

Appendix (i)

West London Alliance Fostering Ofsted Data 2013-14

West London Alliance

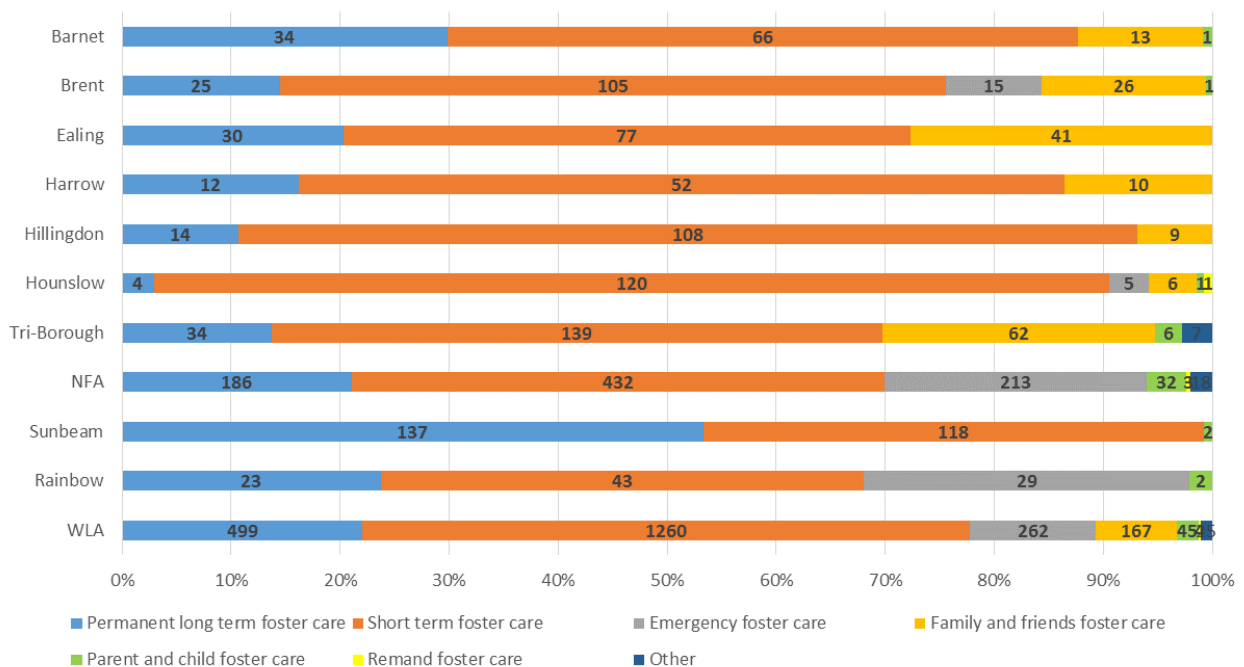
Fostering services recruit, prepare, assess, train and support foster cares. In the West London Alliance (WLA) there are two types of service, one provided by Local Authorities (LAs) and one provided by Independent fostering services (IFA). Independent fostering services are private companies or charities, which are registered with Ofsted and provide placements to children with foster carers approved by them.

