



TRAFFORD  
COUNCIL

# Placement Stability & Sufficiency

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**Laura Barton – Specialist Commissioner Children**

24<sup>th</sup> January 2023

# Introduction to Placement Stability & Sufficiency

- Sufficiency Explained
- National & Regional Context
- Trafford's Position
- Challenges
- Addressing our Challenges

# What do we mean by sufficiency?

The 'sufficiency duty' requires Local Authorities and children's safeguarding partners to ensure that there is sufficient local accommodation and support to meet the needs of all children and young people in care, or that there is a plan in place to move towards that position. We are required to produce a strategy that describes how we, working with our local partners, intend to meet this duty for the children and young people in our care.

Our sufficiency strategy sets out how we intend to develop local accommodation and support which will improve outcomes for children and young people and ensure we deliver on our duty to be good corporate parents.

A summary of our sufficiency strategy is accessible on the council website. Focus areas include:

- Gender and cultural needs of young people
- Placing more young people in foster care within Trafford
- Support for children with complex needs

# National Context

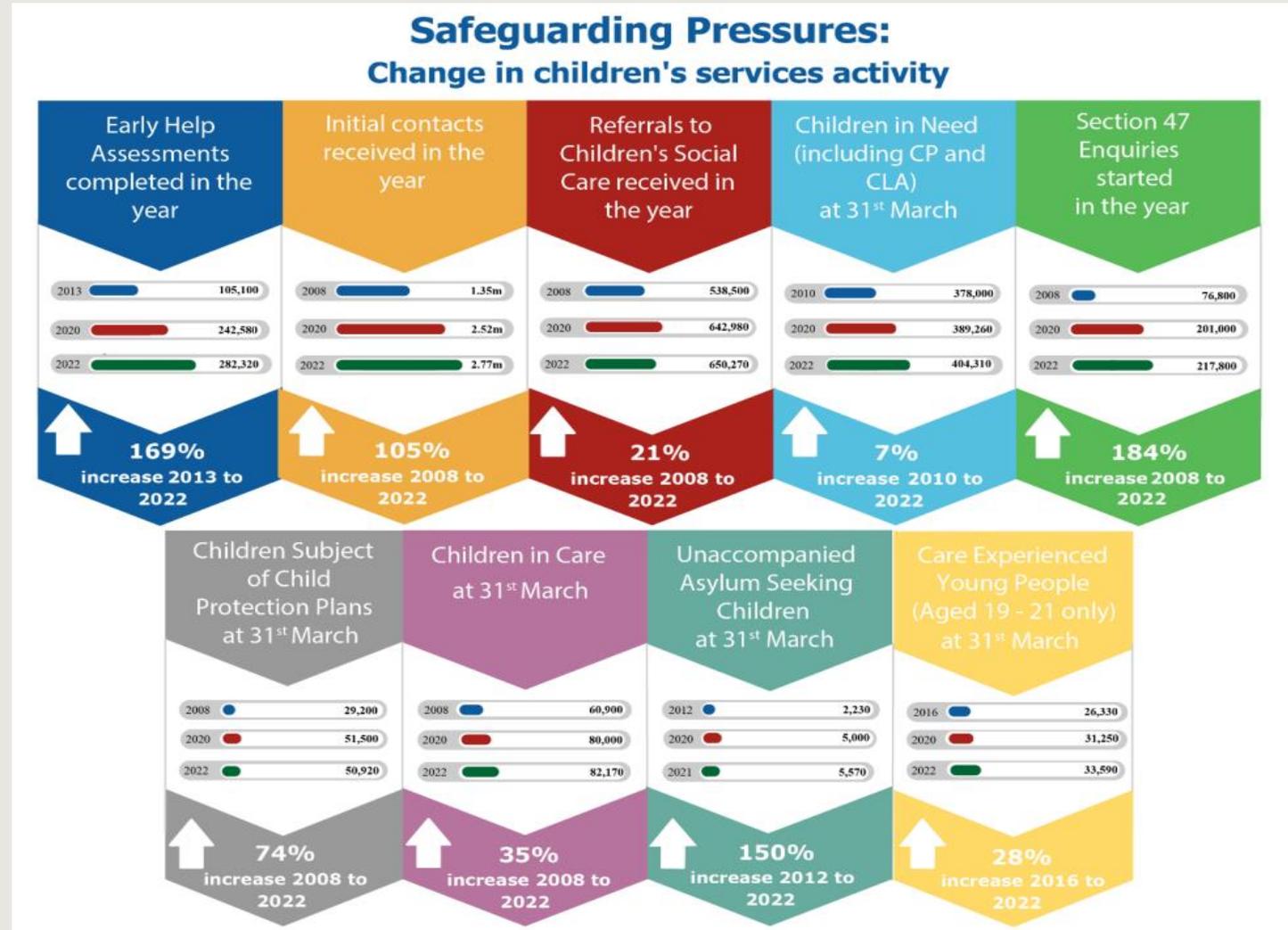
In 2022, the number of Cared For Children by local authorities in England rose to 82,170, up 2% on previous year and continuing the rise seen in recent years

Local authorities are seeing an increased complexity of need in young people, some of which will be due to the impact of Covid

An independent review of children’s social care was completed by Josh McAlister which identified a number of key recommendations.

Some large residential and fostering organisations are funded by private equity firms

Recognition by central government that supported accommodation services for care experienced young people require regulation – implementation planned for 2024.



