initiative via Big Lottery funding and, in London, the introduction of free transport for under-16s

is beginning to have an impact on young people's ability to access social and recreational opportunities.

London has some advantages, and some disadvantages, for children and young people's play and recreation. London is a city unique for its wealth of social and cultural opportunities for all ages. However, it also faces some serious challenges in providing access to play space and recreation facilities for all its young citizens, and there are inequalities of access across London and between different groups of young Londoners.

Children and young people's play and recreation

Play and recreation provision is a cross-cutting policy issue with links to all the ECM outcomes. Increasing play and sporting activities are important to the government's strategy for halting rising obesity levels as well as to enhance children and young people's emotional well-being, mental health and healthy lifestyles.

Play, and in particular, informal outdoor play, is increasingly recognised by adults as important for children's growth and development¹. A summary of research on urban space² showed the importance of play opportunities for the acquisition of social skills, from experimentation and the confrontation and resolution of emotional crises, to moral understanding, cognitive skills and, of course, physical skills.

London Play, a voluntary organisation which supports and co-ordinates out of school play services for children across London, similarly maintains that play is not only good for children, but also good for communities. Providing recreational and play activities for children and young people helps build the fabric of communities and increases children and young people's skills, confidence and self-esteem³. Recent Families and Social Capital research has also indicated that children are active in strengthening local communities and are often instrumental in developing their parents' networks; and the more social networks children have in a neighbourhood, the greater parents' confidence in the safety of that area⁴.

Since 2004 there has been an increased interest in play. The review **'Getting Serious about Play'** in 2004, was followed by the launch of the **Children's Play Initiative** in 2005, a £155 million funding programme, aiming, among other things, to create, improve and develop children and young people's free local play spaces and opportunities throughout England. In June 2006, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) published **'Time for Play: encouraging greater play opportunities for children and young people'**, highlighting the cross-governmental significance of play. This also encouraged the development of local authority play strategies and planning for play through Local Area Agreements.



By May 2007, over £20 million of the Big Lottery Fund had been allocated to London boroughs, ranging from an allocation of over £1m to Newham to just under £300,000 to Richmond upon Thames⁵. This availability of funding, combined with the national policy push, has given play more of a priority in policy and planning at a local level. A preliminary analysis of Joint Area Review reports for London⁶ shows that of the 12 boroughs which had undergone review between 2005 and 2007, 11 had mentions of play and all had mentions of recreation. In 2004, only eight boroughs had developed a play strategy; by September 2007, all London boroughs will have submitted a local play strategy to the Big Lottery Fund. Analysis of 21 play strategies showed that all had clear links to Children and Young People's Plans and contained audit and consultation analysis of play provision, opportunities, gaps and deficiencies. Engagement in play was seen as a beneficial outcome in itself as well as contributing to Every Child Matters outcomes⁷.

Consultations with children themselves consistently identify play and recreation as high priorities. However, there are some barriers for children and young people in accessing play, recreation and cultural opportunities, particularly outdoor activities. These include traffic, crime (and fear of crime), poor or limited access, poorly designed neighbourhoods and lack of inclusive facilities. A survey published in August 2006⁸, found that many children say they play indoors more than outdoors, despite most of them preferring to play outside. The survey also found that fewer than one in five children said they preferred to play computer games than play outside.

London has some very good play provision. For example, London currently has 79 adventure playgrounds, which compares very favourably across the UK and internationally (though they are concentrated in a small number of London boroughs)⁹.

Places where children play may or may not be specifically designed for play or informal recreation, and may or may not be supervised by staff trained in play work or other skills. The 'Play Place Grid'¹⁰ below gives examples of the types of facility and space which can offer children and young people the best opportunities for play and informal recreation and which can form the basis of provision where children are able to play freely and free of charge in their own neighbourhoods.

	Supervised and semi-supervised eg	No formal supervision eg
Designated places for play and informal recreation	Adventure playgrounds Open access play centres Play ranger and out-reach play projects Mobile play facilities School playgrounds (out of school hours)	Playgrounds/play areas Bike, skate and skateboard facilities Ball courts Multi-use games areas Hangout/youth shelters
Non-designated places for play and informal recreation	Parks with rangers and gardeners Streets with wardens	Streets, neighbourhood open spaces, parks and green spaces Beaches, rivers and lakes Routes to school and play areas Playing fields and recreation grounds

The GLA draft supplementary planning guidance on children’s play and recreation for the London plan¹¹ refers to this range as ‘playable spaces’. A playable space is one where children’s active play is a legitimate use of the space, and where there are features in the space that invite active play. ‘Playability’ is a feature of fixed equipment play areas. But it is also a feature of some parks, recreation grounds, natural areas and other types of public open space. ‘Playability’ is not just a matter of the physical characteristics of a space. It can also be influenced by social and cultural characteristics. For instance, a space that is dominated by people who are hostile to children’s presence is obviously not ‘playable’, whatever its physical characteristics.

One approach to enabling children to play out safely is via the development of Home Zones. Home Zones are streets where people can share the road space safely with vehicles, opening up the streets for social use. They are created by slowing and reducing traffic, removing kerbs, redesigning parking spaces, and introducing street lighting, art works, flowers, plants and landscaping, play spaces, seating and communal areas. Both the reduced traffic and social environment can create a positive place for children to play.

The Mayor of London's Transport Strategy requires each London borough to produce a Transport Strategy (called the Local Implementation Plan or LIP), and most London Boroughs have now completed this work, having a plan to run until 2010/11. The LIP will set out the councils' proposals for the implementation of the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy which encourages boroughs to deliver wide-ranging transport benefits and more sustainable forms of travel – such as walking, cycling, public transport, school travel plans, road safety measures such as 20mph zones and Home Zones, and transport infrastructure improvements.

Published in March 2007, **The Department for Transport (DfT) Manual for Streets**¹² provides guidance for practitioners involved in the planning, design, provision and approval of new residential streets, and modifications to existing ones. It aims to increase the quality of life through good design, which creates more people-orientated streets.

Home Zones for London was funded by London Councils. It helped communities in five boroughs across the capital to create their own home zones. In London, home zones are recognised in planning guidance. **The Mayor's Children and Young People's Strategy** states that 'neighbourhoods should be recognisably designed, maintained and managed in children's interests and should include the principles contained in the Department for Transport's Home Zone programme'. This position is also set out in the Mayor's Transport Strategy, which states that 'the London boroughs are also encouraged to consider the use of Safer Routes to Schools and Home Zones to complement 20mph speed limits'¹³.

Play England is a five year project to promote free play and to create a lasting support structure for play providers in England. Their objectives include: promoting local play strategies; build partnerships for play; research and demonstrate the benefits of play; promote equality and diversity in play; and promote standards.

Play England has been piloting performance indicators in six local authorities and has recently proposed the wider adoption of two indicators to capture data on participation in, and satisfaction with, play facilities. These are: the percentage of all children and young people aged from birth to 16 (ie from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled), who play out for at least four hours each week; and the percentage of all children and young people who think that the range and quality of play facilities and spaces they are able to access in their local neighbourhood is good/very good¹⁴. There is some evidence of a willingness to adopt standards in play work based on the take-up of London Play's Quality in Play, a quality assurance programme for play

providers. At May 2007 there were 132 play providers across London accredited or working towards accreditation under this scheme¹⁵.

The Mayor's Children and Young People's Strategy, 2004 placed an emphasis on the importance of play and recreation: 'All children and young people should be able to play within their local neighbourhoods and have safe and attractive play spaces within walking distance of their homes. For older children and young people, having opportunities to enjoy and develop their own cultural and recreational pursuits is equally important'.

In 2005, this aspiration was supported by issuing a **GLA Guide to Preparing Play Strategies**. In October 2006, draft supplementary planning guidance **Providing for Children and Young People's Play and Informal Recreation** was issued for consultation as part of the 'Further Alterations to the London Plan'. This sets out benchmark standards for provision of play and informal recreation space in housing developments, provides guidance to London boroughs on providing for the play and recreation needs of children and young people under the age of 18, and the use of benchmark standards in the preparation of Play Strategies. Focusing on quantity, quality and accessibility of play and informal recreation space, the guidance aims to improve the health and well-being of young Londoners. It recommends a new minimum standard of ten square metres per child and provides guidance on developing more 'playable' doorstep, neighbourhood and youth spaces.

Inclusive play and recreation for disabled children and young people

There is some information on recreational activities of disabled children from a 2004 survey¹⁶, which found that 37 per cent of disabled children and young people participated in swimming in school compared with 30 per cent of children generally. Swimming was also the most popular sporting activity undertaken by disabled children and young people out of school. Disabled children were also more likely to go horse-riding as a school time sporting activity (six per cent) than in the general population (one per cent).

In 2001, disabled children and young people cited lack of money (37 per cent) and unsuitability of local sports facilities (37 per cent) as some of the reasons for experiencing difficulties in accessing recreation facilities out of school¹⁷. A 2002 survey of families' experiences of play and recreation¹⁸ accessed over 1,000 UK parents and carers of children and young people aged 0 to 19 with a range of disabilities. Asked about family days out, many families were put off before they even began: 73 per cent didn't go on outings because of long queues; 68 per cent didn't use recreation facilities because they were made to feel uncomfortable; 55



per cent had to travel outside their area to find accessible facilities; 46 per cent said their budget limited outings; and 25 per cent said lack of transport limited outings.

Families were asked about swimming pools, cinemas, playgrounds, parks, theatres, bowling alleys, museums and football matches. Swimming pools were the most popular choice (75 per cent) followed by cinemas (52 per cent), playgrounds (52 per cent) and parks (49 per cent). In respect of the best and worst facilities for inclusion, the survey highlighted bowling alleys as best for access, including parking and toilet facilities. Parks and playgrounds rated less well for access. None of the facilities were rated as good for offering concessions for carers or children; cinemas were rated worst in this regard.

Asked about local clubs for children and young people, 70 per cent of parents said that their children could not go to local clubs. Two-thirds felt that their special needs were not met adequately and, perhaps as a consequence, over half of parents felt that 'special needs' clubs would be better.

Access to parks and green spaces

The benefits of play in green environments have been highlighted by research showing that spaces with trees and grass offer better play opportunities for children than places without such landscape elements. In inner-city Chicago, children were observed playing in areas surrounding apartment blocks; these play areas were similarly arranged but not all of them had trees and grass. Significantly higher levels of creative play were found in the green spaces than in the barren areas¹⁹. In Scandinavia, children aged around six were found to develop balance and co-ordination faster when playing in a forest than in a traditional playground. The challenges inherent in this kind of natural play space and the children's intuitive use of all they found around them were credited with this improved development²⁰.

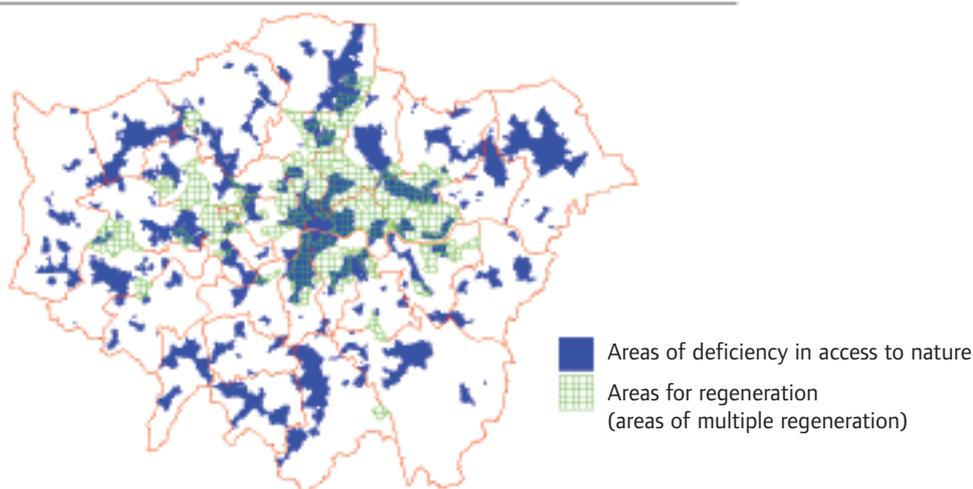
The value placed by children and parents on the availability of green spaces highlights the need for local authorities to create and adopt green space strategies that make clear how high quality green spaces can deliver on other local priorities such as health, education, reducing crime and promoting sustainability. Some local authorities are gathering useful data and in places where this has happened, strategic planning is overtly linked to wider corporate strategies.

The Mayor's Children and Young People's Strategy states that is important that children have access to a variety of open spaces for sport, play and

to discover the natural world. The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (March 2007), currently out for consultation, includes an implementation strategy on Improving Londoner's Access to Nature.

The above consultation paper on improving Londoners' access to nature identified areas of deficiency in both access to nature and public space²¹ to highlight the parts of London that are in greatest need of improvements in biodiversity. They are defined as localities that are more than one kilometre walking distance from a publicly accessible Site of Borough or Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation. The highest priority for improving access to nature and public open space is in areas that have high levels of deprivation, as highlighted in the map below.

Map 6.1 Areas of deficiency in access to nature and areas for regeneration



GreenSTAT is the new visitor survey system created and managed by national charity GreenSpace to provide a standard approach to visitor surveys for UK parks and green space managers. For under-16s, it seeks to collect data on, for example, frequency of visits, how they travel to the green space and which activities they normally like to participate in when they visit. 21,300 responses (906 responses from under-16s) have so far been received. It is anticipated that by the next SOLCR, there will be sufficient numbers of London responses from under-16s that can be analysed and reported, once there are more London borough subscriptions to GreenSTAT.

Facilities for older children and young people

In 2002, **Transforming Youth Work** set out the values and elements of a modern youth service, and in 2005 this was built on by proposals in **Youth Matters: next steps** to reform services for young people, requiring local authorities to provide positive activities for young people. *Youth Matters* centres on four key themes: providing young people with things to do and places to go; enabling young people to make a positive contribution to, and become engaged in, their communities; delivering effective information, advice and guidance; and providing targeted, integrated support. This policy drive, combined with the government's 'Respect' agenda to combat anti-social behaviour, has given a fresh impetus to planning for youth provision.

Targeted youth support will be one of the key elements of **Integrated Youth Support (IYS) Services**, alongside information, advice and guidance (IAG), counselling, and other delivery areas under Youth Matters themes (as above). The development of IYS aims to provide holistic support to young people, bringing together various interventions and opportunities to support forward movement in their lives, improved skills and development, and friendships.

Evidence that national policy developments are beginning to shape priorities at a local level comes from a recent review²² of local authorities' Children and Young People's Plans which found that 'personal and social development and recreation' was the priority which featured most frequently in the sample of plans reviewed.

The last SOLCR (2004) noted that London's youth services had seen considerable reductions in funding over the last decade, with wide disparities in levels of funding across the London boroughs. It also highlighted variations in the accounts of some local authorities, between youth service budgets and official expenditure, making it difficult to provide accurate data on youth service spend. To some degree this problem remains, although it may be eased through some ring-fencing of expenditure following the introduction of new duties in the *Education and Inspections Act 2006* and, in particular, statutory guidance on local authorities to provide 'positive activities for young people' under this Act.

In 2006/07, the total youth service expenditure for London boroughs was estimated to be £57,385,822, with a mean average of £1,912,860. This does not include borough expenditure on youth services from other funding sources (such as Connexions and Drug Action Teams) as this data is not currently available²³.

More complete data are available for the previous year 2005/06, when the sum total of London borough expenditure on youth services was £76,625,075 (including other funding sources) with a mean average total youth service expenditure of £2,554,169. The average per capita figure for England and Wales is £80. Inner London was the highest spending area overall with average spending of £155, with all inner London boroughs (for whom data are available) spending over £100. Outer London boroughs' average spending of £76 is less than the national average. This expenditure encompasses direct youth work provision by the local authority (centre-based and outreach), Connexions, drug action teams and grants to voluntary youth sector activities.

The proportion of young people engaged with local authority youth services varies widely from borough to borough. At one extreme, almost 30 per cent of young people in Bexley, Havering and Southwark were participating in youth services in 2005/06 compared with six per cent or less in Haringey, Barnet and Enfield. The national average is a participation rate of 16 per cent²⁴.

There is a range of voluntary sector funded provision which will not appear in these figures and is therefore hard to quantify. For example, data provided by the Scouts Association show that in 2007 there are 32,811 young people (27,777 male, 5034 female) involved in the Scouts across London²⁵. Similarly, London Youth has a membership of 361 voluntary sector projects providing clubs across London with a combined membership of 62,136 young people. Included in their membership are 802 disabled young people and 2,606 young people with a learning disability, all integrated into mainstream provision²⁶.