Key findings

Children and Young People

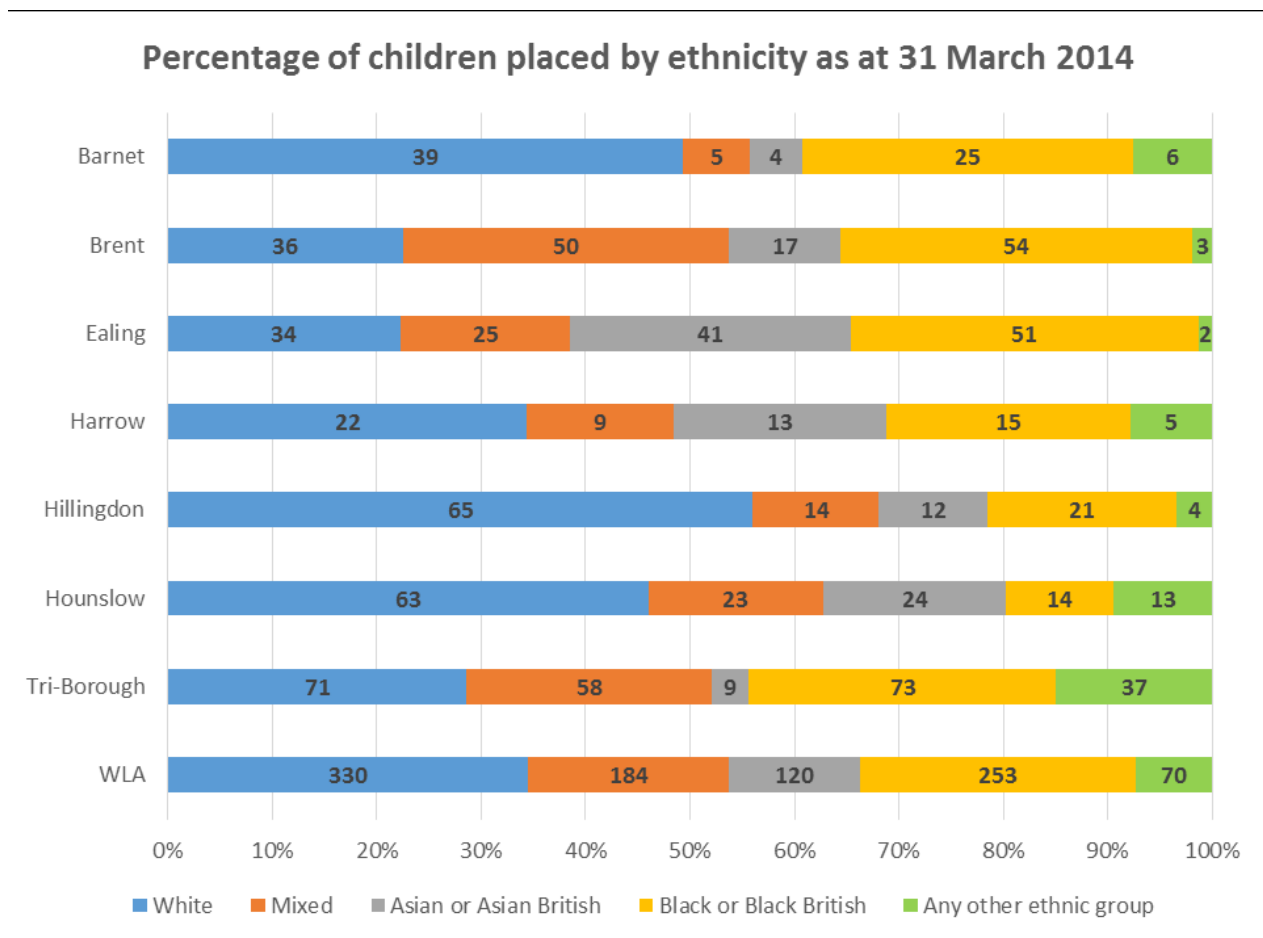
- As at 31 March 2014, there were 2,242 children and young people placed in foster care: 1,004 (44.8%) children in LA provision and 1,238 (55.2%) children placed in IFS provision. Of the 1,004 children in LA provision, 942 (93.8%) were fostering places and 62 (6.2%) were short break or respite places.
- Between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013, the number of children placed in foster care at any point in the year was 3,563, excluding short breaks: 2,066 (58.0%) placed in LA provision and 1497 (42.0%) placed in IFS provision.
- Across the West London Alliance the biggest types of foster care provided were 'Short term' (55.7%) and 'Permanent long term' (22.1%).