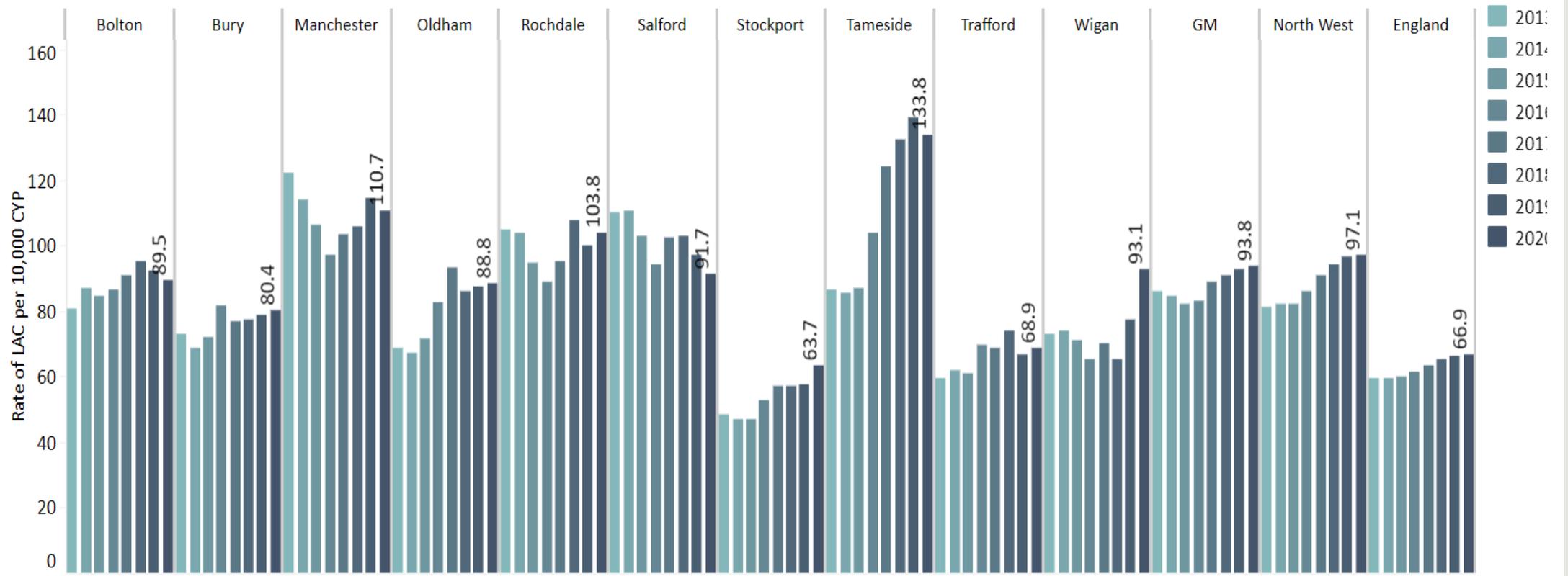
# Regional Context

- The north west is seeing an increasing number of Cared For Children and increased complexity of need in line with national trends
- The north west holds a disproportionately high number of residential beds within its boundaries but these are not always accessible to us due to local authorities across the country placing in the north west
- There are strong working partnerships between local authorities across the north west (via Placements North West) and more locally GM (via GMCA) which aim to improve sufficiency.
- There is a wealth of information available through the GM dashboard
- GM has developed its own sufficiency strategy and progress is reported into the sufficiency board. The strategy has focused on 3 key themes:
  - Increase supply of local services
  - Reduce demand for external services through internal models / services
  - Improving access to local supply - so local provision for local children

# GM Dashboard: Rates of Cared for Children

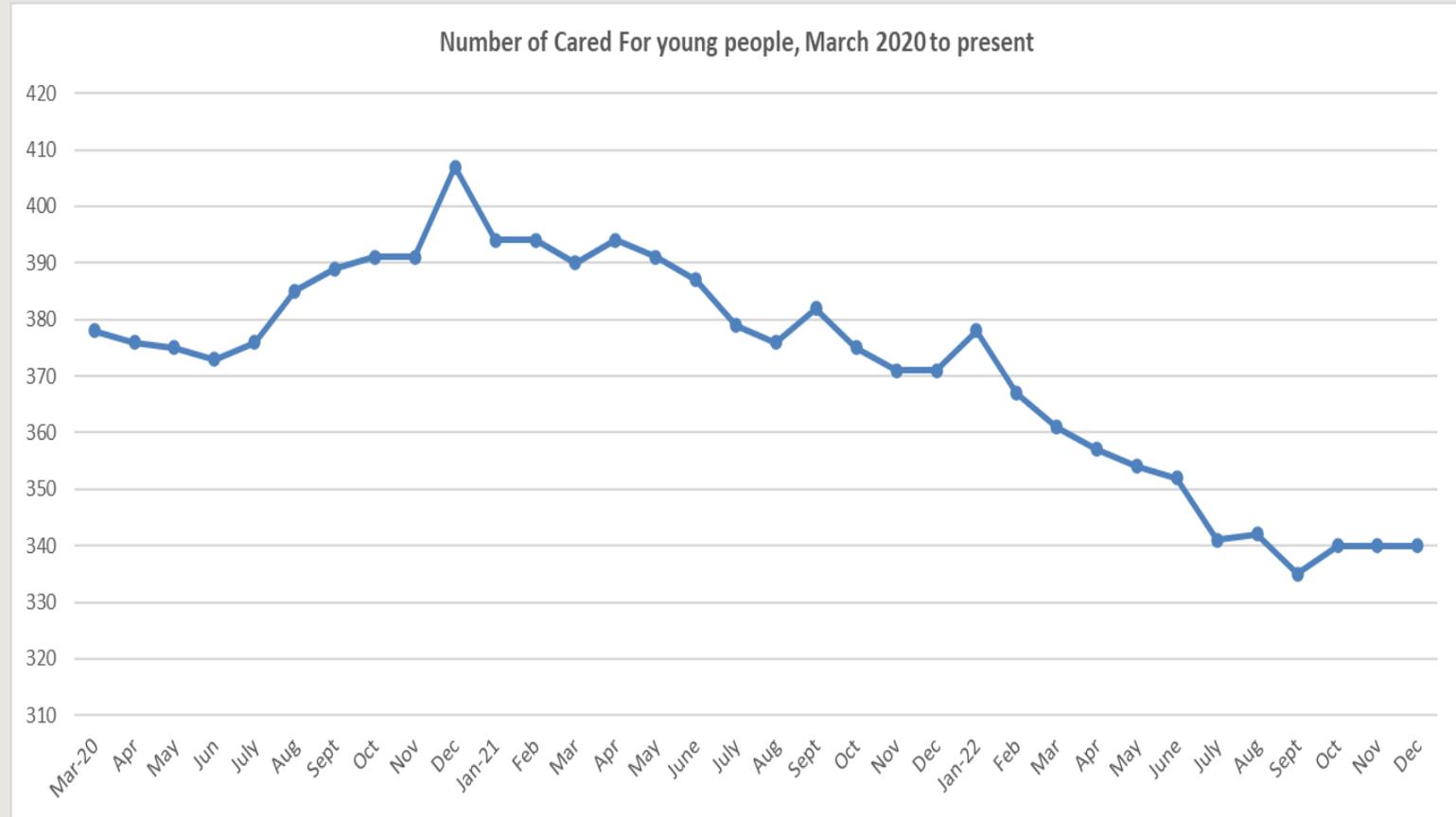
## 1. Numbers of Looked After Children across GM

### 1.1 Rate of looked after children per 10,000 of the under 18 population at 31 March, 2014 - 2021



# Trafford's Position: Cared For Children

- This graph shows the reduction in our Cared For Children numbers since March 2020 – Dec 2022.
- In Nov 21 we had 77 children placed at home on a care order and this has reduced to 56 children.
- We've had success with 23 children being made subject to Special Guardianship Orders and providing legal permanence (not cared for children any longer).