Government's ten year youth strategy, 'Aiming high for young people: a ten year strategy for positive activities' (July 2007), provides for £60 million to improve youth facilities over the next three years (national figures), which may be supplemented by additional funding from unclaimed assets and be match funded by boroughs from private and other sources. £173 million national allocation will continue the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds for a further three years and additional national funding of £82 million is allocated for the establishment of positive activities and youth inclusion programmes. By 2018, the government expects that young people will have direct influence over 25 per cent of local authority spending on positive activities, and there will be the piloting of 'coming of age' ceremonies for young people and exploration of the potential of a 'Youth Week' to celebrate young people's achievements.

The Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds provide the backdrop for the Youth Challenge Competition. These funds represent a commitment from government to empower young people and to give them more choice and influence over provision and facilities in their area. DfES instituted the **Positive Activities for Young People programme** (PAYP), a targeted programme providing diversionary and developmental activities. Young people across the country aged 8 to 19, most at risk, are encouraged to engage in learning and/or employment with key worker support. By the end of 2005/06, 290,000 young people had participated. All 33 London boroughs will receive specific extra **DfES allocations of £21.2 million** in 2007/08. This is made up of: £11.7m Positive Activities for Young People; £5.1million Youth Opportunity Fund; and £4.4m Youth Capital Fund.

The Youth Media Fund (£6 million over two years) is to be used to involve disadvantaged young people in media projects, to help them to gain a range of media related skills and more broadly support their personal and social development. London projects have been among those allocated funding to date.

The **Learning outside the Classroom Manifesto** was launched in November 2006. It brings together a coalition of more than 500 organisations including government and the private and voluntary sectors with the aim of providing every young person with a wide range of high quality learning experiences outside the classroom. Learning outside the classroom is intended to provide a further route to the 'achieving' Every Child Matters outcome. Much learning outside the classroom will take place as part of a programme that supports personalised learning and complements the strategy for young people set out in Youth Matters.

Sports, arts and cultural opportunities

London is a unique city, with a wealth of social and cultural opportunities for all ages, including young people. London Youth Arts Network Directory lists over 500 organisations including 240 youth theatre and drama groups, 133 organisations providing visual arts opportunities for young people and 25 photography projects²⁷.

In 2012, London will host the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and children and young people were at the heart of the successful bid. The 2006 London regional strategy from the Arts Council hopes that the Games will create an opportunity to link culture, education and sport with young people's aspirations, and with the creation of more and better opportunities for young Londoners to engage with the arts.

The Play England London region has created a partnership of agencies committed to ensuring that exemplary play provision and 'playable space' is embedded in the Olympics planning, delivery and legacy phases. CABE Space hosted a workshop seminar in June 2007 to agree the vision and integrate local play strategies and action plans with the wider upper and lower Lea Valley and Olympics park regeneration.

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games is seen as an opportunity to raise the profile of London as a world-class, sustainable city. The Games will provide a platform to promote London as a city in which to invest, visit, conduct business and study, as well as showcasing the city as a world centre for the financial, cultural, scientific, technological, film and creative industries.

It is hoped that the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will create far reaching benefits for all London's communities and will include:

- a pre-volunteering programme to enable people to volunteer at Games time who might otherwise have not had the opportunity to do so
- a programme of free community cultural events throughout the year
- promoting the Youth Games
- enhancing programmes to parks and open spaces
- together with partners, increase support for physical activity, from pre-school children right through to world class sportspeople.

The **London Summer of Sport campaign** for 2007 gives Londoners the chance to try out different sports for free. Supported by the Mayor of London in partnership with Sport England, the longer-term aim is to increase participation in sport and physical activity in the run-up to and beyond the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Funded by the Big Lottery Fund and corporate sponsors, **the UK School Games** is a multi-sport event for the most talented young people of school age in the country. In 2007, over 1,300 athletes will be competing in Athletics, Badminton, Fencing, Gymnastics, Judo, Swimming, Table Tennis and Volleyball. Each of the eight sports will be combined into a four-day Games environment designed to replicate the feel of a major event such as the Olympic Games or Paralympic Games. **Sport England's priority areas**, linked to current PSA targets, include 'women and girls' and 'young people in settings outside of the school and college curriculum'. In 2004, their Active England scheme invested £15.8m nationally, and approximately 50 per cent of this was in young people²⁸.

The Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA) of London is leading a regional Strategic Commissioning Programme (2004 – 2008), which is part of a national learning development programme funded by DCMS and DfES. Strategic commissioning is focused on supporting learning for school age pupils, with the objectives of increasing the demand from schools for museum, archive and gallery education, increasing capacity of museums, archives and galleries to deliver education activities and improve access for teachers and schools. In London, of the 2,108 schools on the MLA database, over half have been involved with the programme²⁹.

The London regional strategy from the Arts Council recognises the need to address inequalities, and aims to achieve a fairer distribution of arts opportunities across the capital. To achieve this aim, it will focus especially on children and young people who are under 19 and those who need support in order to participate in the arts independently. Priority groups are those living in low-income families, living in areas of London with few, or no, appropriate cultural facilities or opportunities, who are disabled, who are vulnerable or at risk.

In 2005 the London-based **Unicorn Theatre for Children** opened its doors. This award-winning producer of professional theatre and education for audiences of children aged 4 to 12 is now based in the UK's first purpose-built (professional) theatre for children. Funding for the construction of the 350 seat auditorium came from the Mayor/London Development Agency, Arts Council England with National Lottery Funds, the Pool of London Partnership, London Borough of Southwark and other trusts and bodies.

How children and young people spend their time

Activities outside the formal school setting are very important to children and young people, yet are rarely measured. In particular there is very little London-specific information available on children and young people's use of time. National surveys do not tend to reflect the diverse and mobile population characteristics of London, so any conclusions for London are therefore tentative.

The most comprehensive time-use survey (of both adults and children) was carried out by researchers at the University of Essex in 2000/01 and formed the basis of a report on children's use of time in 2004³⁰. The UK Time Use Survey used a nationally representative sample of private households³¹ and collected questionnaire and diary data from all household members aged eight and over.

Table 6.1 Children's activities, minutes by activity, by age; weekdays in school terms and all weekends

	Weekdays		Weekends	
	8 to 10	11 to 13	8 to 10	11 to 13
	-year-olds	-year-olds	-year-olds	-year-olds
Not with parent				
Personal care	45	53	45	57
Domestic & shopping	8	14	21	32
Social & entertainment	20	34	38	66
Sport	12	16	24	46
Hobbies & games	57	41	104	81
TV, video, music	36	52	67	90
Travel	27	54	25	41
Reading	4	4	5	6
Computing	9	14	17	23
With parent				
Personal care	66	54	77	62
Domestic & shopping	15	17	41	39
Social & entertainment	11	12	46	33
Sport	5	3	14	10
Hobbies & games	32	20	72	40
TV, video, music	62	66	100	104
Travel	33	22	41	28
Reading	5	3	7	7
Computing	11	11	23	19
Sleep, school etc	975	959	687	670
Total	1430	1431	1430	1428

Source Adapted from report on time-use survey by Egerton and Gershuny³²

Time spent with parents

The Time Use Survey showed that during school terms, on average, children spent six hours per day with one or both parents (excluding sleep, school and work time). Younger children spent more time with parents, averaging nearly seven and a half hours on weekend days. Older children averaged over three hours on weekdays and about five-and-a-half hours at weekends. At the end of the school day, co-presence with parents or siblings rose to about 60 per cent in any particular time slot. However, quite a large percentage of children (about 20 per cent) were with 'known others' between about 4.00 pm and 8.30 pm.

The overall average time spent with parents outside school terms was only half an hour greater than in term-time. However, it has been suggested that the data does not represent family holidays well, therefore



underestimating time spent with parents, though one theory is that children spend more weekends staying with relatives or friends outside school terms. On average, younger boys spent more time with their parents than younger girls both during and outside school terms. There appeared to be little difference by parental social class during school term weekdays, but parents from the white-collar occupations spent more time with children during weekends, mostly in domestic/shopping activities, social activities, sport, hobbies and travel.

A UNICEF report (2007)³³ found that 60 per cent of 15-year-olds in the UK thought that their parents 'spent time just talking to them' several times a week and two-thirds ate the main meal of the day with their parents several times a week.

The Millennium Cohort Study enquired about parents' levels of satisfaction with the amount of time they have to spend with their children. More than 60 per cent of mothers felt they had plenty of time to spend with their children compared with 25 per cent of fathers. Mothers' satisfaction with the amount of time they have to spend with their children varies with ethnicity: half of African Caribbean mothers felt that they had plenty of time with their children compared with 86 per cent of Pakistani and Bangladeshi mothers and 65 per cent of white mothers. Older mothers (over 35) were twice as likely as mothers under 25 to report not having enough time with their children (22 per cent compared with 11 per cent). These differences in degrees of satisfaction were attributed in the study to levels of participation in the labour market.

A recent IPPR study³⁴ suggests that British children spend less time with parents or adults and more time with peers than young people in culturally similar countries. Changes to family structure – divorce and single parenthood – and parental work patterns are said to be the greatest contributors. Nevertheless, the report's key finding is that children growing up in non-traditional family forms can succeed if warmth, stability and consistent parenting are present.

Time spent with grandparents

Studies have shown that grandparents are often key forms of support for families, providing both ad hoc and daily childcare^{35&36}. A forthcoming national study for the Grandparent's Association³⁷ shows that 25 per cent of children receive care from grandparents. Sixty per cent of grandparents see their grandchildren weekly, providing an average of 15.9 hours a week of childcare.

The Millennium Cohort Study concurs with these findings, reporting that grandparents were the most frequent main providers of childcare for mothers who worked, accounting for more than one-third of arrangements. Many mothers prefer to leave children with grandparents because of convenience, trust and cost. In total 57 per cent of childcare arrangements for all children in the national study was classed as 'informal', ie grandparents, partners and neighbours.

As reported in Chapter 7, other national research suggests that the pattern of childcare provided by grandparents in London is different to elsewhere in the UK, with a DfES-funded study in 2006 finding that 14 per cent of London families had used a grandparent for childcare in the last week, compared with at least 24 per cent in all other regions. This difference may be due to higher mobility among London families resulting in less access to extended family networks.

Activities

The UK Time Use Survey showed that older children spent more time on domestic tasks or shopping and in social activities without their parents. They spent less time on hobbies or games with or without parents and more time on TV/Video or music independently of parents. They travelled less with their parents and more without their parents. This pattern seems to represent increased independence with age.

Overall the data show girls engaging in more independent personal care and domestic activities (including shopping), while boys engaged in more sport and more hobbies/games. Similar but more marked effects are found on weekend days, but girls also engaged in more social or entertainment activities at weekends and more television/music and reading at weekends. Companionship with parents was higher at weekends, and differences in activities between boys and girls were fewer. However, boys did more hobbies/games or sport with parent/s, while girls did more social/entertainment activities and more reading. Boys did more computing (mainly computer games) on both weekdays and weekends. No differences by social class were found in reading or computing on either weekdays or weekends.

Participation in hobbies and games peaked in the evenings on term-time weekdays, at approximately 25 per cent (about two hours), approximately ten per cent of which was with a parent present. On school term weekdays sports participation peaked in the late afternoon and evening at seven per cent, of which approximately two per cent had parents co-present. Approximately ten per cent of children were involved in sport at



the peak in the afternoon. Although this increased somewhat during weekends, the amount spent with parents increased very little.

The IPPR research found that children from wealthier families were more likely to spend time in organised or educational activities that are associated with greater personal and social development. While better-off parents are able to buy activities that are likely to increase their children's life chances, some poorer children are excluded from these developmental opportunities.

Some further national data on how children and young people spend their time are available from the Families and Children Survey, 2004. The following tables are based on responses from 11 to 15 year olds. As table 6.2 shows, the most popular spare-time activities of young people are widely shared, with few apparent differences between London young people and those in Britain as a whole. Listening to music, meeting friends and watching TV are enjoyed by over three-quarters of young people nationally and in London

Table 6.2 What do you like to do in your spare time?

	London		All Britain	
	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number
Listen to music	80	268	84	2,497
Meet friends	77	259	82	2,452
Watch TV or videos/DVDs	85	285	83	2,464
Play computer/console games (like Gamecube, x-box, playstation)	66	222	67	1,993
Go to the cinema	59	199	58	1,714
Do sports	56	186	58	1,736
Read books and magazines	60	202	57	1,702
Surf the web (internet/www)	57	192	53	1,575
Go shopping	52	174	52	1,550
Email	32	107	31	937
Play a musical instrument	19	63	23	698
Something else	57	190	52	1,554

Base: Children aged 11 to 15 years who took part in FACS in 2004.

All ns and % are weighted

Source Families and Children Survey, 2004

Table 6.3 suggests that quite a large proportion of young people take part in no organised activities. Of those that do, sports activities are the most common. Table 6.4 shows the places that young people visit or use in their local area. Again there is a similar pattern of places visited nationally and in London, with parks being the most commonly visited facility.

Table 6.3 Which organised activities do you take part in?

	London		All Britain	
	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number
Sports team or club	32	109	34	1,034
After school club	31	103	23	684
Drama, arts or music groups	19	65	17	505
Exercise or dance class	16	55	18	536
Youth club	12	41	13	406
Scouts, guides, cadets	6	20	9	288
Other organised activities	18	59	20	595
None of these	31	105	31	952

Base: Children aged 11 to 15 years who took part in FACS in 2004.

All ns and % are weighted

Source Families and Children Survey, 2004

Table 6.4 Which places do you visit or use in the local area?

	London		All Britain	
	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number
Library	30	102	26	778
Park	53	181	51	1,546
Playground	28	96	27	824
Swimming pool/leisure centre	26	89	33	1,006
Church/mosque/temple/ other place of worship	31	103	15	450
Community hall	3	12	6	192
Cinema/theatre	26	89	34	1,029
Bowling alley	12	42	13	393
Outdoor sports pitch/ground	30	103	35	1,060
Connexions	3	9	3	82
None of these	11	38	11	335

Base: Children aged 11 to 15 years who took part in FACS in 2004.

All ns and % are weighted

Source Families and Children Survey, 2004

Faith activities

More than three-quarters of the UK population report an affiliation to a religious faith (Census, 2001).

Table 6.4 shows that 31 percent of London children in the FACS survey visited places of worship, compared with 15 per cent of children in Britain as a whole, suggesting that faith plays a significant part in the lives of many London children.

Belonging to a faith community can shape how and with whom children spend their time. The National Children's Bureau series 'Understanding Children's Lives' investigated the effect of faith on children's lives³⁸. Interviews with children from a diverse London community and a North West community suggested that while religious affiliations did not prevent mixing with children from different faith groups in school, children from more observant families had less social interaction with other children from outside their particular religion than those less observant. (This finding should be read in conjunction with the study on friendships and ethnicity in the next section, and also discussion on community cohesion issues in the 'Positive contribution' Chapter 8.)

Friends

Friendship is very important to children and young people and influences their social and psychological development. The topic of friends was the first of six key themes to be considered by The Children's Society's 'The Good Childhood Inquiry'. Children contributing to this inquiry have said friends are the most important things in their lives. In response to the question 'If you need help with a problem, who is the person you are most likely to talk to?' children and young people said that they were most likely to go to a friend (46 per cent), followed by a parent (35 per cent)³⁹. A survey of adults undertaken as part of the inquiry suggested that early friendships can last a lifetime with 69 per cent of respondents saying they are still in touch with a least one childhood friend⁴⁰. Despite this reliance on peers, the study also showed that one in five teenagers had no best friends.



The UNICEF study ranked UK children lowest of all OECD nations in finding their peers to be 'kind and helpful'. Just over 40 per cent of young people aged 11, 13 and 15 agreed with this statement, compared with 80 per cent of Swiss respondents and more than half of US respondents⁴¹.

The nature of children's friendships can have an effect on the degree of community cohesion and sense of neighbourhood. A study of patterns of friendship in 12 English primary schools commented on ethnically mixed

friendships. More than 70 per cent of white children with friends of other ethnicities were concentrated in inner London, compared with ten per cent in outer London. In the outer London sample, only three out of 272 friendship links of white children were with children from other ethnicities. The study showed that the positive benefits of mixed primary schooling particularly for white children, extend into the early years of secondary school and there was some evidence that parents learned to respect people from other backgrounds as a result of their children's experiences in mixed schools⁴².

The Children's Society's 'The Good Childhood Inquiry' drew on a national survey⁴³ to argue that children's freedom to play out with their friends is being curtailed by adult anxiety about the modern world. Their survey showed that anxiety about playing out unsupervised means that adults are denying today's children the freedom to spend time with friends that they once enjoyed themselves. When asked the best age for children to be allowed out with friends unsupervised 43 per cent of adult respondents said aged 14 or over, despite the fact that most of them had themselves been allowed out without an adult at the much younger age of ten or under. Respondents over the age of 60 went even further, with 22 per cent saying children should be over 16 before going out alone.