Types of foster care provided



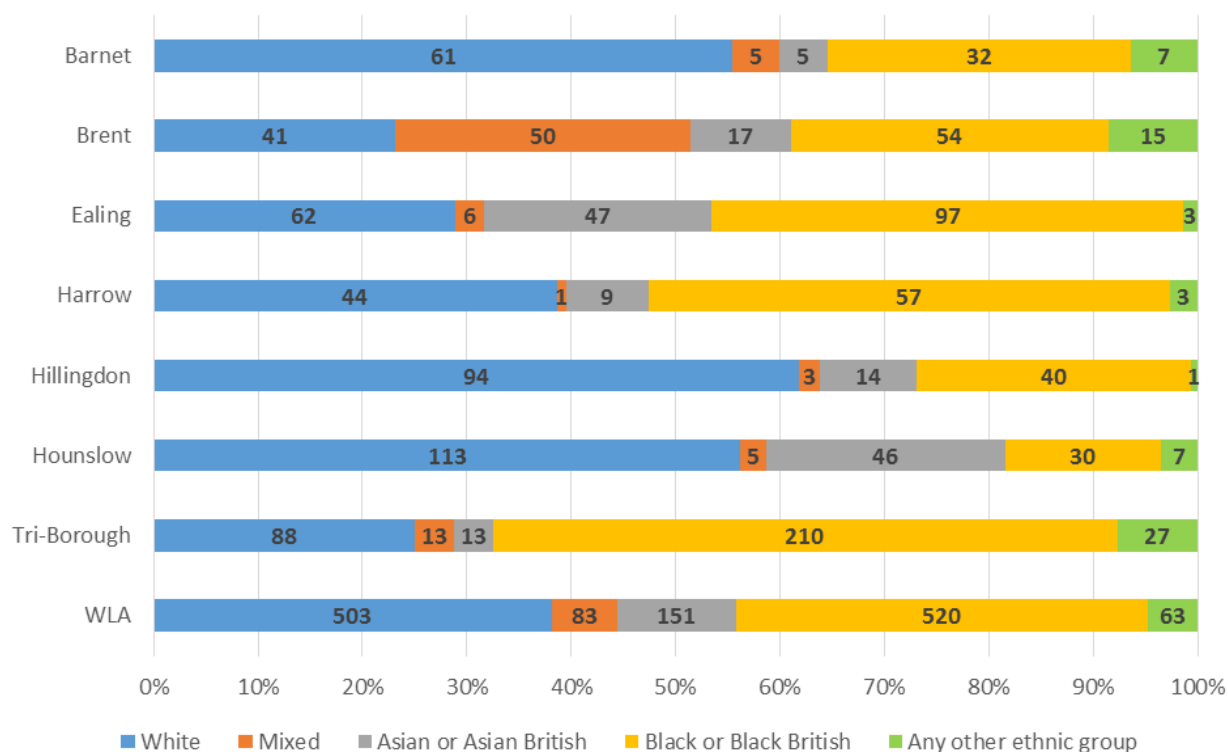
- Of the 2,060 children placed by LAs, at 31 March 2014 there were 147(7.1%) who were disabled.
- Across the West London Alliance the two biggest ethnic groups for children placed in foster care are 'White' (34.5%) and 'Black and Black British' (26.4%). Hillingdon has the largest proportion of children from a 'White' background (56.0%) placed in foster care. Brent has the largest proportion of children from a 'Mixed' ethnicity background (22.5%). Brent, Ealing and the Tri-

Borough councils have the largest proportion of children from a 'Black or Black British' background (33.75%, 33.33% and 29.4% respectively) in foster care.



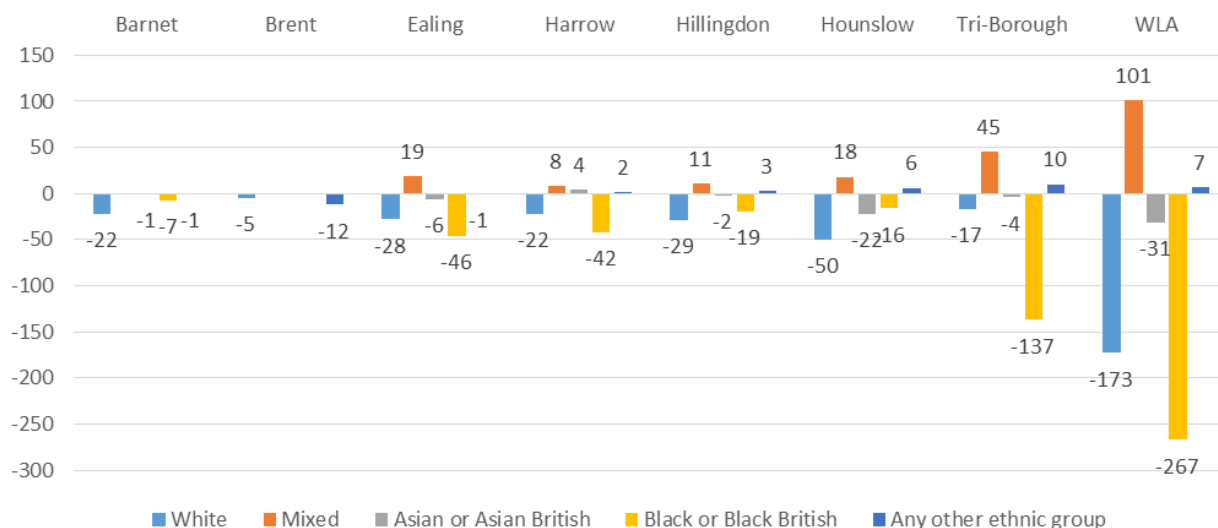
- Across the West London Alliance there is variance in the ethnicity of foster carers. Overall the two biggest ethnic groups are 'Black or British Black' (39.4%) and 'White' (38.1%). The Tri-Borough councils have the highest proportion of 'Black or Black British' foster carers (59.8%). Ealing and Hounslow has the highest proportion of 'Asian or Asian British' foster carers (21.8% and 22.9% respectively). While Brent has the highest proportion of 'Mixed' ethnicity foster carers (28.3%).