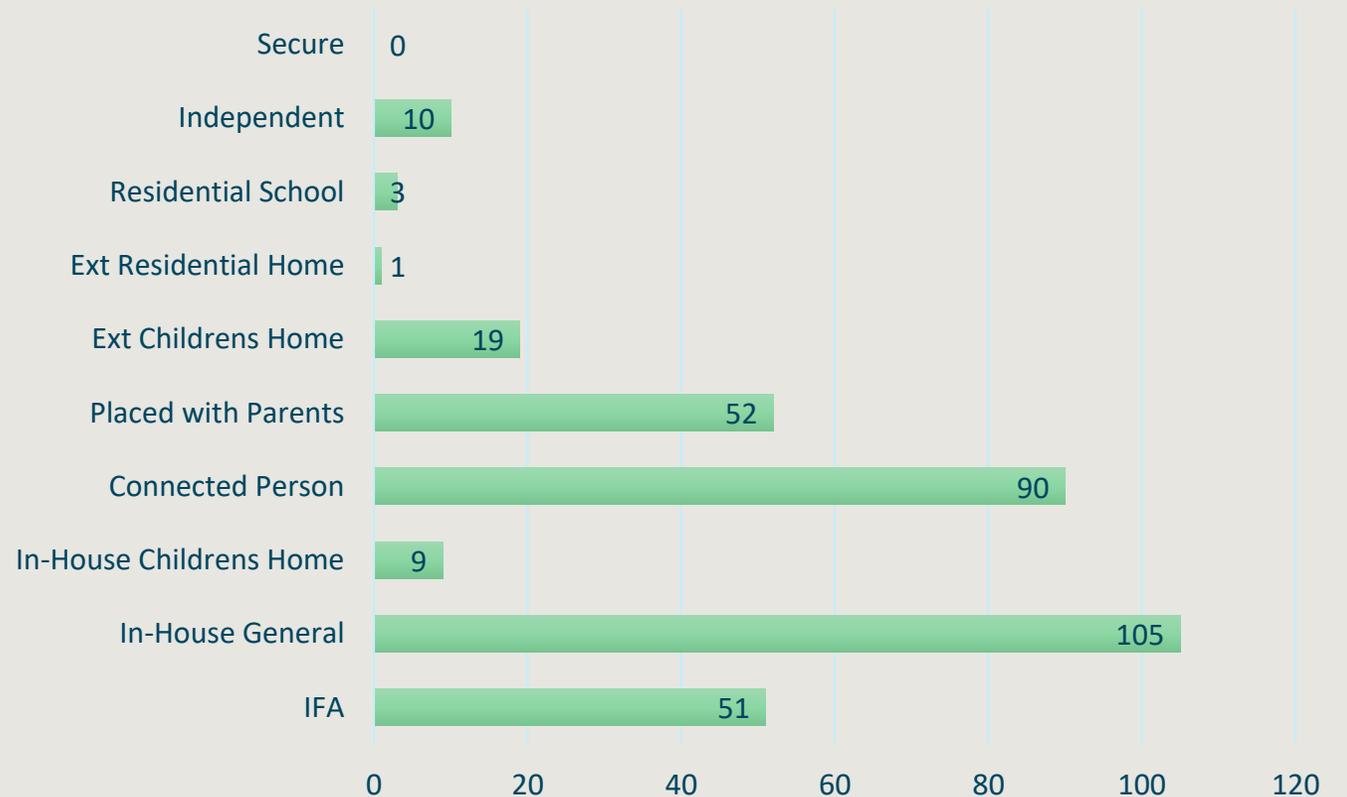


# Type of Placement

(data as of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022)

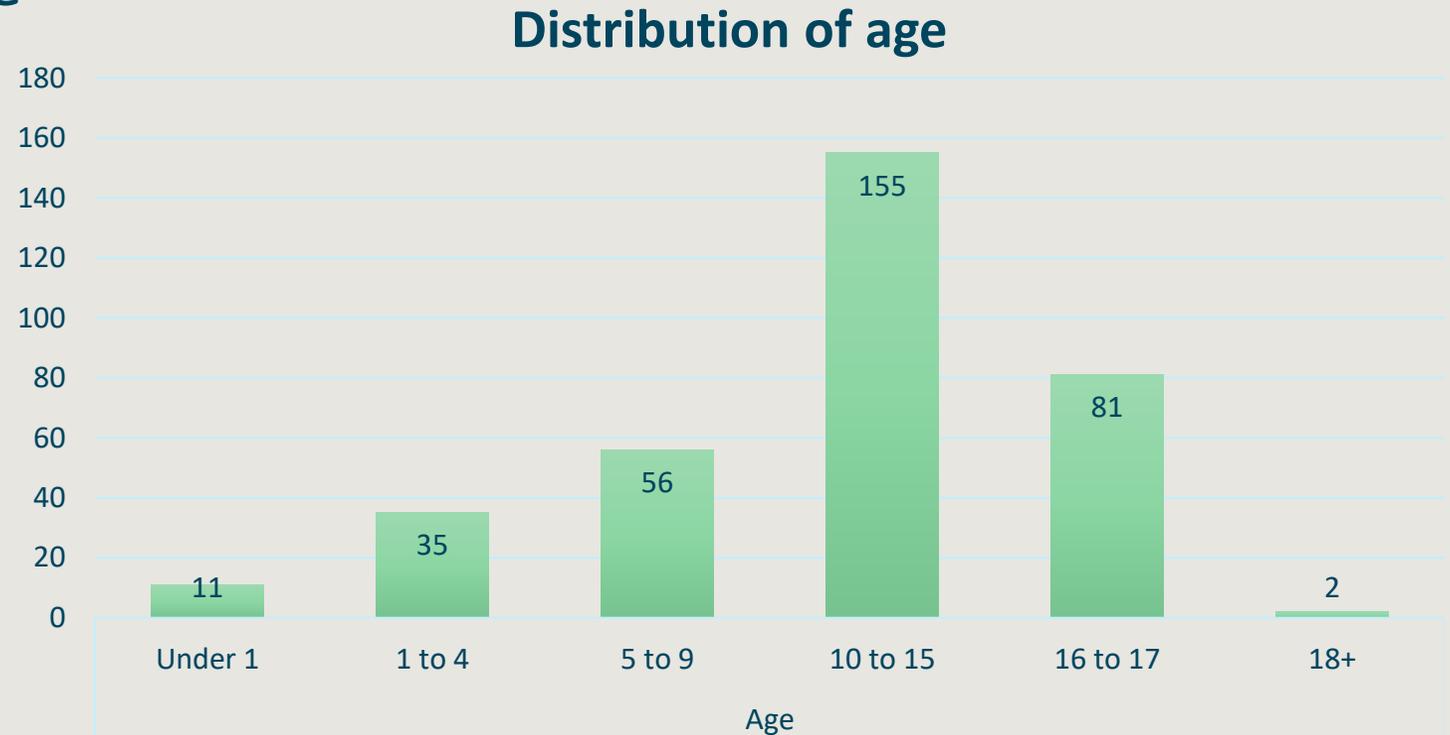
- 340 Cared For Children (CFC)
- The majority of our children are living in family homes
- Twice as many children are placed with Trafford foster carers than with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA)