Access and affordability of public transport

A key enabler for children and young people's participation in leisure, recreational and cultural activities is the ability to move around London with a degree of independence. Transport is a key issue for all Londoners and is a recurring priority raised in consultations with young people.

The cost of transport is a national issue for both families and young people. A recent report for the TUC's Young Members' Conference⁴⁴ pointed out that the real cost of public transport has risen considerably over the last two decades with a disproportionate effect upon young people, who are much heavier users of public transport than people from other age groups. In particular, young people from the poorest households are most likely to suffer, since they have least access to a car and are far more likely to rely on public transport. As a result, transport costs have a significant impact upon young people's ability to access employment and training opportunities.

The National Travel Survey found that in London 16 per cent of two-parent families and 55 per cent of lone parent families did not have a car. This compares to national figures of nine per cent and 48 per cent respectively. Twenty-eight per cent of London's lone parents and 26 per

cent nationally, had one or more bicycles as their only vehicle. Improvements in cycling infrastructure in London, therefore, could potentially have a significant impact on lone-parent families. Lone parents were more likely to say that they had difficulty with journeys involving taking their children to school or to social activities (12 per cent compared with four per cent of two-parent families). There were similar differences in problems getting to the doctors and to visit friends and relatives.

Trends in transport use can be identified by comparing the 2005/06 London Travel Demand Survey, and the 2001 London Area Transport Survey, which was used in the 2004 SOLCR. The changes between 2001 and 2005/06 are not uniform, but there is a clear increase in the relative use of buses. In inner London, this seems to be mainly a transfer to buses from car use, whereas in outer London, car use is fairly static and there is a suggestion of some switching from walking to bus use.

A major development since SOLCR 2004 has been the **Mayor's introduction of the free bus and tram OysterCard scheme for under-16s from September 2005. This was extended to under-18s in full-time education from September 2006** (see Chapter 5). The criteria for the latter scheme included both vocational and academic options, including unpaid training such as apprenticeship programmes.

In addition, free and concessionary arrangements for families by Transport for London include, from April 2007, free tube travel for up to four children under 11 who are accompanied by an adult in possession of a valid ticket or who is using Oyster to pay as they go.

The Mayor's free bus and tram scheme for all young Londoners under 16 years of age (covering 450,000 11 to 15 year olds⁴⁵) was designed to support low income families who typically spend a much greater proportion of their income on transport; provide better access for London's families to education, places of culture, sports facilities and play spaces; increase the independence of young people and to allow them to play a wider role in the community of the capital; and encourage young people to use public transport, helping to continue London's move away from car journeys and reduce the 'school run'. Furthermore, the early development of sustainable travel lays down good foundations for its continued use in later adult life.

The UK government has recognised the scheme as exemplar policy in the 2005 *Education White Paper* and, through the *Education and Inspections Act 2006*, as an example of direct action that authorities can take to promote access to positive activities for young people through addressing transport issues⁴⁶.

A Transport for London evaluation of the under-16s free travel scheme (March 2006) provided information on its impact in the first six months of operation. Research was undertaken with London residents, bus drivers, 14 and 15-year-olds and parents of 11 to 15-year-olds⁴⁷. The main benefits (and reasons for take up) of the scheme are the cost savings it produces. However, the scheme also increases accessibility – four in five 14 and 15-year-olds think free travel makes London a lot more accessible and three-quarters rely on their parents much less to get to places. The independence it gives under-16s not only means they use the bus more to visit friends and family (68 per cent) but also to play sport (63 per cent) and for travel to/from school (47 per cent).

In the first six months of the scheme 281,000 photocard were issued, with young people reporting mainly financial reasons for taking up the scheme but also citing the desire for independence, such as 'not being driven by parents'. Take-up varied between boroughs, ranging from 75 per cent in Lambeth to 46 per cent in Tower Hamlets. The report highlighted considerable support for the scheme by the majority of Londoners (77 per cent) – unsurprisingly this was particularly so among parents of children aged 11 to 15 (91 per cent) and among the under-16s (98 per cent).

It also revealed a change in the mode of transport used by young people with a 20 per cent increase in bus trips by 11 to 15 year olds. Of 14 and 15-year-olds who use the bus more, two in five use the bus for trips which previously would have been made by car, indicating a decline in car use. Three in four have taken the bus at some point instead of walking, one in five switched trips from the underground and one in ten took the bus instead of cycling. While the overall number of antisocial behaviour incidents⁴⁸ on buses had increased in the period examined, there was no increase in the proportion of such incidents committed by under-18s, which remained the same at 15 per cent of all incidents.

Petitions and polls undertaken in early 2007 – following an attempt to abolish the scheme by some London Assembly Members and parties – have been overwhelmingly in favour of retaining the travel concession. Ninety-seven per cent of respondents to the National Children's Bureau and Play England's petition supported the continuation of the scheme. The Partnership for Young London poll had similar results – 187 young Londoners responded, of whom 181 (97 per cent) wished to retain the free travel concession; among adult Londoners, 156 of the 164 respondents (95 per cent) also felt the scheme should be continued⁴⁹. At the time the under-16s scheme was introduced, a MORI survey carried out by the GLA showed that 80 per cent of adult Londoners backed the free travel scheme⁵⁰.



Travel to school

A comparison of the London Area Transport Survey data in 2001 with the London Transport Demand Survey data 2005/06, suggests a slight reduction in the number of children walking to school between 2001 and 2005/06⁵¹. For London children aged five to 11, walking was the main mode of travel to school for 55 per cent of this age group in 2001 (62 per cent in inner London and 50 per cent in outer London). In 2005/06 walking was the main mode of travel to school for 49 per cent of London's five to 11-year-olds (57 per cent in inner London, 44 per cent in outer London). Older children and young people aged 12 to 16 years are less likely to walk to school. In 2001, 36 per cent did so (with the same percentage for inner and outer London); in 2005/06, 33 per cent 'mainly' walked to school. Cycle use as the main mode of transport to school is very low for all areas and age groups.

Use of the bus as the main means of travel to school for five to 11-year-olds has gone up from seven per cent in 2001 to 12 per cent in 2005/06. In inner London it has gone up from nine per cent to 13 per cent; in outer London, from seven per cent to 11 per cent. For 12 to 16-year-olds bus use to school has risen from 36 per cent in 2001 to 40 per cent in 2005/06 (from 40 per cent to 42 per cent in inner London and from 35 per cent to 39 per cent in outer London).

Younger children are more likely to be taken to school by car than older children. In 2001 36 per cent of 5 to 11-year-olds were driven to school (26 per cent in inner London, 42 per cent in outer London). In 2005/06 this had fallen to 35 per cent for London overall, but while in inner London there was a four per cent drop in car use to school, in outer London there was a one per cent increase. There was also a slight increase in older children being driven to school, from 16 per cent in 2001 to 17 per cent in 2005/06 (ten per cent in inner London, 20 per cent in outer London).

The London Challenge survey⁵² asked parents and carers whether their child travelled to school accompanied by other children or alone. Primary school children were more likely to travel to school accompanied by their parent or carer (69 per cent, compared with 17 per cent of secondary school children). Secondary school children were more likely to travel with other children (43 per cent, compared with 14 per cent of primary school children) or on their own (25 per cent, compared with nine per cent of primary school children). Of the escorted journeys to school, almost half (48.8 per cent) are undertaken by car, with 41.2 per cent on foot.

Nationally, **The Education and Inspections Act 2006** extends entitlement to free school travel for pupils entitled to free school meals or whose parents are in receipt of maximum working tax credit. The Act also allows for a series of Pathfinder authorities to test innovative arrangements. Each Pathfinder must include provisions to support parental choice, and measures to secure more pupils travelling by sustainable means.

Use of transport for recreational purposes

The following tables⁵³ show the modes of transport used by children for non-school weekday trips. Three-quarters of children aged 5 to 10 in outer London and almost half in inner London are mainly transported by car to recreation activities. However, around a quarter of young people aged 11 or over in inner London mainly use the bus, with walking being the most commonly used means of getting to recreational activities for inner London young people. In outer London, over 30 per cent mostly walk, though 45 per cent are taken by car.

Table 6.5 Mode share of weekday trips where journey purpose is recreation, 5 to 10-year-olds

Mode of transport	Inner London	Outer London
Rail	1.1	0
Underground/DLR	6.2	0
Bus	10.1	1.2
Car (incl. van, lorry, motorcycle)	48.5	76.2
Cycle	2.6	1.0
Walk	30.7	21.6
Other (incl. taxi)	0.7	0

Table 6.6 Mode share of weekday trips where journey purpose is recreation, 11 to 16-year-olds

Mode of transport	Inner London	Outer London
Rail	6.7	1.1
Underground/DLR	1.6	0.9
Bus	24.9	17.7
Car (incl. van, lorry, motorcycle)	16.8	45.0
Cycle	5.3	3.7
Walk	44.7	30.9
Other (incl. taxi)	0	0.9

The information presented above suggests that there is still a relatively low use of bicycles as the main means of transport for either school or recreational purposes.

The Tour de France came to the UK and London in summer 2007, for the first time in the race's 100 year history. A key aim for the Mayor was to promote cycling to all Londoners, and the GLA coordinated a **roadshow of events encouraging children and young people to cycle more in the build-up to the July Grand Depart in London**. Transport for London and Sustrans through the 'Bike it' initiative have run competitions to encourage children to cycle the route of the Tour de France by adding up how many miles they cycle each day to school on charts and maps.

The travel demand management team at Transport for London work with schools to develop their individual travel plans to encourage sustainable travel through walking and cycling, and have recently launched a new accreditation scheme to reward schools for these achievements. **The Mayor has pledged £2.8 million to provide cycle training in 2007/08** (to put this in context the Department for Transport has pledged £3 million to the rest of the UK as a whole, excluding London). Last year alone 19,000 children in London received some level of certified cycle training. As part of the School Travel Plans, TfL continues to encourage schools and boroughs to take part in walking campaigns such as 'walking buses' and 'walk on Wednesdays' schemes.

Endnotes

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7 Supporting families

Summary

This chapter focuses on the supports and challenges to families in London covering housing, child care, for children in need and those children who live away from their families of origin.

In 2006 there were 16,240 households accepted as homeless in London, down from 28,050 in 2004 and 30,510 in 2003.

Legally, homeless families should no longer be placed in bed and breakfast for more than six weeks, but the problem of temporary accommodation persists. At December 2006, there were nearly 61,000 households placed in temporary accommodation in London. Nearly 46,000 of these households included children: a total of over 87,000 children. As this figure is more than three times the total number of households accepted as homeless in the same year, it gives a worrying indication of how long many families continue living in temporary accommodation and the decline in the availability of social housing to meet their needs.

In 2005/06 there were a total of 544,000 overcrowded homes in England, 212,000 in London. This represents an increase of 42,000 overcrowded households since 2001/02. Most overcrowded households include children. London has a much higher proportion of children living in overcrowded housing than in the rest of England. Almost a fifth of lone parent families with children in London live in overcrowded homes; twice the proportion in Britain as a whole.

Black, Asian and minority ethnic families are more likely to be affected by homelessness and overcrowding than white families. Around one in 12 Bangladeshi households are in housing need.

Home building in London has increased, from 19,500 new homes in 2000 to about 27,500 in 2004/05 and 2005/06. The Mayor has set a new housing target of 30,500 new homes per year up to 2016. Half of these new homes should be affordable, with a target of 70 per cent being housing association or council rented housing and 30 per cent intermediate housing.

In March 2004, London had 96 Sure Start programmes in 29 local authorities (SOLCR, 2004). In April 2007 there were 209 designated Sure Start Children's Centres in London and around 188,000 London children under five are currently living in areas served by Children's Centres with the opportunity to access the services they provide.

Nationally, around a quarter of families use grandparents for childcare. This is much less common in London (around 14 per cent). There is less childcare provision for under-fives in London than the national average. Day nurseries and child-minders provide 24.5 places per 100 children aged under five in London, compared with the England average of 31.4 places per 100. There is also variation between boroughs in the amount of provision and turnover of provision continues to be a problem as reported in SOLCR 2004.

Daycare costs in London are around 25 per cent higher than the average in England. However, after-school clubs in inner London are typically £10 cheaper for an average 15 hours' care than in other regions.

In London, the relative spend on preventative services to children in need is a little above the national average and has increased in line with national increases.

In a national survey of 28,000 households, six per cent of under-16s had a disability, two-thirds of whom were boys. These figures would equate to over 100,000 disabled children under 16 in London. It is estimated that around one in 40 London children are young carers.

Nearly one-fifth of England's 60,300 looked after children are London children (11,770), and the rate for inner London is the highest in the country. This rate has risen considerably from the 2003 level of 77 children per 10,000. The outer London rate has dropped from 70 per 10,000 in 2003 to 59 per 10,000 in 2006.

In 2005/06 there were a total of 18,300 looked after children in England in placements outside their local authority boundary; 5,680 of them were London children. Of these 2,200 were in placements more than 20 miles from their home.

3,200 unaccompanied asylum seeking children were looked after in England at 31 March 2006, 63 per cent of whom were located in London.

Introduction

The shape of families and households in Britain has changed considerably in the last 30 years. The latest edition of Social Trends¹ reports that the number of people living alone in Great Britain has more than doubled since 1971. In 2005, 24 per cent of non-married people aged under 60 were cohabiting in Great Britain, around twice the proportion recorded in 1986. The proportion of children living in lone-parent families more than

tripled between 1972 and 2006 to 24 per cent. Perhaps more important than any of these differences in family form is the fact that change is a frequent part of contemporary family life. Families are dynamic: 40 per cent of mothers will spend some time as a lone parent, and most mothers who separate or divorce will subsequently enter another partnership and form a step-family.

Changes in family status precipitate other changes. Separation, divorce or new relationships are often the trigger for a series of other changes: in housing, in financial circumstances, in schools. It can therefore be argued that support for families has never been more important to promote the well-being of children. This is reflected in government policy, particularly as expressed through the 2007 publication of *Every Parent Matters*², which has a major focus on the role of families, particularly parents, as central to a range of initiatives to reduce child poverty, increase educational attainment and promote positive citizenship.

This chapter focuses on the supports and challenges to families in London. It starts with a review of data on one of the most fundamental elements of family life: a home. We then consider support services to families, including: childcare, support to parents, families with children in need and families affected by disability. We end with a section on those children who live away from their families of origin: looked after children and young people, unaccompanied asylum seeking young people, care-leavers, runaways and homeless young people.

Housing and homelessness

The government has given new powers to make the Mayor of London responsible for the capital's Housing Strategy and for deciding the broad distribution of investment in affordable homes. **The Mayor's draft Housing Strategy** (published in summer 2007) focuses on driving up supply of housing, including affordable housing, improving the quality of the capital's existing and new housing stock, reducing the impact of housing on climate change, promoting better communities and responding to the needs of those who are overcrowded, homeless or need specialist/supported housing.

The rising demand for housing has created a rapid increase in house prices and rents, and a growing need for subsidised affordable homes in London. High housing costs are a major challenge to families in London forcing some of the most vulnerable into poor quality or overcrowded homes and contributing to levels of homelessness. As a result many families end up spending long periods of time in temporary accommodation.

According to Shelter there are 1.6 million children living in bad housing in Britain, of whom almost 400,000 are in London. This has a particularly negative impact on children: those growing up in bad housing have up to 25 per cent higher risk of severe ill-health and disability during childhood and early adulthood, and homeless children are up to four times more likely to suffer mental health problems than other children³.

London patterns of tenure differ from the rest of England with higher levels of rented homes and lower levels of home ownership. Forty-three per cent of tenants in the social rented sector are one-person households and 32 per cent are families with children⁴. There are strong links between worklessness and social tenure⁵.

The most recent figures from the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Survey of English Housing 2005/06, report that of a total of 544,000 overcrowded homes in England, 212,000 of them are in London. This represents an increase of 42,000 overcrowded households since 2001.

Almost one-fifth of lone parent families in London live in overcrowded homes, twice the proportion in Great Britain as a whole⁶. By the same measure, black, Asian and minority ethnic families are more likely to be affected than are white families (12.6 per cent of BAME families against 3.6 per cent of white families). Based on 2001 Census data, Bangladeshi households are most likely to be in housing need (approximately one in 12 of all Bangladeshi households). Of all households in need, 39 per cent are white British, 16 per cent black African, 12 per cent white other and ten per cent black Caribbean⁷. Although this data derives from the 2001 Census, there is no reason to suppose any subsequent, major reduction in the overcrowding experienced by such families, as it is largely caused by a lack of large social rented housing and high housing costs.