Percentage of foster carers by ethnicity as at 31 March 2014



- The following shows the difference between the ethnicity of children in care and foster carers across the WLA. There are 101 children from 'Mixed' ethnic backgrounds compared to the number of foster carers. There were more foster carers than children in the 'White' and 'Black or Black British' ethnic groups (173 and 267 more foster carers respectively). Please note that more than one child could be placed with a foster carer.

The difference between the number of children in care and the number of foster carers across the WLA



- Between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014 there were 185 incidents of children going missing, which involved 61 children (excluding IFAs). 17.7% (11) of children went missing for less than 24 hours, 33.9% (21) of children went missing for between 1 to 6 days while 16.1% (10) of children

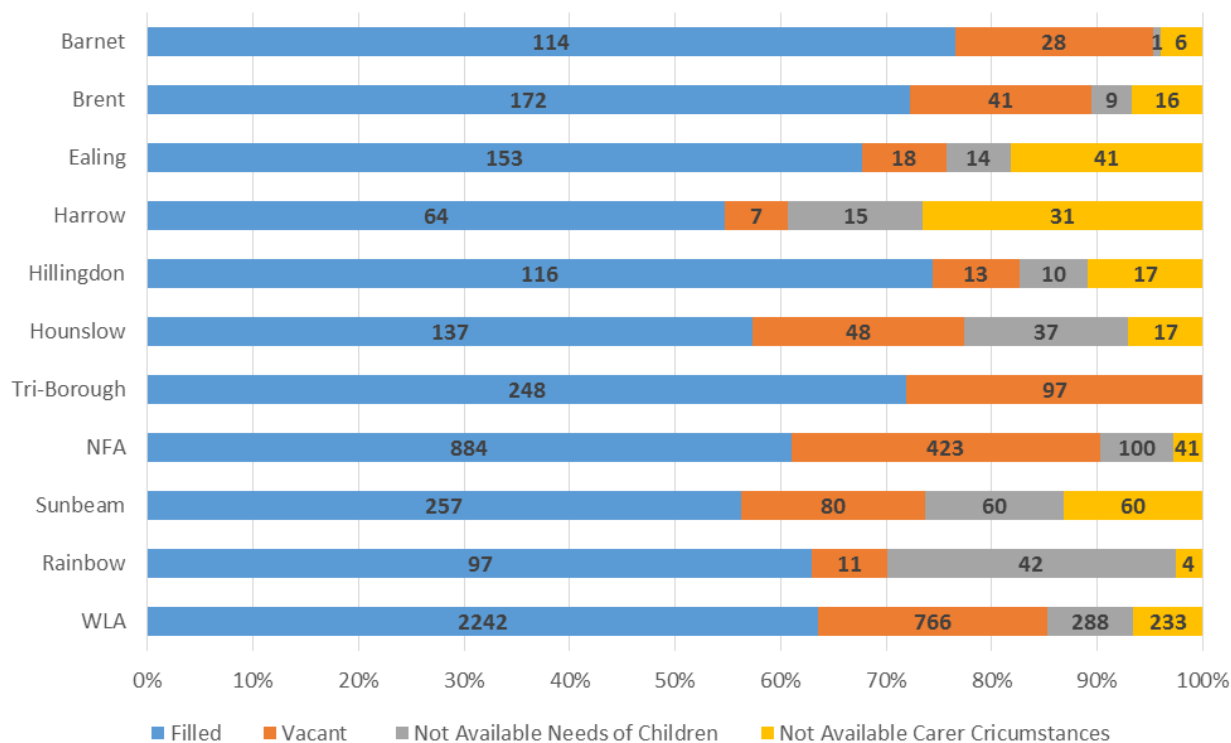
went missing for between seven and 28 days. 32.3% (20) of children went missing for longer than 28 days with 2 children still missing as at 31 March 2014.

- There were 22 (1%) children who, at some point during the financial year 2013-4, had no educational arrangements.