## All CFC by Placement type

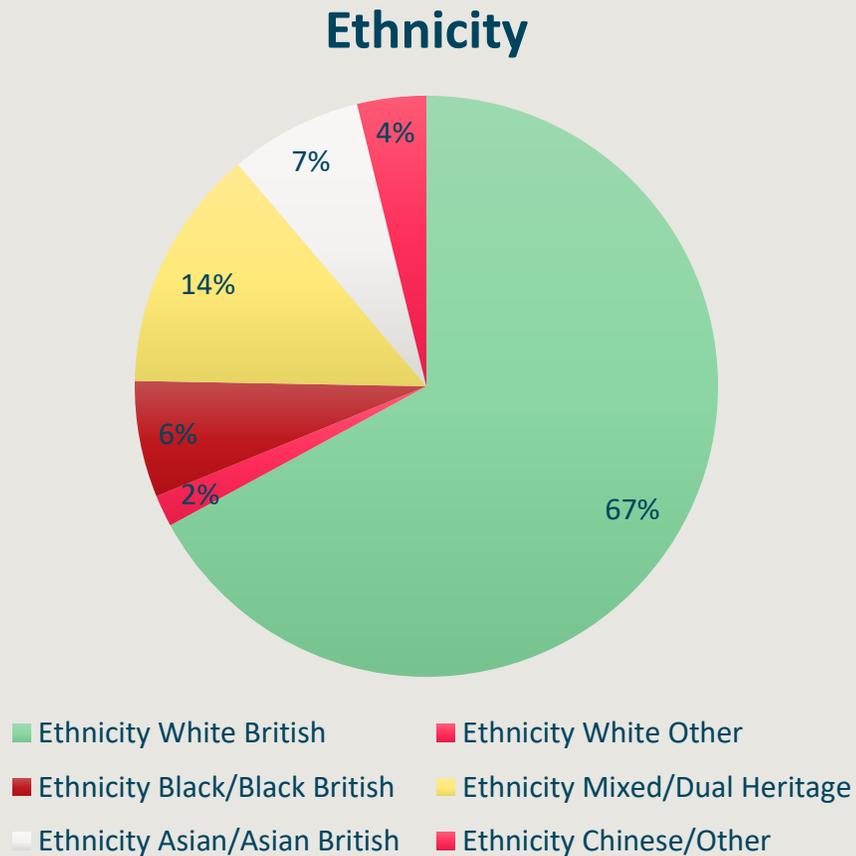


# Ages of Cared For Children

- The largest cohort by age band is 10 – 15 yrs
- 70% of our cared for children population are 10 yrs +
- 13.5% are 4 yrs or under

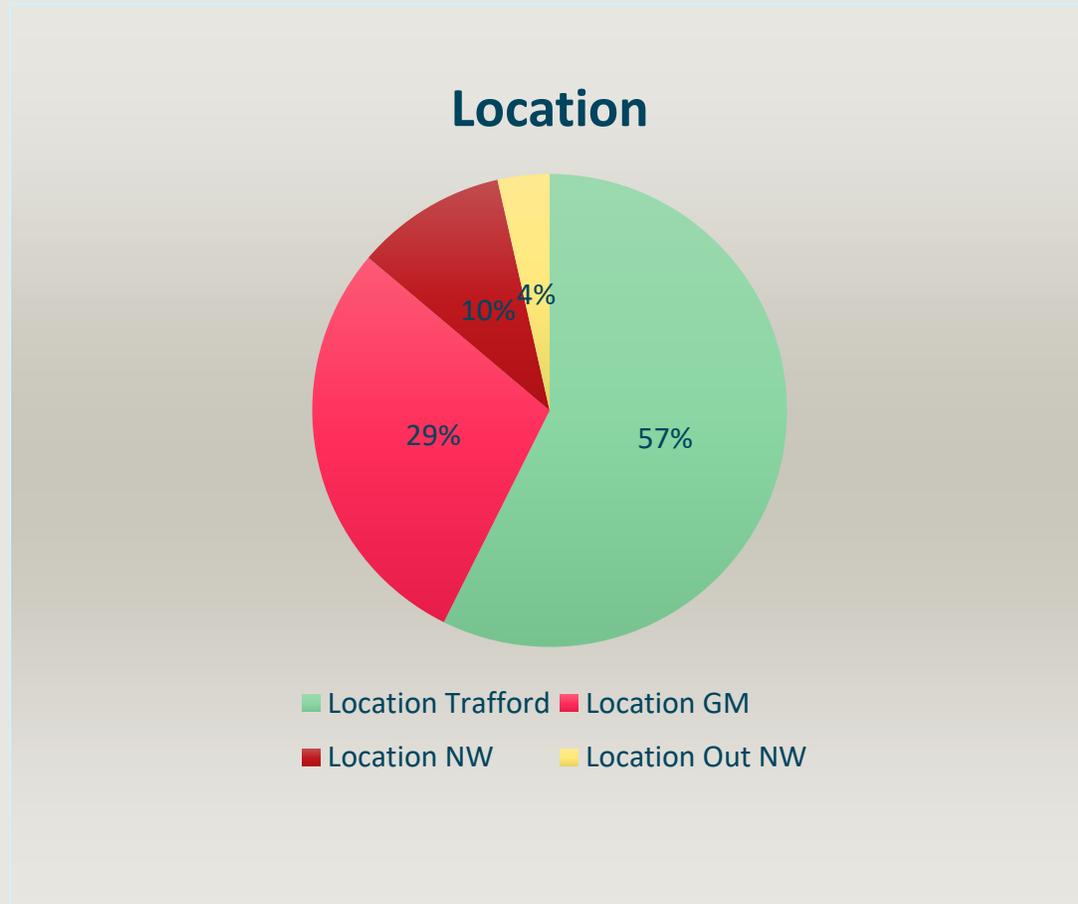


# Ethnicity of Cared for Children



- The largest cohort is white British
- 14% are mixed/dual heritage
- 7% Asian/Asian British