Redistributing under-occupied housing will not by itself solve overcrowding. In the London social sector, where overcrowding is most acute, overcrowded households outnumber under-occupied households by almost two to one. Home building has more recently started to increase, from 19,500 new homes in 2000 to about 27,500 in 2004/05 and 2005/06. This is a significant improvement but much more is needed to bridge the growing gap between supply and demand⁸.

There has been a range of initiatives to tackle overcrowding in the capital supported by the UK government, the Mayor, the Housing Corporation and London's boroughs. **The 2006-08 Affordable Housing Programme** (the resources made available to develop new social housing) set a target of 35 per cent of development to deliver social rented homes with three or more bedrooms. In addition, the Mayor allocated £21 million of regional housing funding to support initiatives for tackling overcrowding such as the funding of extensions. In the same period the government allocated funding of £500,000 to tackle under-occupation of social housing.

In London, the **Mayor's 2004 Housing Requirements Study** estimated that over 8,000 units of social housing with four bedrooms or more are required annually for the next ten years, yet on the ground the actual supply is only a few hundred per year. The Mayor has set a new housing target of 30,500 new homes per year up to 2016. Half of these new homes should be affordable, with a target of 70 per cent being housing association or council rented housing and 30 per cent intermediate housing⁹. **The Mayor's Housing Strategy** will include renewed targets for the delivery of larger social rented homes in London.

Decent homes

Nationally the number of homes failing to meet the decent home standard¹⁰ continues to fall at a steady rate. Since 1996, the number of non-decent homes has reduced from 9.1 million (45 per cent of all homes) to 6.0 million (27.5 per cent of all homes). While homes in the private sector continue to be less likely to be non-decent compared with social sector homes (27.1 per cent and 29 per cent respectively), homes in the social sector have seen a greater rate of progress and consequently the gap between the two sectors has narrowed¹¹. In London the proportion of local authority homes not meeting the decent homes standard was 49 per cent in 2004, down to 46 per cent in 2005, but still well behind other regions¹².

The UK government's aim is, by 2010, to bring all social housing into a decent condition. A 2005 report from HM Treasury cites a reduction in the number of non-decent homes of over one million since 1998¹³.

Family Homelessness

Despite homelessness acceptances decreasing in the last couple of years, homelessness continues to be a major issue for London. In 2006 there were 16,240 homeless acceptances in London, down from 28,050 in 2004 and from 30,510 in 2003. Nationally there was a reduction from 127,760 in 2004 (100,170 in 2005) to 76,860 in 2006. These represent the first reduction in homeless acceptances since 1997. London boroughs

have been using various methods to decrease the number of homeless acceptances, through homelessness prevention schemes and encouraging households to rent properties in the private sector, sometimes with the borough providing help with the deposit. In this way families can avoid spending time in temporary accommodation, although the private rented sector still provides an insufficiently secure alternative for many families.

Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are over represented in London's homeless population. Between October and December 2006, only 42 per cent of acceptances in London were from white families, while in the South West and East of England the proportion was 89 per cent. London had the highest percentage of acceptances from black and Asian groups (29 and 11 per cent respectively) and also for other ethnic groups (11 per cent). The West Midlands had the next highest acceptances from black and Asian groups (at seven and eight per cent respectively). Lone parent families are also almost twice as likely to be accepted as homeless compared with couple families.

Table 7.1 Households accepted as homeless, by household type and ethnicity during 2004/05

	Couple with children	Lone parent	Single person	Other	Total	Of which % BAME
London	23%	40%	32%	6%	26,790	47%
England	18%	42%	34%	7%	121,060	19%

Source Adapted from Housing activity supplementary returns P1E (annual)

The Communities and Local Government (CLG) strategy for preventing homelessness aims to halve the number of households living in temporary accommodation by 2010. There is also a government target to end the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for 16 and 17-year-olds by 2010. While reductions are to be welcomed, adequate alternatives are necessary to ensure that the result is not simply displacement into equally insecure/unsuitable private tenancies.

In March 2007, the government announced the allocation of £16 million to voluntary organisations to help prevent all forms of homelessness. This money is part of the £74m Homelessness Grant for 2007/08 to prevent and tackle homelessness. In addition, they announced a **new partnership with YMCA England and Centrepont to deliver a National Youth Homelessness scheme**, including developing a network of supported lodgings, a new National Homelessness Advice Service in partnership with Shelter and the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), and the establishment of a committee of formerly homeless young people to advise Ministers directly on policy.

Temporary Accommodation

London has a large number of homeless households in temporary accommodation, of whom women with children or pregnant women form a large proportion, including those fleeing domestic violence. At the end of December 2006, there were nearly 61,000 households who had been accepted as homeless and placed in temporary accommodation by London local authorities. Nearly 46,000 of these included children or expected children, a total of over 87,000 children. As this is more than three times the total number of households accepted as homeless in the same year, it gives a worrying indication of how long many families continue living in temporary accommodation and the decline in the availability of social housing to meet their needs. Life in temporary accommodation can have a profound impact on children as highlighted by a 2006 Barnardo's report describing the experience of London families and the challenges they face in obtaining access to health, education, play facilities and many of the normal aspects of family life¹⁴. Black, Asian and minority ethnic families are over-represented among those in temporary accommodation¹⁵.

As we have noted in Chapter 1, many London boroughs face service challenges with the number of families who are frequent movers. This affects homeless families, asylum seekers and refugees, Gypsy and Traveller families, young people who run away and those affected by domestic violence. Evidence shows that frequent movers are more likely to be victims of violence, vandalism or burglary, less likely to be registered with a GP and children are less likely to reach expected levels at school¹⁶.

Having a safe and affordable home is key to successful refugee integration and to community stability and inclusion. However, housing insecurity is a major concern for refugees in London, from the time they arrive in the country. On arrival asylum seeking individuals and families may request the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) for help with housing, in which case they are most likely to be allocated housing out of London in a designated dispersal area while they await a decision on their asylum claim. Some refugees choose not to request housing support and many of these remain in London, where they are more likely to find other members of their home countries to live alongside. Upon receiving a positive asylum decision, some refugees remain in the dispersal area while others move elsewhere, often to London. London therefore continues to be home to a significant number of refugees at different stages in the asylum and citizenship process¹⁷.



A positive change since SOLCR 2004 is that it is no longer permitted to place homeless families in B&B accommodation for more than six weeks, and then only when there is no suitable alternative available. However, some refugee and asylum seeking families are still being housed in B&B.

The 2006 **Local Government White Paper** explores, through revised guidance, how Sustainable Communities Strategies and Local Area Agreements can help ensure the needs of frequent movers are effectively tackled.

NOTIFY is a web-based tool developed by the GLA and London Councils (now maintained by the latter), which aims to facilitate homeless households' access to health and education, as well as social services. This system uses information provided by London borough housing departments to notify housing, education, social care and health services about homeless households placed in, moving between or leaving temporary accommodation. Information is contained in a database and is updated weekly, although not all boroughs currently provide the data. It also flags up where there may be additional concerns such as where children are on the Child Protection Register.

Family support services

Childcare provision

The government is committed to the development of 3,500 Sure Start Children's Centres by 2010 – a children's centre for every community, so that every family has easy access to high quality, integrated local services. In the London region there are currently 208 designated Sure Start Children's Centres (as at 10 May 2007) reaching approximately 188,400 children under five and their families, with a further 247 centres planned for development by March 2008. This is a growth from just 96 Sure Start programmes in London in 2004 (SOLCR, 2004).

In a 2006 survey of childcare and early years provision¹⁸, use of childcare was found to differ between London and the rest of the country. There was an increase in the use of childcare and early years provision, particularly formal childcare, between 2001 and 2004 in all regions apart from London. The greatest increases were found among couple families, higher income families, and in more affluent areas. In London, only 55 per cent of families surveyed had used any form of childcare in the last week, compared with around two-thirds in all other areas. However, the report concluded that this difference was largely because of a lower use of grandparents for informal childcare (14 per cent of London families had used a grandparent for childcare in the last week, compared with at least 24 per cent in all

other regions). This is likely to be one of the many consequences of London’s mobile population described in Chapter 1: mobile parents are likely to have less access to childcare from extended families.

The amount of provision for under-fives in London is lower than the national average¹⁹. Day nurseries and childminders provide 24.5 places per 100 children aged under five in London, compared with the England average of 31.4 places per 100²⁰. There is also wide variation between boroughs in the amount of provision.

Table 7.2 Registered childcare places in London and England, 30 September 2003 and 31 December 2006

	Childminders		Full day care		Sessional day care		Out of school care		Crèche day care	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
London	39,200	43,100	59,400	81,100	28,700	25,700	45,300	61,000	5,000	7,500
England	309,000	323,600	420,600	596,600	277,500	226,700	309,900	371,200	34,900	48,400

Source Analysis of figures from Ofsted Quarterly Childcare Statistics

In 2003 there were a total of 177,600 registered childcare places in London; in 2006 this had increased to 218,400 places. The largest increases have been in full day care and out of school care. Turnover of provision continues to be a problem as reported in SOLCR 2004. A survey of 20 Early Years Development Childcare Partnerships in London found that one London nursery had closed for every four that had opened, one out of school club had closed for every two new clubs, and that for every child-minding business that starts up, another one closes²¹.

The first ever Childcare Act was given royal assent on 13 July 2006. It introduced a duty on local authorities to identify demand and supply of child care to ensure sufficient places are available, and to raise the quality of services. The aim is to improve outcomes for all children and to narrow the gap between groups with poor outcomes and the rest through ensuring access to early childhood services. In the London context the **Mayor’s Childcare Strategy**, published in 2003, pre-dates and mirrors this national commitment²².

Increasing access to childcare is also part of the government’s commitment to reducing child poverty by supporting parents into work. There is a target to get 70 per cent of lone parents into paid work by 2010 (around 300,000 lone parents). Some commentators, such as the Daycare Trust, argue that this is unlikely to be achieved, without committing sufficient funds to the provision of daycare²³.

Cost of childcare

The lack of affordable childcare is one of the barriers to women entering employment. Parents in the UK pay around 70 per cent of the cost of childcare overall, compared with other European parents who pay around 30 per cent of their childcare costs. Help with childcare costs is available through the tax system. The current average award through the childcare element of the working tax credit is £49.80 a week. There is no extra help for parents with three or more children²⁴.

Daycare costs in London are around 25 per cent higher than the average in England. The exception relates to after-school clubs in inner London which are typically £10 cheaper for an average 15 hours' care than in other regions. The hourly cost including subsidies, of all types of childcare, including care provided by relatives or friends, was higher in London than all other regions at an average (median) cost of £1.98 per hour (compared with a national median of £1.43). Responses of parents in Bryson et al's 2006 childcare survey²⁵ indicated that the cost of childcare is a more significant factor in London parents' childcare decisions than it is elsewhere.

Table 7.3 Typical weekly childcare costs, London and England, 2003 and 2007

	Nursery (under 2) £		Nursery (over 2) £		Childminder (under 2) £		Childminder (over 2) £		Out of school club £	
	2003	2007	2003	2007	2003	2007	2003	2007	2003	2007
Inner London	168	205	152	176	139	171	139	162	NA	29
Outer London	154	182	136	158	138	177	133	179	NA	37
England average	128	152	119	140	118	141	112	139	NA	38

Source The Daycare Trust. The Case for London, 2004 and Sixth annual childcare costs survey, 2007

Families with disabled children can face even more difficulties in meeting the costs of childcare. A 2004 web-based, national survey of parents²⁶ elicited 179 responses and identified major problems for families in paying for childcare which the working families tax credits system was failing to remedy. This was particularly the case for families with children who have intensive support needs requiring one-to-one care. The Council for Disabled Children estimates that 80 per cent of disabled children would be able to use non-specialist provision with only minor or moderate adjustments to staff training or premises. However, the remaining 20 per cent need more specialist care. The higher costs of such care means that even with tax credit, parents need to be able to earn considerably higher incomes to be able to afford to work.

Help with childcare costs is available through the tax credit system, and many parents can now also get tax relief through their employer, via childcare vouchers. Three and four-year-olds are entitled to 12.5 hours of free nursery education a week. However, much provision costs more than the maximum amount eligible for childcare tax credit of £175 per week.

In London there is a **Childcare Affordability Programme** run by the London Development Agency and co-funded by the Mayor and DCSF subsidising the cost of childcare for eligible parents. The three-year £33 million programme is testing out pilots to reduce the cost of childcare for up to 10,000 low-income families. The first phase has allocated funding to participating providers across all London boroughs. As well as reducing the cost of full-time care by up to £30 per week, this phase is also subsidising the cost of flexible childcare. A second phase of pilots will tackle the cost of different types of childcare, including childcare for disabled children, home-based and emergency childcare and packages of childcare support for parents during the transition into employment, including those undertaking training.

Extended services in and around schools

The government's aim is that at least half of all primary schools and a third of all secondary schools should be providing access to the full extended school core offer by the end of September 2008. In London, the Training and Development Agency (TDA) aims to have 54 per cent of schools providing this by September 2008: around 915 primary schools and 140 secondary schools in London. TDA forecast that approximately 660 schools should be providing the core offer by September 2007 to build momentum toward this target. At May 2007, 21 per cent of schools (531) in London were providing the full core offer, matching the national rate of progress²⁷.

In addition, there are a number of London schools providing access to elements of the core offer, either singly or in combination. Of the 531 schools providing the core offer, 63.3 per cent are in the most deprived group of schools (defined as those with over 25 per cent of pupils eligible for free schools meals). Just over 20 per cent are in the third quartile of deprived schools (defined as those with 11 to 24.9 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals), suggesting that extended school provision is being developed in the most disadvantaged areas.

By 2010 all schools will provide access to a **core offer of extended services** comprised of a varied menu of activities (study support); high quality childcare 8 am – 6 pm, all year round in primary schools; access to parenting support; swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialist support services such as health and social care; and wider community access to ICT suites, sports and arts facilities, and access to adult learning.

The GLA commissioned research on 'What works in preventing and re-engaging young people NEET in London' included a toolkit document²⁸ on promoting the role that extended (secondary) schools can play in this agenda, including through study support and community involvement.

Support for children in need

A core principle in the *Children Act* 1989 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has been that families should be supported to bring up their own children wherever possible, unless it is inconsistent with the child's welfare and safeguarding needs. Not only are preventative services for children in need widely regarded as better for children, there is also evidence that they can be more cost-effective than the alternative of a child being looked after by the local authority. The average cost per week of a London child in need receiving a service is £365 (England average, £290) whereas the cost of a looked after child is £820 (England average, £680)²⁹. However, the challenge of re-focusing expenditure has led to many local authorities struggling to increase their relative spend on preventative services. In London, the relative spend on preventative services is a little above the national average and has increased in line with national increases.

Table 7.4 Gross expenditure on children in need but not looked after, as a percentage of gross expenditure on all children's services, 2000 – 2006

	2000/01	2002/03	2005/6
Inner London (%)	34	38	41
Outer London (%)	32	37	40
Unitary authorities (%)	32	38	39
Shire counties (%)	30	36	39
Metropolitan districts (%)	34	38	38
England (%)	32	38	39

Source CSCI Performance Assessment Indicators

Children in need may be assessed as in need of services for a range of reasons. In London they are more likely to be receiving services because of absent parenting (primarily due to the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in London) or low family income than the national average.

Table 7.5 Children receiving services in week, by category of need, all children in need

Reason for needing services (numbers and percentages)

	Abuse or neglect	Disability	Parental illness/disability	Family in acute distress	Family dysfunction	Socially unacceptable behaviour	Low income	Absent parenting	Cases other than CIN	Not stated
England	86,900 (37%)	29,700 (13%)	11,600 (5%)	24,100 (10%)	29,800 (13%)	14,000 (6%)	4,200 (2%)	9,900 (4%)	8,400 (4%)	16,100 (7%)
London	13,460 (30%)	5,210 (12%)	2,780 (6%)	3,795 (8%)	4,960 (11%)	2,280 (5%)	2,070 (5%)	4,630 (10%)	1,570 (4%)	3,965 (9%)

Source Department for Education and Skills. Children in Need in England Survey, 2005

Support to parents

Parenting impacts on outcomes for children ranging from physical and mental health to academic attainment, and the government has made support for ‘positive parenting’ central to its Every Child Matters programme and emphasis on improving outcomes for disadvantaged children. A positive parenting style can act as a protective factor against other risks, such as growing up in a low-income household or a deprived neighbourhood, reducing the likelihood that these risks will translate into problems over time. Policy has embraced evidence suggesting that parenting skills can be taught and learned³⁰.

Targeted support for parents in disadvantaged areas is provided largely through Sure Start Children’s Centres. The National Evaluation of Sure Start (NESS) published early findings based on data from 2001 – 2004, showing that in most areas there were moderate but measurable improvements in parenting: parents were warmer and more accepting of their child’s behaviour, using less harsh discipline such as smacking or shouting; and starting to have a more organised home life with better routines for children.