Fostering capacity (places) and placements

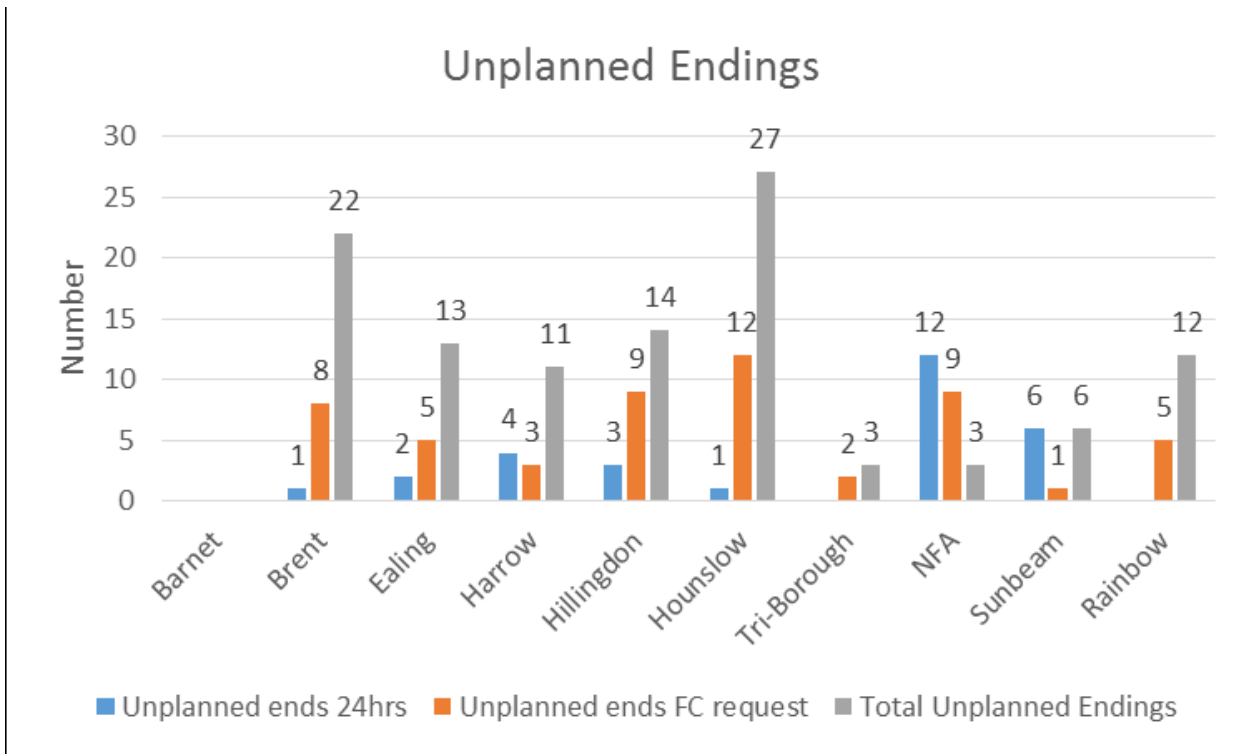
- On 31 March 2014, there were 3,529 approved foster places in West London Alliance: LA provision accounted for 41.7% (2,059) of places while IFA provision accounted for 58.3% (2,059) of places.
- Across the West London Alliance 63.5% (2242) of foster places are filled with 21.7% (766) places vacant. This varies across the WLA with Harrow having the lowest proportion of places which are filled (54.7%) and Barnet having the highest proportion (76.5%). 67.1% (514) of vacant foster care places are available through IFA provision while 32.9% (252) are available through LA provision.

Overview of foster care places



- During 2013-14, of the 205 sibling groups whose placements commenced in the year, 18 (8.8%) were assessed to be placed together, but were placed separately. A large majority (72.2%) of sibling groups, however, were placed together, in line with the assessment. Around one fifth of sibling groups were assessed to be placed separately: 39 groups (19%).

- In total there were 144 unplanned endings of placements between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014. 62.5% (90) of these occurred in LA provision compared to 37.5% (54) in IFA provision.



Foster Carers – Recruitment and Retention

- There were a total of 786 LA approved fostering households as at 31 March 2014.
- Between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014, there were 1,881 initial enquiries made from new prospective fostering households with 8.4% (159) continuing to making application.
- Of the 159 applications from prospective fostering households that were concluded during 2012-13, half were approved, 71 were withdrawn and very few were rejected at panel: 51.6%, 44.7% and 1.3% respectively.
- Between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014, there were 82 new fostering households approved and 59 were de-registered. This saw a net increase of 23 approved fostering households from last year.

Application Progress