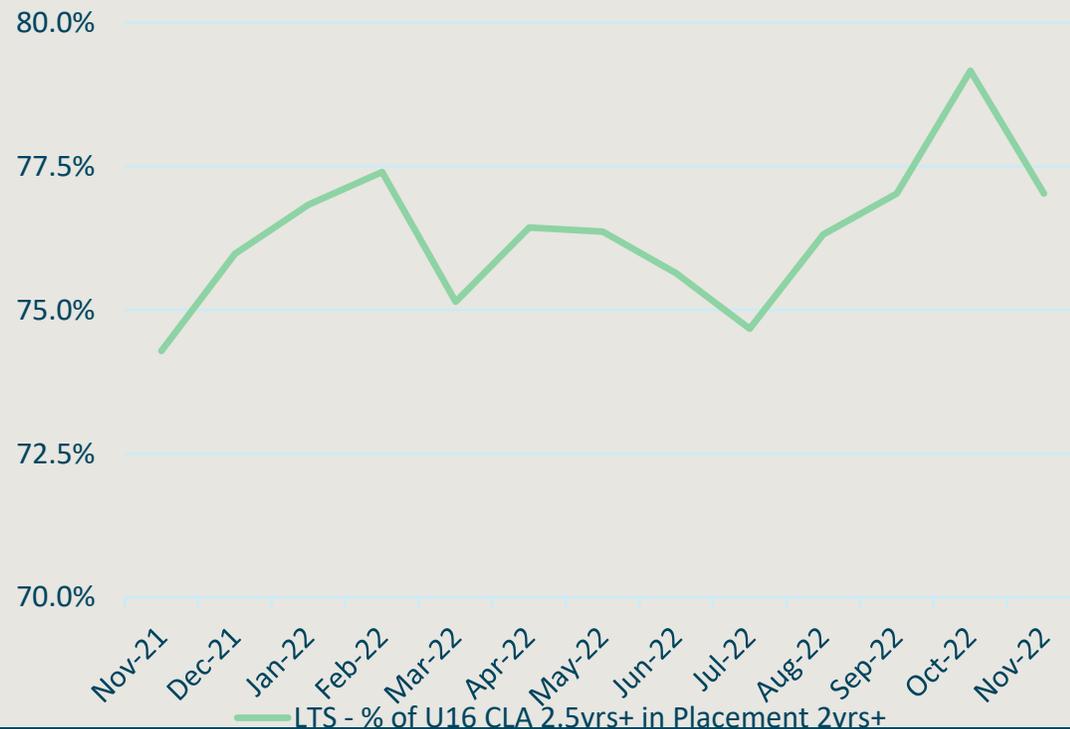
# Location of Placement



- 57% of our children are placed within Trafford
- 85% within Greater Manchester
- 96% within the North West
- Most of our children are placed within 20 miles from home measure (2022):
  - Trafford: 91%
  - North West: 82%
  - England: 72%

# Placement Stability

## Long term placement stability



- Long term placement stability is calculated by taking the number of children under 16 who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years (30 months) and have been in the current placement for at least 2 years (24 months) divided by the number of children under 16 who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years (30 months)
- Trafford has performed well with regard to placement stability and in 2022 with a recent dip below 75% in July 2022
- We know that a small number of young people do have multiple moves. As of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 our short term placement stability was just over 4% (children with 3 or more placement moves in last year) and we work hard to prevent unnecessary change for young people.

# Improving Placement Stability

- Although the majority of our Cared For Children have placement stability there are children who have experienced a number of moves
- This area of practice is identified in our Ambition workstreams
- Permanence Strategy in place, introduction of permanence panel from January 2022, care planning meeting and placement stability meetings need to be embedded
- Impact of discharges from care of Placement with Parents and SGO on stability performance

# Case Study One

- Young person who is 10 years of age and became a cared for child due to safeguarding issues such as neglect and exposure to domestic abuse.
- The young person is described as having significant complex needs, including delayed development, sensory processing needs and ADHD. The YP struggles with attachment and anxiety and finds it difficult to regulate their emotions.
- The young person has had to date 8 different placement moves since they came into care in November 2014 to the current time. They have had lived in 4 foster placement and 4 residential placements. The placements have ended due to the carers and providers not being able to meet the complex needs of the young person.
- They currently live in a 4 bedroom residential children's home in a neighbouring local authority. The cost is £9500 per week.
- They are receiving 2:1 care and we are currently paying to block the bed due to their level of need. The home enables a high level of support and therapeutic support that is being provided to them.
- The young persons care plan is for them to live with foster carers. To enable this to happen we will have to identify experienced foster carers who can meet their needs with a wrap around package of support to provide placement stability and security.

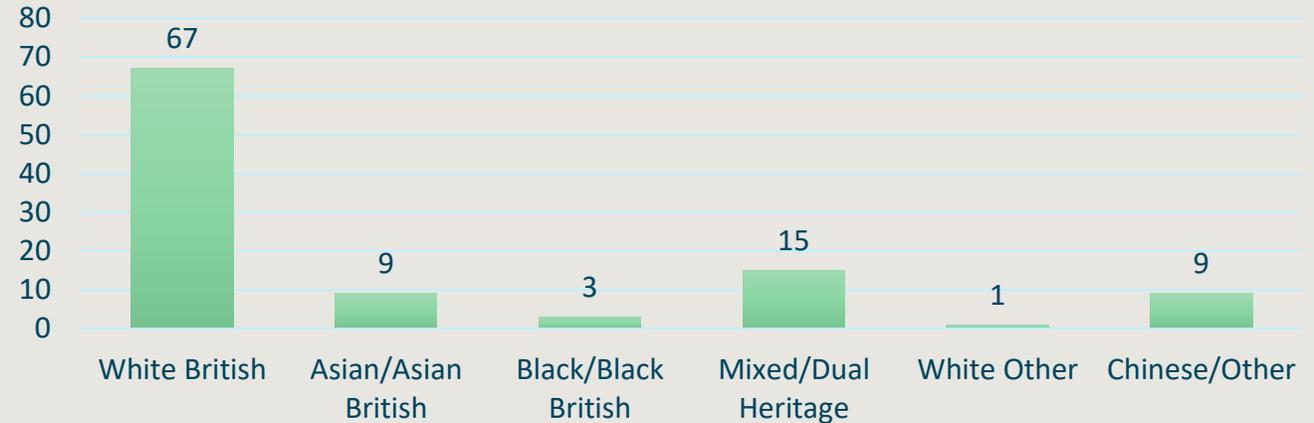
# Case Study Two

- We have a 15 year old young person who has been residing in their current placement since the summer of 2022.
- The young person was adopted when they were very young and lived with adoptive parents throughout their childhood. They encountered difficulties in regulating their behaviour, and presenting with challenging behaviours and self harm. They became cared for by the Local Authority in April 2019 due to the breakdown with adoptive parents and has subsequently been subject to a number of placement moves.
- Since being in the care of the local authority in 2019 they have lived in 8 residential children home placements that have all ended in an unplanned way due to the level of complex needs that the young persons presents with such as challenging and aggressive behaviour, significant self harm and suicidal ideation.
- The most recent placement ending was in the summer of 2022 as there was a significant incident where they threatened staff with a knife and they tried to set fire to the building.
- The cost of the current placement is £12,400 per week. The young person is on 3:1 support to meet their needs in the placement.