The National Audit Office value for money report on Sure Start centres³¹ has reported that nationally centres were raising the quality of services and making them more relevant to the needs of lone parents, teenage parents and ethnic minorities in areas with large minority populations. But they needed to do more to identify and provide outreach services to families with high levels of need in their area. Less progress was being made in improving services for fathers, parents of children with disabilities, and for ethnic minorities in areas with smaller minority populations. There was also a lack of awareness of the full range of services available by some people using services as well as by families not using the centres at all.

A report by 4Children, drawing on their Make Space Youth Review, emphasises the particular need for support for families of teenagers and specifically recommends that parents need support in balancing commitments at work and at home and the right to request flexible working for parents of older children is essential. It further proposes that regular activities for older children during times that parents are at work are important in creating a positive supervised environment³².

Perhaps surprisingly given the policy significance of parenting, there remains a lack of London-specific information on the full range of parenting initiatives that have been developed across the city and a shortage of evaluative data on their impacts.

Every Parent Matters sets out the government's commitment to supporting parents from birth to the transition to adulthood³³. It summarises the range of initiatives and their anticipated development to 2010, including: support to new parents, Sure Start and other children's centre based services, the role of extended schools, the free books for children scheme, the introduction of parent support advisers to aid home-schools liaison, and the role of Targeted Youth Support, and many other specific initiatives covered below and elsewhere in this report. It lays out the basis for current family policy as being the recognition of the significance of parenting at each stage of growing up, particularly:

- In the early years, parental aspirations and encouragement have a significant impact on children's cognitive development and literacy and numeracy skills.
- Parental involvement in a child's schooling between the ages of seven and 16 is a more powerful force than family background, size of family and level of parental education.
- Selective parenting interventions can substantially improve childhood behaviour.

- Father–child relationships – be they positive, negative or lacking – have profound and wide ranging impacts on children that last a lifetime, particularly for children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds.

In the **Parenting Support guidance published by the DfES** in October 2006 the government asked local authorities: to develop a strategic and joined-up approach to the design and delivery of parenting support services; to identify a single commissioner; and commission parenting programmes that are evidence-based. In February 2007 they announced an additional £7.5 million available to local authorities between then and March 2008 to support this work.

For the second round of the **Parenting Fund**, the DfES grant was just over £14 million awarded to 131 projects, to run from July 2006 to July 2008. Recipients are charities and 'not for profit' organisations undertaking parenting support work where parents, families and children face significant challenges. In round two, there is a greater emphasis on working with teenagers, an incorporation of the 'Respect' agenda and support to couples as a way of strengthening parenting. The grant focuses on 23 localities including Greenwich, Southwark, Hackney and Croydon.

Under the **Respect Action Plan**, the government announced, in April 2007, a network of 53 Family Intervention Projects (FIPs) to work intensively with particularly troubled and troublesome families across England. Family Intervention Projects provide a single key worker to 'grip' the family and challenge the root causes of their difficulties by giving intensive support – and use sanctions if rules are broken. London services will be located in Camden, Hackney, Lambeth, Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Westminster.

As part of the **Social Exclusion Action Plan**, ten new pilot sites were announced in January 2007 (including Tower Hamlets and Southwark) to test a nurse-led intensive home-visiting programme designed to help disadvantaged first-time parents achieve better outcomes for their children. Health visitors provide support to boost health in pregnancy, encourage attachment to their new baby and help with parenting skills. It draws on neurological research showing how pregnancy and early bonding are vital to a child's development³⁵.

Support to families affected by disability

The most comprehensive national disability surveys were undertaken by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) between 1985 and 1989 and are consequently out of date. Gordon et al (2000) later undertook a re-analysis of the OPCS data and, for some purposes, policy-makers and researchers still tend to rely on this as the most robust national data currently available. The Family Fund database is also one of the most frequently used and highly regarded national sources of information on disabled children and their families. More recently, the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) Family Resources Survey (FRS) has collected national data on disabled children³⁶. In this national survey of 28,000 households, six per cent of under-16s have a disability (two-thirds of these are boys). These figures would equate to over 100,000 disabled children under 16 in London. The national survey found that 75 per cent of disabled children receive 'continuous care' and a further ten per cent receive care 'several times a day'.

The table below shows the number of disabled children receiving services from local authorities based on the Children in Need Census, 2005.

Table 7.6 Children with a disability in receipt of services during survey week in February 2005³⁷

	Children looked after	Children supported in their families or independently	All children in need
Shire authorities	5,400	9,400	14,700
Unitary authorities	2,200	4,500	6,600
Metropolitan authorities	2,800	4,300	7,100
London authorities	1,500	4,200	5,700
England	11,800	22,300	34,100

Source Children in Need Census 2005, DfES

Disabled children are over-represented in the looked after population. However, the data show a considerably lower proportion of disabled children as looked after in London than in England generally, suggesting that community-based services are more likely to be supporting families in London. Research by the National Autistic Society has found a double-disadvantage in their UK-wide survey for children with autism from black and minority ethnic communities³⁸.

Nationally, the level of support available to families with disabled children has been subject to criticism. A 2006 survey of 20 local authorities

including five London boroughs³⁹ raised a variety of concerns including: an absence of plans for disabled children in Children and Young People's Plans, despite most local authorities identifying disabled children as a priority group; a lack of involvement of either disabled children or their parents in the development of the strategic plan; evidence of some planning for education but virtually none for housing or transport, both of which are of vital importance for disabled children and their families; and vagueness in many of the actions for disabled children in Children and Young People's Plans.

As part of the 2007 budget, the government announced an early Comprehensive Spending Review settlement for the Department of Education and Skills (DfES) informed by the findings of the Disabled Children Review⁴⁰. **Aiming High for Disabled Children** allows the DCSF to immediately start planning provision for disabled children for the CSR period, underpinned by £340 million of investment to: empower disabled children and their families, with a clear and transparent 'core offer', piloting Individual Budgets, and supporting best practice on engagement, such as parent forums; encourage more responsive services, with disabled children prioritised at both a local and national level, developing a national indicator on disabled children; provide better coordinated support, delivered as soon as disabled children and their families need it, and a Transition Support Programme; improve provision of key services, including boosting provision of short breaks, and a childcare accessibility project.

Young carers

Around one in 40 London children are young carers. Data from the 2001 census showed there to be nearly 150,000 young carers in England and Wales of whom nearly 22,000 were in London. These data are obtained by self-report: they may include the performance of some relatively light tasks but they may also exclude some young carers who do not wish to be identified as such. Based on the Census figures, most (18,086) care for under 20 hours a week but some (3,958) care for between 20 and 50 hours plus. There is some variation between boroughs with Bromley having the lowest proportion of young carers (1.6 per cent) and Tower Hamlets the highest (4.2 per cent). Young carers are increasingly recognised in government policy. For example, the Home Office report *Hidden Harm* estimates that, in the UK, there are between 250,000 and 350,000 children of problem drug users⁴¹. These children are not necessarily carers, but many may be taking on responsibilities that are disproportionate to their age.

Being a young carer can have detrimental effects on young people, including problems at school, health problems, emotional difficulties,

isolation, lack of time for leisure, feeling different, pressure from keeping family problems a secret, problems with transition to adulthood, lack of recognition and feeling they are not being listened to. Twenty seven per cent of carers of secondary school age experience some problems at school⁴².

Many young carers have a parent with a mental health difficulty. The impacts of this can also include social exclusion, restricted opportunities and 'stigma by association'⁴³. It is increasingly recognised that professionals working with adult mental health service users need to be alert to the needs of the whole family including children. Recent initiatives to ensure improvement in this area include a SCIE practice development initiative: The Parental Mental Health and Child Welfare Network⁴⁴. There is evidence of particular issues when a parent spends time in hospital. A review of hospital contact arrangements to support parents and children for CSIP found that poor facilities and inadequate support and information when a parent was in hospital often contributed to family difficulties rather than alleviating them⁴⁵.

Many young carers are in need of additional support for themselves and their families. In 2006, thirteen Princess Royal Trust Carers Centres reached a total of 1,862 London young carers⁴⁶. It is likely, however, that not all young carers access services either from their local authority or elsewhere owing to a reluctance to identify themselves. It is suggested that this reluctance sometimes arises from fear of bullying from peers, or from anxiety on the part of young people, their parents or both, that it will lead to unwanted intervention in their family circumstances.

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers recently examined London Boroughs' Children and Young People's Plans to see whether, where and how they had incorporated reference to young carers. Inclusion was very varied with nine plans making no mention of young carers. Where young carers were mentioned, this was most commonly a single reference in relation to the community and voluntary sector or to a specific young carers project. Exceptions included Barnet and Camden which referred specifically to the development of a young carers strategy and to developing an effective interface between adult and children's services⁴⁷.

Concern has been expressed by voluntary organisations over the future funding arrangements for support to young carers. The carers' grant and children's fund are central government funding streams that fund a range of projects for carers and disadvantaged children, and include schemes supporting young carers. The carers grant is worth £185 million in England this financial year, while the Children's Fund will provide £130 –

£149 million. Both of these funding streams are due to end in March 2008: the Children's Fund will go directly into local authorities' children budgets, while the future of the carers grant will not be clarified until the Comprehensive Spending Review is completed.

As part of the **Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007**, HM Treasury and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) promised further actions to improve outcomes for children and young people, with a particular focus on those from more disadvantaged backgrounds. Priorities identified are building resilience, attainment in education, good social and emotional skills and positive parenting⁴⁸.

Over the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review period the government intends to set out a Parents' Charter – making clear the minimum level of support all parents should expect from local services, what is available where parents have greater need, and in return, the responsibilities of parents towards their children. The government will provide £13 million to enable a significant number of local areas to set up pathfinders, providing more effective support to families caught in a cycle of low achievement.

Children living away from their families of origin

Looked after children and young people

Over one-fifth of England's looked after children are London children, and the rate for inner London is the highest in the country – far exceeding the national average. This rate has risen considerable from the 2003 level of 77 children per 10,000 to 95 per 10,000 in 2006; while the outer London rate has dropped from 70 per 10,000 in 2003 to 59 in 2006.

Table 7.7 Children looked after at 31 March 2006, by number and rate

	Number	Rate per 10,000
England	60,300	55
London	11,770	72
Inner London	5,750	95
Outer London	6,020	59

Source Children Looked After by Local Authorities, Year Ending 31 March 2006

Rates vary across boroughs, showing a range from 23 children per 10,000 in Richmond-upon-Thames to 121 per 10,000 in Hammersmith and Fulham and in Lambeth. The three boroughs with the most consistently high numbers and rates between 2003 and 2006 are Southwark, Islington and Hammersmith and Fulham.

The proportion of children placed in residential care has steadily declined, with a corresponding increase in the use of foster placements.

Table 7.8 Average percentage of children looked after (excluding those placed with parents) who were in foster placements or placed for adoption, 2000 – 2006

	2000/01	2002/03	2005/06
Inner London (%)	62	64	76
Outer London (%)	65	77	77
Unitary authorities (%)	68	75	85
Shire counties (%)	68	73	83
Metropolitan districts (%)	60	68	81
England (%)	64.3	71.6	82

Source Commission for Social Care Inspection. 2005-06 Performance Assessment Framework Performance Indicators

Inner London, in line with other metropolitan districts, has increased its percentage of children in foster or adoptive placements by 12 per cent since 2003, but remains below the national average for this type of placement. Outer London (which was well above the national average in 2003) is now also well below the national average.

Placement stability

Nationally, placement stability improved considerably between 1998 and 2002, but has now remained static over a five year period. Inner London had been doing comparatively well against this indicator up to 2002 but, despite considerable efforts to improve placement stability for looked after children⁴⁹, the percentage of inner London children with three or more placements has now crept up to the national average of 12 per cent.

Out of borough placement

In 2005/06 there were a total of 18,300 looked after children in England in placements outside their local authority boundary. 5,680 of them were London children. Of these 2,200 were in placements more than 20 miles from their home⁵⁰. This represents 19 per cent of all children placed, compared with 13 per cent in England as a whole.

Demand for placements has been rising, particularly for foster care. This has not been matched by growth in the supply of foster carers with a resulting rise in unit costs. The residential care market is less capacity-constrained. London boroughs have access to information across boroughs and a single pan-London contract. There are, however, significant shortages of places in residential and foster care for children with special and/or high needs in London including for disabled children, children with behavioural difficulties, offenders and children in sibling groups.

The **Care Matters White Paper** (June 2007) proposes to strengthen the statutory framework so that a local authority cannot place a child out of their local area unless it is satisfied that such a placement is in the child's best interests. The authority must ensure that all children placed out of authority receive the same level of support as if they were placed closer to home. This indicates how it will be necessary to continue to develop effective local and regional strategies to develop more placement options closer to children's home communities. London boroughs are collaborating to improve their local care capacity and to recruit, train and retain more high quality foster carers for the capital. The major obstacle to this is London's lack of suitable family-sized low-cost accommodation (see earlier in chapter)

The **London SEN and Children in Care Commissioning Board** was established by the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS), London Councils, Government Office for London and the London Regional Partnership in 2006 to support London boroughs' commissioning of quality services for children. The Board was set up in response to concerns about the increasing cost, suitability and availability of non-maintained and independent special school placements and care of children away from home. The aim is to secure better outcomes for young people, better value for money, and to secure improved services for children placed away from home in residential or foster care. Better commissioning practice may lead to opportunities for reinvestment in services. The initiative will focus on securing residential and foster care for children and young people with special health, education and social care needs; set up a regional commissioning unit serving London; and ensure each borough has effective and robust commissioning arrangements in place, developing cross-London arrangements where appropriate.

Health and education of looked after children in London

Steady improvement continues in relation to the Performance Assessment Indicator for the provision of healthcare to looked after children. This is true nationally, but the extent of improvement is greatest in inner London. In 2003 64 per cent of looked after children in inner London had an annual health and dental assessment; in 2006 this had increased to 85 per cent.

Table 7.9 Average percentages of looked after children who had dental and annual health assessments during past 12 months, 2000 – 2006⁵¹

	2000/01	2002/03	2005/06
Inner London (%)	62	64	85
Outer London (%)	65	77	84
Unitary authorities (%)	68	75	84
Shire counties (%)	68	73	81
Metropolitan districts (%)	60	68	78
England (%)	64.3	71.6	81

Source Commission for Social Care Inspection. 2005-06 Performance Assessment Framework Performance Indicators

Improvement in the educational attainment of looked after children has been slow. There has been some improvement: in 2005, 13 per cent of London's children in care achieved five GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade A* to C, compared with 10.8 per cent of children in care nationally, though this still compares badly to the 55 per cent of children in the general population achieving this level of attainment. However, many London children in care are making rapid gains in educational outcomes. 71 per cent of London's looked after children are still in full-time education at Year 11, compared with 61 per cent of children in care in England as a whole⁵².

There have also been considerable increases in the percentage of care leavers attaining at least one GCSE/GNVQ, though the percentage remains lower in London than elsewhere in England.

Some London boroughs have made marked progress. In Lewisham 67 per cent of looked after young people took one or more GCSEs in 2006 (up from 50 per cent in 2005) and 13 per cent achieved five A* – C grades in 2006 (five per cent in 2005). This is a result, at least in part, of steps taken to eliminate permanent school exclusions of looked after children, extra tuition for children in care in Years 10 and 11 and a new system for monitoring the attendance of children in care.

In Barnet a 'champions' scheme, focussed on improving attainment, provides champions who are senior members of staff within the council or outside organisations who, unbeknown to the child, take the role of a concerned parent, finding out the young person's potential and ensuring they get any additional provision needed. After the first year, the number of looked after children gaining five A* to C grades at GCSE doubled from less than ten per cent to 20 per cent. In 2006, this had improved to 25 per cent.

Table 7.10 Percentage of young people leaving care aged 16 or over with at least 1 GCSE at grade A* – G or a GNVQ

	1999/2000	2002/03	2005/06
Inner London (%)	24	38	47
Outer London (%)	27	37	50
Unitary authorities (%)	31	44	55
Shire counties (%)	36	48	55
Metropolitan districts (%)	27	43	54
England (%)	31	44	53

Source Commission for Social Care Inspection. 2005-06 Performance Assessment Framework Performance Indicators

Since the launch of joint DfES/DH guidance '**Education of children and young people in public care**' in 2000, there has been a sustained focus by government on improving the educational outcomes for looked after children. The new White Paper (Care Matters, June 2007) states that children in care have been given the highest priority in school admissions, with an expectation that they will get places in the 'best schools', even if they are full. They will also get a specific assurance that they will not have to move placement and school in the crucial Years 10 or 11⁵³.