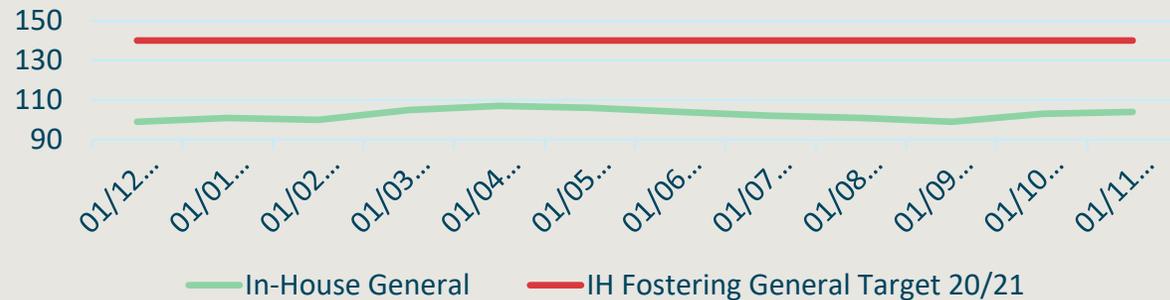
# Internal General Fostering

- 104 in-house general foster placements.
  - Female and male split was 43% to 56%, 1% identifies as gender neutral.
  - 64% of children were White British.
  - Average age of a child in an in-house placement is 11 years old, with ages ranging from 0-17.
- 54% have been in their placement for at least 1 year and 39% have been in their placement for over 2 years.
- 73% were placed in Trafford, and a further 20 (19%) were placed elsewhere in Greater Manchester, 6 (6%) children were placed elsewhere in the region. 90% are placed within 20 miles of home.
  - The average placement cost was £417 pw.

## In-House General Ethnicities



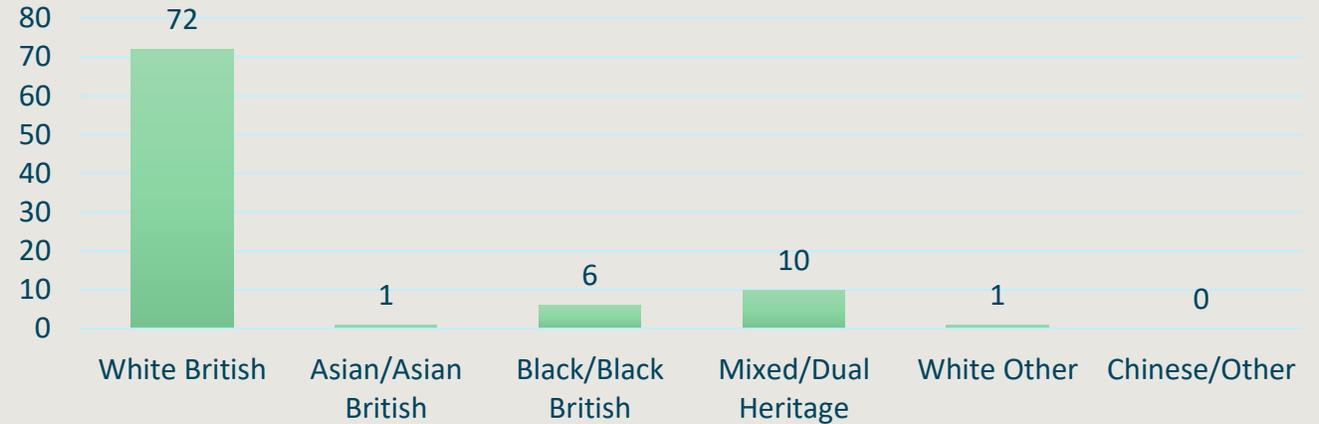
## In-House Foster Care



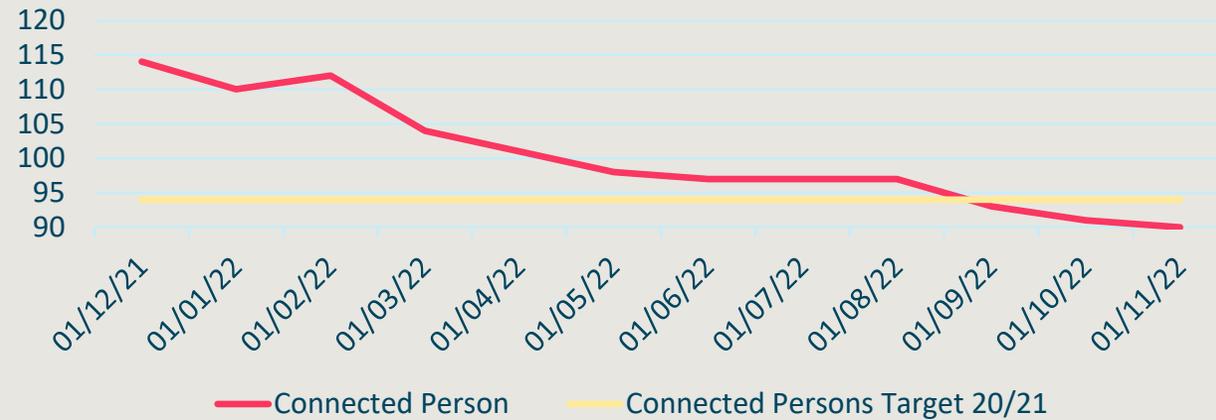
# Connected Persons

- 90 Connected Persons placements.
- The number of children in Connected Persons placements has been in decline for the last 12 months.
- The split was 51% female, 49% male.
- 80% were White British.
- The average age of a child in a Connected Persons placement is 10 years old, with ages ranging from 0-17.
- 85% have been in their placement for at least 1 year and 66% have been in their placement for over 2 years.
- 72% were placed in Trafford, and a further 20 placed elsewhere in Greater Manchester and 4 were placed elsewhere in the region. 94% are placed within 20 miles of home.
- The average cost was £337pw.

## Connected Person Ethnicities



## Connected Persons



# IFAs

- There were 50 IFA placements, including 2 in placements supported by the Complex Needs team.

The split is 58% female and 42% male.

- 44% were White British.
- The average age of a child in an IFA placement is 11.7 years old and ages range from 0-17.

38% have been in their placement for at least 1 year and 28% have been in their placement for over 2 years.

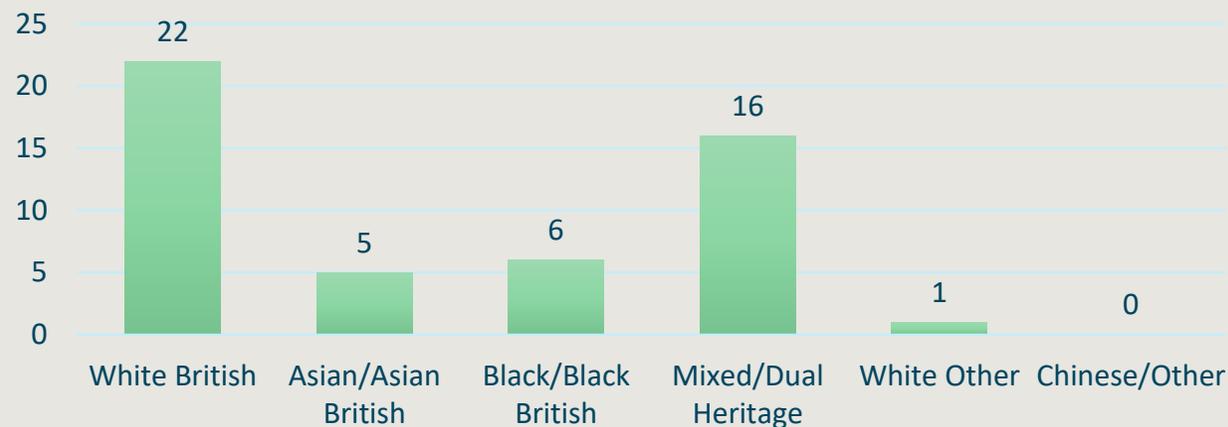
- 24% (12) were placed in Trafford, a further 25 elsewhere in GM, 11 elsewhere in the region and 2 outside the NW. 78% are placed within 20 miles.

- The costs range from £672pw to £1,769pw, with an average of £943pw.

- 7 placements were off-framework, with an average cost of £905, compared to £952 for those on the GM Framework.

- Steady increase in IFA placements since the start of Feb 22.

## IFA Ethnicities



## IFAs



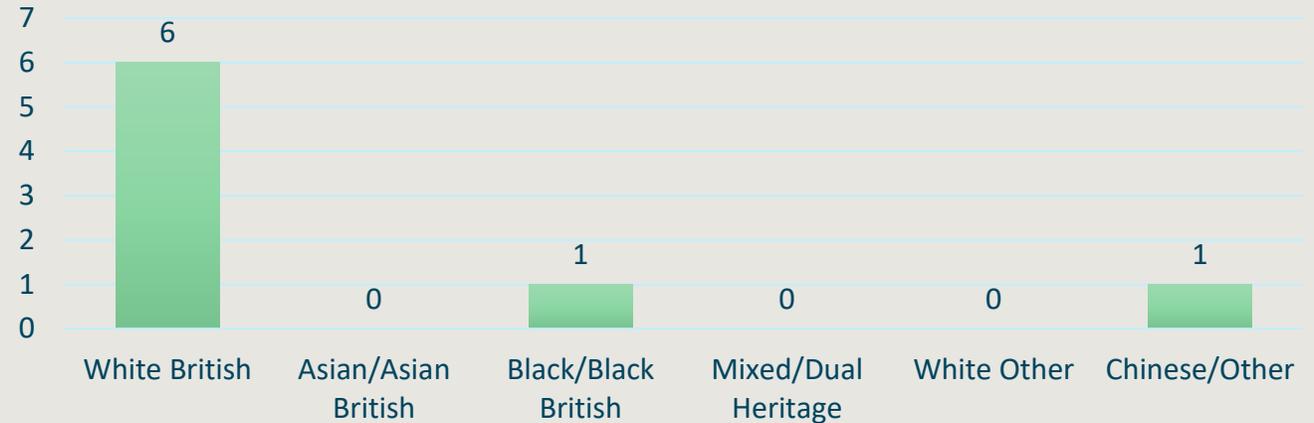
# Internal Residential

- There were 8 young people in internal residential placements.
- The numbers in internal residential have been relatively stable over the last 12 months.
- The split is 75% male, 25% female.
- 75% were White British.
- The average age of a child in an internal residential placement is 15.6 years old with ages ranging from 13-17.

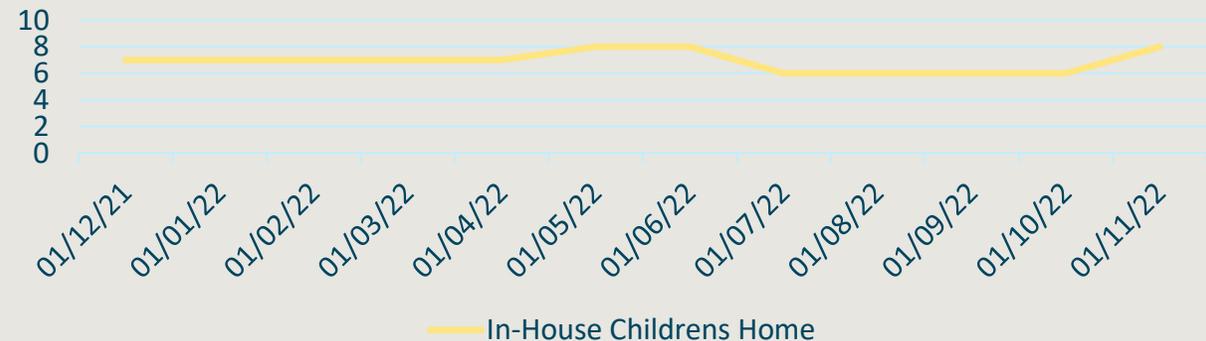
Half of the young people in internal residential placements have been placed for less than one year, 4 young people have been looked after for less than one year.

- All are placed within Trafford.