Building on the statutory duty on local authorities to promote the education of the children they look after, the **Education Act 2005** required schools to give looked after children priority in their normal admission cycle and the **Education and Inspection Act 2006** gives local authorities the power to direct a school admission authority of a maintained school to admit a looked after child outside the normal admission round even where the school is full. The government is also funding 11 local authorities – including two in London – to pilot the 'virtual school head' – as a champion of the education of looked after children.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people

As with refugee and asylum seeking adults, there is no city-wide data about numbers of refugee children and young people in London, apart from the London Asylum Seekers Consortium (LASC) figures for separated children and young people (6,265 at end September 2006) and children in families supported by London local authorities (1,325). These figures do not take into account numbers of children and young people who are in NASS emergency accommodation awaiting dispersal, or may have returned to London following 'dispersal', or are unsupported by NASS or London local authorities.

At 31 March 2006, 3,200 unaccompanied asylum seeking children were looked after in England, 63 per cent of whom were located in London, with a further 15 per cent located elsewhere in the South East. The number of looked after asylum seeking children at 31 March 2006 in London and the South East had fallen by three per cent from the previous year, while the Midlands and the North had seen a rise of 35 per cent.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children/refugees depend on the support of local authorities, through social services departments, either under Section 17 (S17) or Section 20 (S20) of the *Children Act 1989*. Children looked after under S20 are usually placed in foster care or residential home and receive a wide range of services⁵⁴ which children under S17 do not receive. Sixteen and 17-year-olds often receive accommodation and financial support only, with no adult to care for them. A range of successful challenges have resulted in revised guidance indicating that young separated refugees should be cared for under Section 20⁵⁵. However, because children who are not given a positive decision must apply again for asylum just before their 18th birthday, and there is limited funding within local authorities for their support, entitlement to leaving care packages may be disputed⁵⁶.

The Joint Committee on Human Rights 2007 report on the Treatment of Asylum Seekers⁵⁷ expresses concern over the UK's reservation from applying the UN Children's Rights protection to children subject to immigration control, and over the exclusion of National Asylum Support Service (NASS) and the Immigration Service from Section 11 of the *Children Act 2004*. It recommends that both should be changed as they signal that the rights of asylum seeking children are less important than those of other children and affords them unequal protection. It also recommends establishing a formal system of guardianship for unaccompanied children and better systems for dealing with age disputes in such cases.

The report specifically addresses the issue of such children being taken out of the looked after system before they reach 18. It recommends that government must provide local authorities with sufficient funds to deliver appropriate support including leaving care costs.

In his response to the Home Office consultation document, '**Planning better Outcomes and Support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children**' the Mayor has stated that the government should treat unaccompanied asylum seeking children in the same way as other children in its care. Based upon the best interests of the child, a young person leaving care is recognised as needing ongoing support beyond the age of 18 and this is no different for young asylum seekers, and in many cases their care needs are higher⁵⁸. If the government invests in young refugees so that they become well educated, confident young people with good life skills, this will enable them to contribute to whichever society they end up living in.

The Mayor also expressed concern that the argument for geographical distribution made within the consultation paper appears to be cost-driven, rather than focusing primarily on the best interests of asylum-seeking children. It was maintained that the good work of local authorities that have already developed specialist services (many of which are in London and the South East) should be built on, wherever their geographical location, and replicated elsewhere wherever possible.

Care leavers

Care leavers are a particularly vulnerable group. Since the *Children (Leaving Care) Act* came into force in 2001 there has been a gradual improvement in outcomes for care leavers, but generally they will face more difficulties in early adulthood than young people who have been able to rely on the support of their family. Typically young people who are not in care leave their parental home when they are 24 years old. Young people may leave their local authority care placement at a much younger age: more than a quarter of children who are in care aged 16 or over (and therefore subject to the provisions of the *Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000*) leave their placements when they are still aged 16 and the rest by the time they are 18.

There is frequently not enough suitable accommodation for young care leavers and even when young people obtain their own tenancy there can be continued problems. Some may not be ready to take this on, they may receive inadequate support and some may be placed in unsafe areas and in provision that is of a poor quality. Over 30 per cent of care leavers are

not in education, employment or training (NEET) at age 19 compared with 13 per cent of all young people⁵⁹.

The **Care Matters White Paper** will give children the right to stay in care up to the age of 18, or even to remain with foster carers up to the age of 21. For every year that children are in care, the government will contribute £100 to their Child Trust Fund's £500 annual budget for each child in care at risk of falling behind in their education, which can be spent on books and after-school activities. It also includes a £2,000 university bursary⁶⁰. The Green Paper (October 2006) had recognised that young people need the right kind of support so that they can leave care in a more gradual way that is more like how other young people leave their families. The White Paper states that the government will pilot ways to enable young people to remain with foster carers up to the age of 21. They will also extend the entitlement to the support of a personal adviser up to the age of 25 for all care leavers.

Young homeless people and children who run away from home

During 2006 a total of 31,230 households between the ages of 16 and 24 were accepted as homeless in England, of which 20 per cent (6,230 households) were in London. Given the factors outlined above about the vulnerability of care leavers, it is not surprising that young people leaving care are over-represented in the population of young homeless people. Fifteen per cent of young people supported by Centrepoin in 2006/07 had spent time in care. Centrepoin worked with over 1,500 young people aged 16 to 25 (1,577) in 2006/07. On any one night over 650 young people stay at a Centrepoin service. Young people aged 18 to 19 years old account for over a third (34 per cent) of the young people Centrepoin worked with during the year. Seventeen per cent were aged 16 or 17. Three-quarters (74 per cent) were of black or minority ethnic origin and 30 per cent were refugees. Half of the young people (49 per cent) reported that they had slept rough prior to entering a Centrepoin service.

Other groups vulnerable to homelessness include young people who run away (many of whom run away from care). Sixteen per cent of young people supported by Centrepoin last year were known to have been runaways. Statistical data provided by the Metropolitan Police Service for 2005/06 reports 16,137 missing incidents for young people under the age of 18 across the 32 London boroughs. Of these, just over a half were female and a quarter were under the age of 14 years⁶¹.

National estimates of the incidence of running away suggest that girls are slightly more likely to run away than boys and the police data is consistent with this finding. Research⁶² found that 30 per cent of young

people running away overnight had first done so before the age of 13. The Metropolitan Police Service figures appear to confirm a relatively high incidence of running away for younger children. Initial findings from the same research also show a lower incidence of running away in London compared with other areas.

London Metropolitan University, in conjunction with Centrepont, produced a 2007 report on the attitudes of young people and parents on the risks of running away and homelessness⁶³. The researchers concluded that most runaways could have been helped by negotiation and mediation skills and that young people and their parents would both benefit from this.

Communities and Local Government has commissioned research on the causes, impacts and costs of homelessness in respect of 2,500 households, including 16 and 17-year-olds, to gain a better understanding of the factors that influence homelessness and the impact of living in temporary accommodation. The research due to be published later in 2007, confirms the findings on vulnerability, with high proportions of the young people having had difficult childhood experiences (including parents with mental health problems, family breakdown, frequent moves, conflict with parents and step-parents, violence within the home and sexual abuse). Many of the young people had also had previous involvement with statutory agencies either as a child or as a young person⁶⁴.

Subsequent to being accepted as homeless, 16 and 17-year-olds tended to make significantly greater use of health and support services when in temporary accommodation than families accepted as homeless. However, once 16 and 17-year-olds had been provided with settled accommodation, service use tended to fall considerably. This raises the question of whether this reflected a reduction in need or whether young people find it difficult to access these services after having been provided with settled housing⁶⁵.

In March 2007 the government announced a **youth homelessness scheme** to include the development of a national network of supported lodgings schemes. CLG will work in partnership with Centrepont and YMCA England to pilot innovative ways of preventing youth homelessness. The government has strengthened the statutory protection available for young people who are at risk of homelessness in England and encouraged local authorities to take positive steps to tackle youth homelessness. 16 and 17-year-olds (with certain exceptions) and young people aged between 18 and 20 who were formerly in care have a priority need for accommodation under the homelessness legislation

The **London Refuge** provides direct access accommodation for children and young people running away from home, informal mediation and family support. The Refuge provided emergency accommodation for 241 young people in 2004/05, and 226 young people in 2005/06. London Councils is currently co-ordinating a multi-agency initiative to develop new models of service for young runaways in London, including mapping need and provision, and developing joint commissioning to support both young people at risk of and those who run away and their families.

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8 Making a positive contribution

Summary

Every Child Matters (2003) defined making a positive contribution as 'being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour'.

National developments to promote participation include the appointment of a Children's Commissioner for England, and increased consultation with children and young people over policy proposals.

In London, the higher priority given to increased participation of children and young people in decision-making and service planning is evident through specific initiatives by the Greater London Authority (Peer Outreach Team, Young London website), as well as through London Councils, GOL and by children's services at borough level.

Despite these developments, the involvement of children and young people in decision-making remains difficult to quantify. Participation is subject to a range of interpretations encompassing a wide range of activities from consultation exercises to young people led services. In addition, the lack of recording and evaluation means there is a gap in information on the extent to which participation brings about real change in policy development and service planning.

The 2006 London Council's Survey of Londoners included a sample of 11 to 17-year-olds. Of these, 20 per cent had been a member of a school council, half had campaigned or said they might do so in future. Just ten per cent said they would never vote, an improvement on 2005 when 16 per cent of young Londoners had said that they would never vote in an election.

The 2005 Communities and Local Government (CLG) national Citizenship Survey found that 73 per cent of young Londoners answered 'very' or 'fairly' to the question of how strongly they felt they belonged to their neighbourhood; 72 per cent felt the same in relation to their borough; and 80 per cent in relation to Britain.

The CLG Survey found that young Londoners were more likely to have friends of a different ethnic background than young people nationally.

Increasing the number of young people involved in volunteering is a government target. Twenty-eight per cent of young Londoners in the above Citizenship Survey said they had undertaken some formal volunteering in the previous month, and 44 per cent over the previous year.

Despite recurring public and media concern about youth offending, the vast majority of young people do not become involved in offending behaviour. A recent Metropolitan Police Service report (2006) highlighted that the number of young offenders in London has gradually decreased in the last five years.

In November 2003, there were 10,919 young people (aged 15 to 20) in prison (of these 2,254 were 15 to 17-year-olds). At 31 March 2007, there were 11,725 young people in prison (2,413 15 to 17-year-olds), an increase of six per cent of 15 to 20-year-olds and three per cent of 15 to 17-year-olds from 2006. Eleven per cent of the London prison population was under 21 in 2006.

In London, the use of anti-social behaviour orders has increased yearly in line with national statistics, from just ten ASBOs imposed on 10 to 17-year-olds in 2001 to 188 in 2005. However, young people under 18 only make up 36 per cent of those subject to an ASBO in London.

There continues to be limited access to advice and advocacy for young people in London as elsewhere in the UK.

Introduction

*Every Child Matters (2003)*¹ defined 'making a positive contribution' as 'being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour'. This definition encompasses both rights and responsibilities, both empowerment and control. This is clear in *Change for Children*² (December 2004), which set out the following five elements of a positive contribution for young people:

- to engage in decision-making and support the community and environment
- to engage in law abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school
- to develop positive relationships and choose not to bully and discriminate
- to develop self-confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges
- to develop enterprising behaviour.

Following the passage of the *Children Act 2004* political attention began to focus on 'respect'. In January 2006, the Respect Action Plan³ stated that: 'The future depends on unlocking the positive potential of young people'. However, in most public and media debates, the 'respect' agenda

has been driven by a preoccupation with young people's offending and anti-social behaviour rather than their positive potential.

This chapter reflects these elements of rights and responsibilities, by reviewing the current participation opportunities provided at all levels of government for the development of children and young people's participation, and their engagement as citizens in community and political life in London⁴. This includes an analysis of specific developments within London to establish the infrastructure to facilitate and sustain such activities. Finally, the chapter will summarise the most recent data on the minority of young people who offend.

Children and young people's participation

The State of London's Children Report, 2004 provided an overview of the definitions and typologies for participation. We do not re-visit this material here, but note that participation can occur at a variety of levels and in different contexts. It encompasses children being involved in decisions affecting them as individuals, about services or facilities, and in decisions in a community or civic context. Participation can include: being listened to or 'having a say'; involvement at early stages of developing policy and planning services; young people led initiatives; and young people involved as volunteers or political activists.

Since the publication of *Learning to Listen* in 2001⁵ there has been a policy and practice shift towards children's participation at national and local level. A decade ago, the involvement of young people was still a marginal element of political and organisational life. Today, it is a mainstream requirement, although questions remain about the extent to which participation is genuinely embedded; how far it is sometimes a 'tokenistic activity; whether it engages sufficiently with the most socially excluded young people and, perhaps most critically of all, whether there is evidence of it making a difference to decisions made and outcomes achieved.

National developments

In recent years, the government has developed an increasingly proactive approach to obtaining children and young people's views to inform policy. *Every Child Matters* was the first major government policy to have a specifically designed consultation process for children. Subsequently, 19,000 young people responded to the *Youth Matters*⁶ proposals in 2005, and 5,000 to *Care Matters*⁷ in 2006.

The Children's Commissioner, Sir Albert Aynsley-Green, was appointed in March 2005 'to give children and young people a voice in government and public life', and given a brief to pay particular attention to gathering



and putting forward the views of the most vulnerable children and young people in society, and to promote their involvement in the range of organisations whose decisions and actions affect them.

On 16 May 2007, **The Children's Commissioner for England**, Sir Albert Aynsley-Green launched a new five-year plan to focus on key issues to improve the lives of England's 11 million children and young people⁸. The new strategy, developed in partnership with children and young people, identifies six fundamental areas of concern regarding children's rights and well-being: youth justice and anti-social behaviour; asylum and trafficking; a fair life; mental health; enjoying education and leisure; and staying safe. His office is now called 11 million.

The plan sets out the Children's Commissioner's vision and mission, and the positive impacts to be achieved over the next five years. At the heart of the strategy is the participation of children and young people, culminating in a Big Discussion held every August. At this event children and young people will agree the priorities for the coming year and decide how 50 per cent of the Commissioner's project budget will be spent.

The National Children's Bureau has been commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills to set up a new Children and Youth Board for 2007 – 2008 to 'advise the government on issues that affect children and young people in England, and to find out the views of other children and young people and promote their voices to the Government'⁹.

The UK Youth Parliament aims to give young people a voice that will be listened to by national and local government and providers of services. It held its first sitting in 2001 and there are currently over 300 elected MYPs; 87 per cent of Local Education Authorities across England are represented, including 24 of the 32 eligible London boroughs.

In March 2007 the **DfES** launched a new interactive **Kids' website** kids.direct.gov.uk/ for 6 to 11-year-olds with a focus on citizenship. It contains information on schools, the police and local government and includes a Kids' Rights section with information on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

A criticism of some participation initiatives is that they mainly attract the most articulate young people and fail to engage with disengaged or marginalised groups. A national review of the participation of disabled children and young people in decision-making reported that participation in decisions at any level was only happening for a small number of disabled children. These were mainly those most able to communicate,

most articulate and confident¹⁰. In London, in 2006, The Children's Society conducted a survey¹¹ of team managers of local authorities' Disabled Children's Teams. Of the 23 responding teams just over half (12) 'always consult' and the remaining 11 'sometimes consult' with disabled young people from the outset. Only a third of respondents (7) 'always ask' the young person who they would like to support them in the meeting.

Current developments aiming to increase the participation of disabled children and young people include **'Making Ourselves Heard', a project from the Council for Disabled Children**, starting in 2007. It aims to give disabled children direct access to the government and policy-makers. A network of disabled young people and the organisations that support them will be set up to map and publicise positive models and services, promote the voices of disabled young people, and promote the inclusion of disabled children and young people.

On 14 February 2007, The Children's Society launched a new interactive micro site (www.mylife.uk.com) to give children and young people a say as part of the UK's first independent national inquiry into childhood ('Good Childhood Inquiry')¹² (see also Chapter 6).

The **National Youth Agency has developed a standards framework** which has been widely adopted by statutory and voluntary sector organisations. **'Hear by Right'**¹³ is based on a Seven S model of organisational change: Shared values; Strategy; Structures; Systems; Staff; Skills and knowledge; and Style of leadership. It relies on self-assessment, divided into three levels of 'emerging', 'established' and 'advanced', with each level building on the last with the aim of ensuring that young people's involvement is built in and not just bolted on.

So to what extent does participation activity make a difference? In 2003, Carnegie produced a report for the DfES on children and young people's participation in England¹⁴. It concluded that while there had been a substantial increase in the level of participation activity by almost all organisations, there was considerable variation in the development of essential infrastructure for effective practice. Practice tended to be more developed in parts of the voluntary and community sector, and the report suggests that a small number of organisations felt that 'a policy' might prove enough, or that the current 'fad' for participation might pass. It is argued that without effective and adequately resourced participation infrastructure there is a grave danger that such policies are 'window dressing'.

More recently, in 2006, a literature review on the impact of young people's voices on policy and practice¹⁵ concluded that while there is a

growing literature on the processes of involving young people, there is a gap in the routine evaluation and documentation of impact. The benefits of involvement for young people themselves are frequently cited and there are a few well documented claims of changes made to organisational processes, policies and strategies as a result of young people's involvement. However, there is a lack of good evaluative evidence to assess the outcomes of participation.

Development of London's participation infrastructure

Increased participation of children and young people in decision-making and service planning is evident in London. At the regional government level, the Children and Young People's Unit of the GLA consulted directly with children and young people on the Mayor's Children and Young People's Strategy¹⁶ in 2003. Around 1,000 responses were received and there was strong support for the strategy from young people. Young people wanted to continue to be consulted about the work of the Mayor and GLA, and 84 per cent thought that a strategy would make things better for young people in London, with 47 per cent believing it would make things a lot better¹⁷. From children's and young people's perspective, the three best ideas in the strategy were: to make public transport cheaper for all children, and free for all primary school children; more play areas and parks that are safe and well looked after; and making public transport safer.

In September 2005, a progress report was produced, including a version specifically for young people, following up the issues they had highlighted in their responses to the consultation¹⁸. Since then, GLA initiatives have included: commissioning the National Children's Bureau to consult children about the London Climate Change Action Plan¹⁹; consulting young people to inform the development of the Mayor's Housing Strategy; and the ongoing work of the Peer Outreach Team.

Since the last State of London's Children Report in 2004, a main focus of the GLA's participation and engagement work has been to build up the Young Londoners' Network – comprising strands of the Lynk Up Crew, Peer Outreach Team and Londonwide Participation Network – and the Mayor's Young London website.

The **Lynk Up Crew** is a group of young people under the age of 11 who act as a children's advisory group to the work of the Children and Young People's Unit in the Mayor's Office. They meet every month to discuss issues, events and projects and give the GLA an important insight into the experience of children in London. They are both boys and girls from across London and representative of many different communities. The

Lynk Up Crew took part in a project with the NSPCC to review and edit a magazine that provides children and young people with practical advice on child protection and bullying issues. This was distributed to schools in London and nationwide from June 2007²⁰.

The **Peer Outreach Team** is a diverse group of 30 young Londoners, aged between 15 and 24 who actively promote participation across London, working with both the statutory and voluntary sectors. They advise and provide information, support and project work to policy teams across the GLA group. Team members have the opportunity to take part in accredited training from youth work to events planning. Recent work, alongside GLA policy officers, has included scoping new community safety initiatives with the Metropolitan Police Service, Transport for London and the Youth Justice Board.

The GLA Peer Outreach Team and the Young Ambassadors from the **London Organising Committee for the Games**, (some of whom have visited Beijing hosting the 2008 Games), are working together to ensure that young Londoners' voices are heard in the lead up to and legacy of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Young London website will dedicate a section to the 2012 Games and its impact on the lives of young Londoners.

A group of **disabled young Londoners** was supported in drafting a strategy to encourage more involvement of disabled young Londoners in decision-making. This work is informing ongoing Mayor's Office strategy work on disability issues for Londoners, and a conference is planned for autumn 2007 to consult further with disabled young Londoners on key issues and future planning.

The GLA has been meeting its commitment to stage an annual event to celebrate the United Nations **International Children's Rights Day** in November. Hundreds of young people have attended and expressed their views concerning safety, the environment, discrimination and many more issues in 2005 and 2006. For 2007, the steering group, led by young Londoners, has invited young people from across the globe to share their experiences and knowledge of rights and the event will be linked with the bicentenary celebrations of the abolition of slavery.

The Londonwide Participation Network is a support and advice network for young people's participation workers across London. It encourages good practice through the sharing of information and networking across borough and sector boundaries. There are over 350 members of the network and support is offered to members who wish to set up a sub-

group with others who share their specialism – one group, set up in 2007, is acting as an advisory group to the Board for Refugee Integration in London and its developing strategy.

The **Young Londoners website**²¹, launched in 2005, provides information to young Londoners about activities, events and projects; accessible information about the governance of London, children and young people's rights as young citizens; and interactive methods of feeding back their opinions and experiences on Mayoral policies and strategies. The site was set up with two channels – designed to target age-specific and relevant information at ages 11 and under and 11 to 18-year-olds. A youth steering group is advising on a number of design and function enhancements to the website for autumn 2007 to make it even easier for children and young people to shape its creative content.

The Architecture Crew is facilitated by Fundamental Architectural Inclusion, a not-for-profit organisation based in East London, and is the only youth architecture forum in the UK offering young people aged 13 to 19 a platform for their views in this area. In spring 2007, the Architecture Crew guest edited the Young London website. They gave their views about the prospect of living in London in 50 years' time and about their vision of a perfect building.

At London borough level, the views of children and young people are embedded to varying degrees in Children and Young People's Plans and policy and practice development. For example, London boroughs have developed some innovatory projects for involving children and young people in inspection. Peer inspection is becoming an increasingly common part of service delivery, and projects in 2006/07 were developed and supported by Camden Children's Fund, Havering Youth Support Service, Newham Youth and Community Service, Tower Hamlets Substance Misuse Service, and Kensington and Chelsea Youth Support and Development Service.

The GLA Peer Outreach Team is to lead on a project funded by the Government Office for London in 2007/08 offering local authorities the opportunity to work with a team of young people who can objectively review services for them and provide feedback for the authority to use in future plans.

Children and young people's involvement as citizens of London

Despite this range of participation work, regional surveys demonstrate that there is still more to be done. In 2004, the Young Londoners Survey²² found that almost half of those surveyed (46 per cent) knew that Ken

Livingstone was the Mayor of London, rising to 68 per cent among 16-year-olds and over a third said they knew at least a little of what he was doing. A similar line of questioning on the London Assembly revealed less knowledge with more than four out five young people unaware of what it was doing.

In the 2006 London Councils' Survey of Londoners²³, approximately a quarter of 11 to 17-year-olds felt that their council 'didn't do enough for them' (27 per cent), 'listen to them' (25 per cent) or 'keep them informed' (24 per cent). Sixteen per cent of young people felt involved in the council's decision-making, but overall young people's awareness of their council remains low. The council services that young people were most satisfied with were schools and libraries while they were least satisfied with activities for young people, which 36 per cent of young Londoners said were poor to extremely poor.

This is echoed by the views of adult Londoners, with the lack of 'things to do' and 'places to go' for children and teenagers regularly featuring high up the list of issues raised in London and national polls of adults. For example, in the Annual Londoners Surveys in 2005 and 2006, 'teenagers hanging around on the streets' was in the top four safety concerns, while 'providing young people with more things to do/ community centres' was in both years in the top three ideas for improving safety in their local area²⁴.

Last year (2006) was the second in which the Survey of Londoners included the views of younger residents. Altogether, 242 young people (aged 11 to 17) were surveyed. Of these, 20 per cent said that they had been a member of a school council, half of the sample said that they had campaigned or might do this in future, and 69 per cent said that they had either written to a local councillor or would consider doing this at some point in the future. Eighty-six per cent of young Londoners said that they had either voted in an election (such as for school council elections or, as in Lewisham, when voting for a young Mayor and Deputy Mayor), or would consider doing this in future. Just ten per cent said they would never vote, an improvement on 2005 when 16 per cent of young Londoners had said that they would never vote in an election. This indication of an increased interest in voting is welcome given that London has the worst voter registration level in the country and during the Mayoral election in 2004, 63 per cent of Londoners did not vote. The problem is particularly bad among young adult voters with a quarter of 18 to 24-year-olds not registered to vote²⁵.

Data from the CLG Citizenship Survey 2005²⁶ also provide some interesting indications of 16 to 19-year-old young Londoners'



involvement in civic and community life. However, it should be noted that the young London sample is small (168 young people out of a total of 597 respondents in this age band), therefore any differences from the national sample are unlikely to be significant²⁷.

Eighty per cent had been involved in some kind of civic participation or volunteering in the past 12 months (84 per cent in overall sample). Twenty-six per cent reported having been involved in some kind of civil renewal participation or consultation in the past 12 months (22 per cent nationally). Eight per cent had signed a petition in the preceding year (18 per cent nationally). Forty per cent were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with services for young people locally (35 per cent nationally), while 38 per cent were 'fairly' or 'very' dissatisfied (43 per cent nationally).

Being an active citizen presupposes a sense of belonging or social inclusion. Participants in the Citizenship Survey were also asked how strongly they felt they belonged to their neighbourhood: 73 per cent of young Londoners answered 'very' or 'fairly' strongly (72 per cent nationally); 72 per cent felt the same in relation to their borough; 57 per cent regarded their neighbourhood as 'tight-knit' (58 per cent nationally); 80 per cent felt 'very' or 'fairly' strongly that they belonged to Britain (83 per cent nationally).

'Belonging' can be limited to those who share an identity, and can be divisive as well as inclusive. However, young Londoners were more likely than young people in other parts of the country to have friends of a different ethnic group from their own: 88 per cent in London and 76 per cent in England and Wales²⁸. To some degree this is a reflection of the diversity of the young London population. As we have noted in previous chapters, the diversity of London's population means that young people have more opportunity to mix with peers of different ethnic backgrounds and cultures than in many other parts of Britain. However, the proportion of young people who have friends of a different ethnicity from themselves may also be seen as an encouraging sign for social cohesion.

Reporting in June 2007, the **Commission on Integration and Cohesion** recommended establishing national school-linking programmes and that there should be GCSE Citizenship Studies ceremonies. More strategically, there should also be 'incentives to encourage adult participation with young people'²⁹.

Table 8.1 Percentage of young people with friends of a different ethnic group from their own

What proportion of your friends is of the same ethnic group as you?						
Would you say...						
		All the same?	More than half?	About half?	Less than half?	Total
Londoners 16 to 19	No.	18	48	40	44	150
	%	12.0	32.0	26.7	29.3	100.0
Overall sample 16 to 19	No.	137	211	97	120	565
	%	24.2	37.3	17.2	21.2	100.0

Source CLG Citizenship Survey, 2005

Rise: London United³⁰ is an annual festival that brings together people from all communities to celebrate diversity and is a symbol of multiculturalism in the capital. About 40 per cent of the approximately 100,000 people who attended the 2006 festival audience were 16 to 25-year-olds. The festival encourages a greater understanding of the different communities that make up the unique character of London. With a broad audience now drawn to the festival (by a strong music programme), the anti-racist message is explicit – that racism will not be tolerated in London and the diversity that makes this city successful will be celebrated. Racist attacks in London have fallen by 35 per cent over the last five years.

In 2006, members of the Peer Outreach Team represented London at a pan-Europe youth conference in Nanterre, Paris. The conference was an opportunity for young people from across Europe to consider constructive solutions to the civil unrest in the streets of the Paris suburbs in summer 2005. The London representatives shared their experiences of growing up in London and met with officials from Nanterre’s City Hall about promoting genuine dialogue with young people and what Paris can learn from the London experience.

Young people spend much of their time at school and that is the main context in which their participation directly impacts on their daily lives. An example of the impact of children’s involvement in schools comes from Westminster Council Children and Young People’s City Survey, 2007. Forty-one per cent of secondary pupils and 70 per cent of primary pupils felt they had a say in the way things are run at school. However, students also believed that their say makes little difference: 74 per cent of secondary pupils in 2006/07 compared with 62 per cent in 2005/06 and 42 per cent of primary pupils in 2006/07 compared with 33 per cent in 2005/06³¹.

From late 2007, information on young people's views will be available through the Tellus2 survey, which has been developed jointly by Ofsted, DfES and Ipsos MORI to gather comparable data on children and young people's views across the country. Previously, the Tellus survey had been part of the Joint Area Review process. However, the enhanced Tellus survey will help develop a national database allowing local authorities to benchmark the responses from their area and act as a key source of evidence for the revised Annual Performance Assessment (APA) and Joint Area Review (JAR) arrangements. It can also help local authorities judge how much of an impact their services are having on improving outcomes for children and young people. The new online survey asks children and young people questions about their satisfaction with services (including aspects of their school life) and questions relating to the five Every Child Matters outcomes, including issues like healthy eating, participation in positive activities and bullying.

Volunteering

Increasing the number of young people involved in volunteering is one element of the government's strategy to promote positive citizenship and represents a significant new initiative within the Youth Matters programme. Following the recommendations of the **Russell Commission**, the government committed £100 million with the aim of boosting the number of young people volunteering by one million over the next five years. A new charity 'v' was established in May 2006 to co-ordinate the work needed to reach this target; so far, it has created over 110,000 volunteering opportunities for young people through projects in partnerships with the third, public and private sectors³².

Volunteering can be formal (eg as part of regular organised activities) or informal (eg helping out in the neighbourhood). The latter is harder to quantify, but as the table below suggests, is more common among all age groups. Nationally, the 2005 Citizenship Survey suggests that formal and informal volunteering is higher among 16 to 19-year-olds than in older age groups.

Table 8.2 Participation in voluntary activities at least once a month, by age, 2005

England	%	%
	Informal volunteering	Formal volunteering
16 to 19	50	32
20 to 24	44	26
25 to 34	37	25
35 to 49	37	32
50 to 64	34	30
65 to 74	36	31
75 and over	29	21

Source CLG Citizenship Survey, 2005

Twenty-eight per cent of the London sample in the 16 to 19 year age group of the above survey had undertaken some formal volunteering in the previous month and 44 per cent had done so in the last 12 months. This is a considerably higher proportion than that identified in the 2006 Survey of Londoners³³, which included 242 young people aged 11 to 17. This found that 14 per cent had done ‘voluntary work’ in the previous year, with a further 70 per cent saying that they may do so in the future. This may partly be due to definitions used in the research, but it may simply confirm the finding that young people’s voluntary activities increase as they progress through their teens.



Young people involved in crime

Enabling young people to ‘make a positive contribution’ is interpreted differently according to prevailing social and political priorities. Addressing young people’s involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour is a recurring priority, both for politicians and communities and for young people themselves. In the 2006 Survey of Londoners, crime (51 per cent) and bullying (39 per cent) top the list of young people’s concerns.

Although the vast majority of young people do not become involved in crime and overall young people are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of offences, those young people who do offend remain the subject of considerable concern. Recent media coverage of gang violence in London has brought these concerns to the fore (see Chapter 4 for more discussion of this). However, it is also important to remember that many young offenders are also victims themselves, and are among the most multiply disadvantaged groups in terms of their health, education and family support.

School exclusion can be a risk factor for youth crime (see Chapter 5) and it has been pointed out that the factors which put children and young people at risk of crime are 'strikingly similar, if not the same, as factors which put children at risk of exclusion and disadvantage in many other spheres of public life'³⁴.

A recent Metropolitan Police Service report³⁵ highlights that the number of both young victims and offenders in London has gradually decreased in the last five years. Since 2001/02, the number of young people accused of crime in most London boroughs has decreased except in Brent, Kingston upon Thames, Redbridge and Sutton, which have shown an increase in young people accused. The number of young people accused of crime in London in 2001/02 was 29,306 dropping to 23,857 in 2005/06. The total number of young people (10 to 17) accused of a crime in London in 2006/07 was 24,108, a slight increase of 251 cases on the previous year but representing a decrease since 2001/02 of 5,198 cases. Approximately 82 per cent of those accused in each year were young men.

Drug crime committed by young people has decreased from 2,892 cases of supply/intent to supply/possession in 2005/06 to 2,481 cases in 2006/07. There were decreases in all boroughs except Southwark, Barking, Bromley, Ealing, Hammersmith, Hillingdon and Waltham Forest. The table below shows the extent of changes in those boroughs with the highest and lowest number of cases.

Table 8.3 Young people (11 to 17) accused of supply/possession/intent to supply, 2005 – 2007

	2005/06	2006/07
Boroughs with highest no. of cases		
Westminster	172	131
Hackney	169	141
Brent	144	92
Haringey	142	70
Boroughs with lowest no. of cases		
Bexley	54	53
Merton	53	49
Richmond	52	40
Barking	43	46

Source MPS data

The Metropolitan police provide data to the GLA on a selection of crimes of which young people are accused, including a number of 'hate crimes'.

Table 8.4 Young people aged 10 to 17 accused of selected crimes in London, 2004 – 2007

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Burglary	829	787	701
Robbery	2,591	2,920	3,121
Violent crime	8,484	9,140	8,722
Vehicle crime	1,969	1,574	1,389
Anti-Semitic crime	0	8	11
Domestic violence	594	429	237
Faith hate	10	30	20
Homicide	33	38	30
Homophobic crime	41	48	39
Racist crime	352	388	344
Transphobic crime	0	10	3
Rape	98	95	85
Other sexual	189	182	110

Source MPS data supplied to GLA. Note: does not include all categories of crime.