## Internal Residential Ethnicities



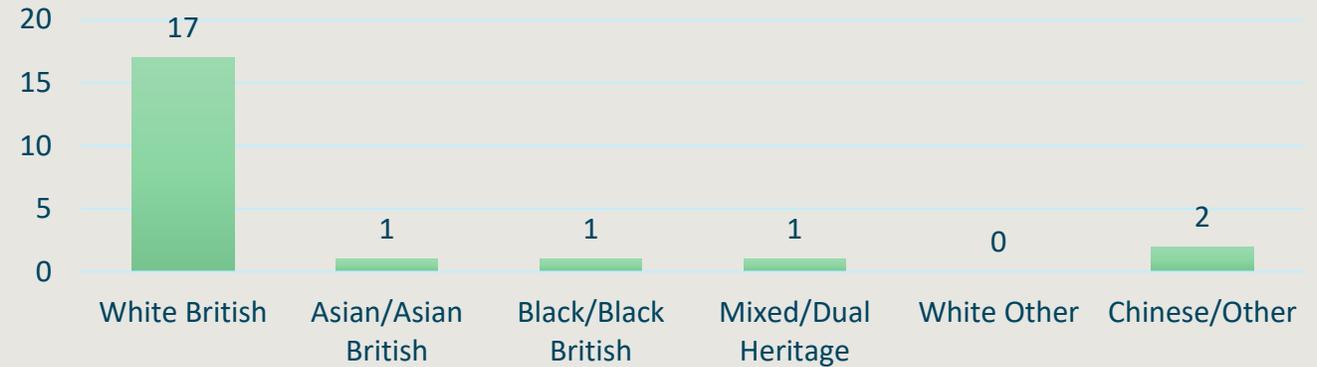
## In-House Childrens Home



# External Residential

- There were 22 young people in external residential placements, including 9 Complex Needs residential placements.
- Over the last 12 months, the numbers in external residential placements has been typically between 22 and 25.
- The split is 59% male, 36% female. 1 CYP identifies as male.
- 77% were White British.
- The average age of a child in an external residential placement is 15.0 years old, the range is 10 - 18,
- 71% have been in their current placement for at least 1 year and 19% have been in their placement for over 2 years.
- The placements are spread out with 52% (11) placed in GM, a further 9 elsewhere in the North West and 1 in Trafford and 1 outside of the NW. 58% are placed within 20 miles of home.
- The costs range from £2,755pw to £14,700pw, with an average of £5,768pw. 6 are off framework, with an average cost of £7,939pw compared to a framework average of £4,320pw. The off framework average is skewed by 2 placements costing over £10,000.

## External Residential Ethnicities



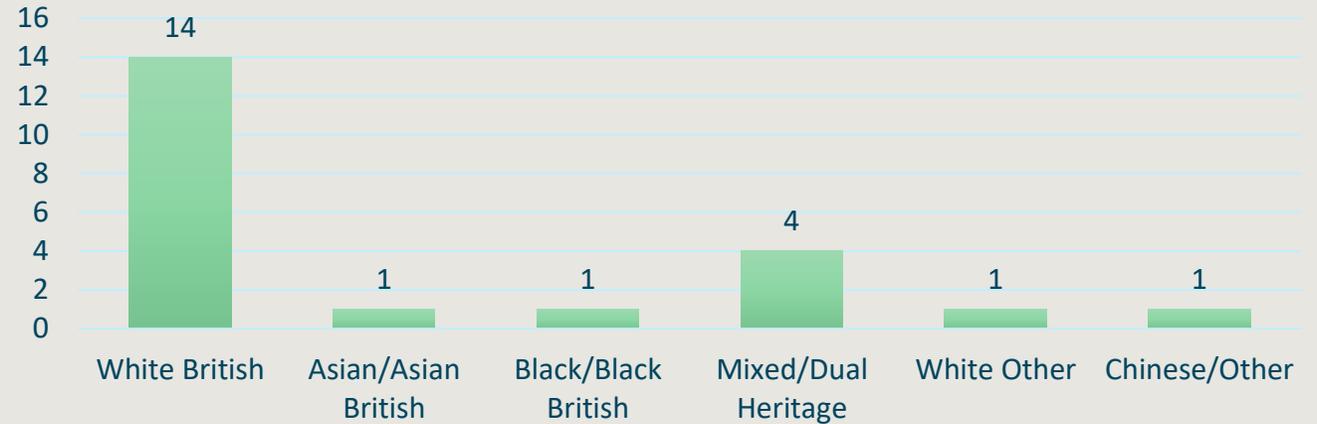
## External Residential Home



# Complex Needs

- There were 23 Cared For Children open to the Complex Needs team
- 2 are in an IFA placements
- 5 are in in-house fostering placements
- 11 are in residential placements
- 1 Placed with Parents
- 1 is in supported accommodation
- 1 is in an in-house children's home
- 1 is placed with a connected person

## Complex Needs Ethnicities



On average, children looked after open to Complex Needs are 13.8 years old. 59% are male, 41% female.

81% have been in their current placement for over 12 months, and 54% have also been in their placement for over 2 years.

27% (6) are placed within Trafford, 11 are placed elsewhere in Greater Manchester and 2 living elsewhere in the region, 3 outside of NW. 82% are placed within 20 miles from home.

The costs range from £364pw to £10,000pw, with an average of £3,111pw.

# Unregulated Placements

- The numbers of looked after young people in 16+ unregulated accommodation is stable. The costs across all settings range from £510 to £3636 pw, with an average of £1234.15 pw.
- There were 8 looked after young people placed in external semi-independent, unregulated 16+ placements. 3 are 16 years old, 1 female and 2 males. 5 are 17 years old, 3 females and 2 males.
- There were 34 young people aged 18+ in commissioned placements. The costs across all settings range from £79 to £4500 pw, with an average of £871 pw.
- We commission 2 supported accommodation services specifically for Trafford young people. Both have recently been reviewed and continue to deliver positive outcomes for our young people. They are:
  - Mary House – a group living provision for 4 young people with support on site 24/7. A satellite flat for 2 young people is also supported by the staff team
  - Forest Court – 5 individual flats in one building with support staff and/or a concierge team on site.

# Siblings Groups

Total CFC population: 340

- 202 of these have at least 1 sibling (inc. step and half) who is also looked after
- 76 groups in total
- Of the 76 groups, 44 are in the same placement

Family Size	Count	Count together
1	138	138
2	45	31
3	19	8
4	8	4
5	1	1
6	3	0

IFAs: 68% are siblings in placement

- 7 sibling groups of 2
- 5 sibling groups of 3
- 1 sibling group of 6: 2 x 2 sets of siblings together in placement, 1 in another IFA and 1 with an in house carer.

Internal Fostering:

Placement Type Code	CYP	CYP in Groups	CYP together
IH Fostering	105	56	21
Connected Person	90	63	47

- 21 of 56 sibling groups are in general fostering placements together
- 47 of 63 sibling groups are in connected persons placements together.

# Current Challenges

- Increasing demand and complexity of need which impacts on budget
- Ability to range of choice to match & access children to local placements
- Residential providers able to charge high fees as they recognise we have reduced bargaining power
- A reduction in number of internal foster carers
- Varying quality in the 16+ market
- Availability and choice of move on accommodation for care experienced young people
- Capacity to deliver the placement finding function alongside quality monitoring of placements and relationship management with providers

# How we plan to address our challenges

- Returning fostering to growth – Fostering Improvement Plan in place, number of GM and local strategies in place
- Securing local beds – a pilot approach working alongside 4 GM LAs to ‘soft block’ a bed in a residential home which will be ring fenced for the 4 LAs
- Developing relationships with the right providers who want to offer local placements to local children. A new residential home for children with complex needs has recently opened in Urmston and we have placed a young person with them. Embed our Link Officer approach to relationship management within commissioning
- Continue to drive the implementation of Trafford’ House Project which is supporting 7 young people to develop their independent skills and find their tenancy
- Refresh our sufficiency strategy and action plan to ensure our work is focused on the key areas
- Work alongside regional colleagues to plan for and understand the impact of regulation on supported accommodation services.

**Thank you for listening – any questions?**