In 2006, those aged between ten and 17 accounted for 9.2 per cent of London's population. Using this population proportion as a measure, those aged between ten and 17 are disproportionately involved in crime (22 per cent of all those accused)³⁶.

In contrast to the decline in overall numbers of young people accused of crime in London, the national picture is of a fairly consistent level of crime committed by this age group over the same time period. Home Office survey data from 2003 – 2005 show a stable level of offences across all categories of crime, serious offenders, and frequent offenders and in the 18 to 25 categories, as well as for 10 to 17-year-olds³⁷. These findings are broadly consistent with those from the British Crime Survey, which also showed that the risk of victimisation for young people had remained relatively stable over a similar period (25.7 per cent in 2003/04; 23.5 per cent in 2005/06)³⁸.

Communities that Care compared their London data from the 2004 Safer London Youth Survey³⁹ with that from their national survey conducted in 2001 and concluded that self-reported rates of crime were little different in London – shoplifting and vehicle crime were a little higher and vandalism and graffiti a little lower than in the national sample.



Offending by young black people

When examining self-report data on offending by young people⁴⁰ there is little evidence to suggest that black people are more likely to offend than white people. Yet in London during the period April 2005 – February 2006, the rate of youths accused of crimes per 1,000 population was 63 for black people and 27 for white people. This equates to 2.3 black youths accused for every one white youth⁴¹. These figures help to explain the over-representation of young black people in the criminal justice system⁴².

Young black people are prevented from contributing positively due to a range of factors, including discrimination within the criminal justice system. This is confirmed in the Home Affairs Select Committee report on the over-representation of young black people in the criminal justice system (June 2007). This concluded that young black people are disproportionately likely to be stopped and searched, arrested, remanded in custody, convicted and imprisoned, and receive more punitive sentences. The committee observed that 'the number of young black people in custody is growing at an alarming rate'. It found that the primary causes of over-representation are racial discrimination, social exclusion and its interrelated issues: educational under-achievement and school exclusion, deprivation and poor housing⁴³.

In his submission to the **Home Affairs Select Committee Inquiry into Young Black People and the Criminal Justice System**, the Mayor of London stated that the over-representation of young black people at practically all stages of the criminal justice system is a particular concern for London. 'Whilst the causes of this over-representation are complex, it cannot be wholly explained by the extent or nature of offending by young black people. Direct and institutional racism appear to provide at least part of the explanation. The Mayor believes that the Committee must focus its efforts on identifying gaps in data, establishing the detailed causes of the over-representation of young black people and identifying a comprehensive and timetabled action plan to make real progress in tackling disproportionality.'

Intervention with young offenders

One way of assessing whether young people who get involved in crime are being enabled to make a positive contribution is to evaluate the interventions being made against the evidence of what is known to be effective. One performance indicator for the Youth Justice Board for 2005/06 (as for 2004/05) is to ensure that 80 per cent of final warnings are supported by interventions. In 2005/06 85.5 per cent of final warnings in London were accompanied by an intervention, an increase on the 78.5 per cent in 2002/03.

The Safer Schools Partnership (SSP) was set up by the Metropolitan Police Service in response to the Prime Minister’s Street Crime Action Group initiative to combat youth crime and has been in operation since April 2002. There are currently 187 SSP officers working in approximately 310 schools across London. The SSP police officer works within the school, in partnership with teachers, other education services and related agencies, to identify, support and work with children and young people regarded as being at high risk of victimisation, offending and social exclusion. One important role is to work with schools to establish appropriate means of dealing with incidents, including restorative justice.

Young people in custody

In November 2003, there were 10,919 young people (aged 15 to 20) in prison (of these 2,254 were 15 to 17-year-olds). At 31 March 2007, there were 11,725 young people in prison (2,413 15 to 17-year-olds), an increase of six per cent of 15 to 20-year-olds and three per cent of 15 to 17-year-olds from 2006. Eleven per cent of the London prison population was under 21 in 2006. Of these 610 were in Feltham YOI.

Black men and women continue to be over-represented in the prison population. Recording categories have changed since the publication of SOLCR 2004 so precise comparisons cannot be made. However, the latest figures available show that while 1.0 per cent of the general population is black, 10.5 per cent of the prison population is black. A further 2.7 per cent are of ‘mixed’ ethnicity and 4.6 per cent are Asian (3.0 per cent in the general population). Figures for under-18s were not available for the previous SOLCR, but in 2005 13.2 per cent of young people in prison were black, 5.0 per cent Asian and 6.3 per cent of ‘mixed’ ethnicity.

The table below shows the proportion of young people remanded in custody in London by ethnic group against the proportion of all 10 to 17-year-olds in London belonging to each group.

Table 8.5 Young people remanded in custody in London, by ethnicity, 2002 and 2005/06

	White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Other
Young people remanded in custody 2002 (%)	36.4	4.5	7.4	42	5.5
Young people remanded in custody 2005/06 (%)	36.7	4.0	6.3	47.8	5.2
% of young people aged 10 to 17 in London	59.3	7.1	15.8	15.8	2.6

Source Adapted from YJB data 2005/06

Use of secure remands and custody

Neither of the following performance targets was met in 2005/06: to reduce the use of the secure estate for remands to 30 per cent of the total number of remands involving bail supervision, remand to local authority accommodation, court ordered secure remand and remand in custody; and for custodial sentences to be no more than five per cent of the sentences imposed.

Table 8.6 Use of secure remands and custody, 2004 – 2006

	Secure remands %		2002/03	Custody %	
	2004/05	2005/06		2004/05	2005/06
London	42.9	50.3	6.0	7.8	7.9
England & Wales	44.4	41.3	4.2	7.4	5.1

Research conducted for the Youth Justice Board in 2004 found a greater proportion of secure remands in cases involving black and mixed parentage boys and young men, than for white boys or young men. These differences are significant because to have been remanded in secure conditions puts a young person at a considerable disadvantage when he appears in court, in terms of the severity of the sentence⁴⁴.



There is considerable concern in London about the use of custodial sentences for young people. Custodial sentences separate young people from their communities, cause problems around rehabilitation and increase the risk of reoffending⁴⁵. Custodial sentences increase difficulties for practitioners being able to create consistent and effective work with the young person. There appears to be a continuing reluctance by the public, and even by some sentencers, to accept community-based interventions and alternatives to custody. It is significant that London has both the highest rate of custody and the fewest pre-court diversion schemes, which are designed to stop criminal behaviour in its early stages. NACRO believes that the approach to youth justice in London is accelerating young people through the system into custody and bypassing opportunities to deal with the problems earlier on⁴⁶. To make a real difference to custody levels, resources must be targeted at diverting young people before they reach the courts as the sharp, national and regional, rise in incarceration since the 1990s is associated with a marked decline in the proportion of young people diverted from the courts⁴⁷.

One particular challenge in London is that a significant proportion of young offenders commit crimes outside their 'home borough', creating difficulties for the police and youth offending teams in the transfer of information. Young people attend court in the borough where the offence

took place rather than their 'home borough'. The information transfer to the 'home borough' Youth Offending Team is not always adequate and therefore support packages can be slow to begin. Information transfer becomes particularly challenging when lone children, including runaways and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, who may not have adequate information stored about them, carry out the offending⁴⁸.

Anti-social behaviour and youth crime prevention

In public terms, media coverage of young people is frequently negative, for example when addressing anti-social behaviour (ASB) by failing to distinguish between 'nuisance' and 'criminal' behaviour. This has been highlighted nationally, for example, through an ongoing campaign by Young People Now magazine – a June 2007 survey found that 485 of reports published about young people in the media were negative, tending to focus on aspects of ASB; 23 per cent were positive; and 29 per cent were neutral⁴⁹. Political and media debates often fail to address the disparity between the perceived threat from young people 'hanging around' on the streets, and the views of young people themselves. Young people say they feel safer in larger groups; view the streets as a place for social interaction; and often have nowhere else to go.

The use of anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) in London has increased yearly in line with national statistics. For 10 to 17-year-olds this has been an increase from just ten ASBOs in 2001 to 188 in 2005. However, contrary to commonly held perceptions, young people do not make up the majority of those subject to an ASBO. In London, ASBOs on 10 to 17-year-olds made up 36 per cent of the total (38 per cent nationally).

The **London Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy** was produced by 11 pan-London agencies with responsibility for tackling anti-social behaviour. One of the conclusions of the GLA 'Anti social behaviour in London' report⁵⁰ is that the strategy must avoid perpetuating stereotypes of young people and children as inherently troublesome or anti-social and that the London strategy should address the underlying causes of ASB committed by young people.

From 1 April 2007 **Local Area Agreements** (LAAs) were extended to every local authority in England and include a mandatory outcome to build community respect and reduce anti-social behaviour. The LAA is a three-year agreement between central and local government. Local government is supposed to get pooled funding, reduced reporting requirements and additional 'flexibilities'. London has 33 crime and disorder reduction partnerships.

Table 8.7 Number of anti-social behaviour orders issued at all courts, as reported to the Home Office by the Court Service, by area and year, 2001 – 2005

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
Greater London all ages	15	21	139	441	528
England all ages	344	414	1,272	3,317	3,845
Greater London					
10 to 17-year-olds	10	4	41	106	188
England					
10 to 17-year-olds	190	242	590	1269	1467

Source Home Office⁵¹

Prevention and diversionary programmes form a significant part of the major changes in the youth justice system in the 2000s. In many cases, prevention is combined with active early intervention on a targeted basis. Many statutory and voluntary and community sector agencies in London are involved in delivering preventative programmes and schemes for young people that both offer positive activities and seek to prevent youth crime. Prevention of youth crime and involvement in ASB is an aim of the London Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.

Youth crime prevention is a lead area for the MPS, particularly the 642 Safer Neighbourhood Teams, working in partnership with children's services and criminal justice system agencies across London, and focusing efforts on those young people most at risk, of being both victim and offender⁵².

SN4P project – Safer Neighbourhoods 4 People – entails local Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) working with local young people from schools, projects and youth clubs. The project is centred around young people, who use cameras to photograph places and spaces where they feel either safe or unsafe. The Safer Neighbourhood Teams then act upon their concerns and contact relevant bodies, including the Safer Neighbourhood Ward Panels, to try to improve safety. The majority of concerns have been about the environment for example, fly tipping, graffiti (tagging), dirty parks, broken park equipment, etc. The GLA Peer Outreach Team, with the Scarman Trust, provided youth engagement seminars (staff development) with MPS staff from Safer Neighbourhoods Teams from across London. The aim of these days is to develop a greater awareness of the issues that concern young people and more effective approaches to youth engagement, especially with the most

disaffected young people. The aim of the whole project is to build more positive relationships between police and young people by identifying and responding to young people's concerns and providing a voice for the young people. This project ran a very successful pilot, in the summer of 2006, and in summer 2007 the project has been rolled out to one ward per borough.

The Mayor, with the 'Calling the Shots Steering Group', worked with the From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation to develop a multi-media education resource to critically engage young people in discussion and learning about gun-related violence and anti-social behaviour. This resource was delivered in over 25 schools in the six Trident boroughs in 2005/06. There has been ongoing anti-guns and violence work by the GLA and other London agencies.

Advice and advocacy

The exercise of full citizenship is dependent on knowledge of one's rights and responsibilities, and access to information and support in exercising them. However, there is good evidence that young people are substantially disadvantaged in this regard compared with adult Londoners. There is limited access to advice and advocacy for young people in London, as elsewhere in the UK, and much of the research cited here is in relation to young adults (over 18 and up to 25 years old).

First line advice and support for young people is provided by **Connexions**, which has personal advisors (PAs) available to 13 to 19-year-olds based in one-stop shops across five sub-regional partnerships in London. Individual support through their PA helps them to manage the barriers and obstacles to their success, including their housing, drug use, finances and relationships, which may entail general advocacy support. The service includes Connexions Direct, which provides online and telephone information and advice. In 2006/07, 188,787 young people received 1:1 support through 460,240 interventions⁵³.

There is a range of specialised sources of advice and advocacy for children and young people in receipt of services from statutory and voluntary and community sector organisations. For example, young people in care should have access to an independent visitor and have the opportunity to make use of specialist organisations such as the *Who Cares Trust?* and Voice. Since 2003, these entitlements also extend to young people in prison.

The Howard League for Penal Reform took the Home Office to judicial review over a statement in Prison Service guidance that the *Children Act 1989* did not apply to children under the age of eighteen in prison

establishments. Mr Justice Munby's judgment, handed down on 29 November 2003, ruled that the *Children Act 1989* applied to children in prison, subject to the requirements of imprisonment.

The Green Paper, **Care Matters**, published in October 2006⁵⁴ proposes a revitalisation of the independent visitors scheme in order to provide 'independent advocates' for children in care.

A report published by Youth Access analysed findings from the 2004 English and Welsh Civil and Social Justice Survey (CSJS), a survey of people's experience of and response to 18 broad types of civil law problems, and sets out the experience of the youngest respondents: those between the ages of 18 and 24 years old⁵⁵. Young people more often reported problems such as those concerning rented housing, homelessness, unfair police treatment, employment and discrimination.

Fifteen per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds had done nothing to try to resolve problems they faced, compared with just ten per cent of older respondents. Furthermore, more young people than older people had faced problems without obtaining advice or had tried and failed to get advice. Ultimately, younger people were more likely to have given up trying to resolve their problems.

Eighteen to 24-year-olds were most likely to turn to the local council for advice (especially if socially isolated, almost 20 per cent), doing so far more frequently than older people. In contrast, they made relatively little use of solicitors and advice agencies. Despite a high percentage of young respondents having access to the Internet, its use to obtain information to try and resolve problems was far less common among this group than among older respondents.

A recent paper⁵⁶ identifies some of the steps that need to be taken to improve advice provision for young people. These include Children and Young People's Plans taking greater account of young people's social welfare advice needs, Children's Trusts undertaking local needs assessments, and further research into the advice needs of under-18s and 'hard-to-reach' groups, including young offenders, young parents and young people in care.

The Law Centres Federation is working with Law Centres across London, in partnership with **Youth Access** and other local agencies, to improve young people's access to good quality rights-based legal advice, delivered in young people friendly settings. There are several established projects and many other developing initiatives. Where targeted services

have been established – notably Streetwise Young People's Law Centre in South London, Streetlegal in North London, and various outreach projects in areas including Kingston, Richmond, Tower Hamlets, Thamesmead – the outcomes are positive.

The **Rights to Access Project**, a Youth Access project funded by the Big Lottery Fund aims 'to improve and extend young people's access to better quality legal rights-based advice services by building the capacity of practitioners and organisations to tackle the gaps in access to quality, young people-friendly legal advice services'. An evaluation of the first year of operation was positive with over 90 per cent of respondents who had used services reporting a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities as a result of the advice received, and more confidence about dealing with the problem themselves⁵⁷.

Save the Children UK is conducting a three-year action research project exploring the use of child-focused independent advocates, in Islington, Enfield and Brent, for children facing problems at school. Different models are being explored including school-based advocacy and outreach support. The project has found that there is little independent support for families and children facing problems with their education. Support services exist which are either insufficiently independent of the local authority, lack knowledge of education law and guidance or are not able to offer representation in person.

The Adoption and Children Act 2002, implemented in April 2004, places a duty on local authorities to make provision for advocacy for looked after children and care leavers who wish to make a complaint under *Children Act* procedures. However, there are many more children and young people who need independent advice, information and support in order to be heard and have their rights secured, not least disabled children living away from home. The Children's Society has reported that just five per cent of such children have access to an advocate⁵⁸. Children and young people asked by the Thomas Coram Research Unit what they rate about their advocacy service stressed the value of the confidentiality, expertise and independence of advocacy services⁵⁹.

The London Youth Advice Forum brings together London-based youth information, advice and counselling services and law centres with a common interest in developing rights-based advice services for young people. In July 2005, the Mayor and London Regional Legal Services Commission held a round table with members of the forum and other regional agencies to consider ways of improving access to advice and advocacy for children and young people in London.

Endnotes

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- 23 <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/964/Survey%20of%20Londoners%20WEB.pdf>
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http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/annual_survey/index.jsp
- 25 Young voter registration, GLA, 2006
- 26 DCLG Citizenship Survey: 2005. The Citizenship Survey is a biennial survey, designed to contribute to the evidence base for community policy (formerly the Home Office Citizenship Survey)
- 27 An exception is the ethnicity pattern of young people's friendships. See footnote 12
- 28 P value < .000, Fisher's Exact Test. Analysis of Citizenship Survey 2003 data with a larger sample of young people reported 86% of young Londoners and 64% of the overall sample had friends of a different ethnic group. In Wales it was 35% and among those living in other areas, the proportion ranged from 53% to 76%

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