

Brent Adoption Service

- Issues were identified around the performance of the Placements Service 2009.
- Measures put in place to address this including an Interim Head of Services appointed July 2010.
- Identified issues in Adoption around timescales children very slow to be matched with adopters and move through the system.
- Low numbers in relation to recruiting adopters.

- January 2011. Implemented a performance culture, tracking sheets / systems implemented to track recruitment, children awaiting adoptions and those adopted, weekly meetings set up to monitor performance
- February 2012 – Ofsted inspected the service, outcome of this inspection was satisfactory, good outcomes for children, very low rates of adoption breakdown and recruitment had increased by 50% to currently 19 assessment underway.

Government Performance Indicators for Adoption

- Up until April 2012 Government used NI61 to measure the time from the decision 'should be placed for adoption' to the time the child was placed.
- This was then measured when the child was adopted sometimes up to 2 years later.
- This meant Brent's data was not current data but an average over 3 years of the children adopted.

2012 Score Card

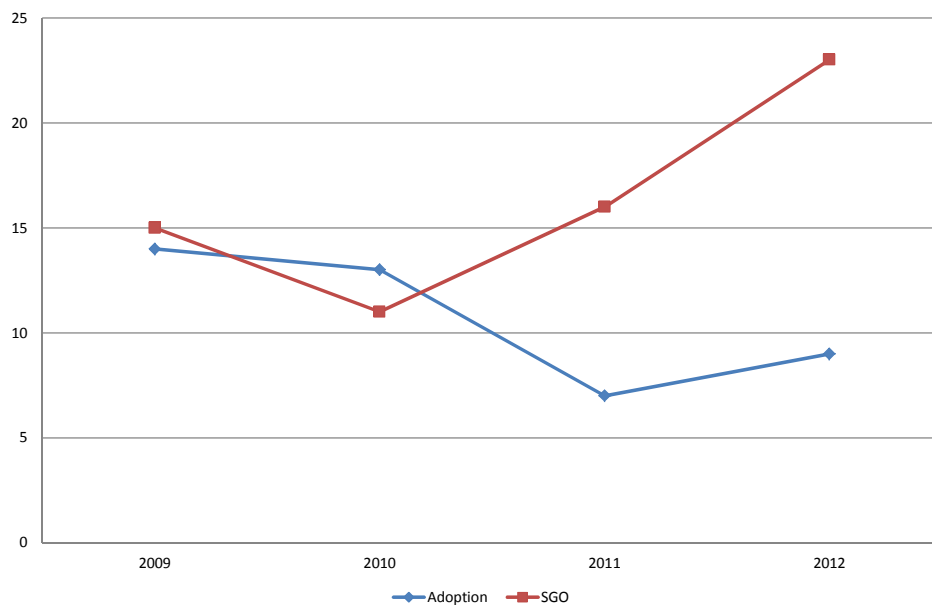
- Political focus on timeliness of adoption
- Focus upon
 - (1) average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family; and
 - (2) average time between receipt of court authority to place a child and decision to match
- Brent's performance:
 - (1) Brent 827 days, higher than statistical neighbours and England average (Eng 625)
 - (2) Brent 235 days compared with England average 171 days
- Brent is in the bottom quartile in the country

The Story behind the data

Permanence in Brent:

- A focus on permanence for all children with significant numbers of SGOs (reflecting and responding to the diverse cultures in Brent) – Figures indicate that Brent is in the top quartile for SGOs.
- A recognition that if the score card had included permanency via SGO, then Brent would have scored higher.
- Also this would have included a much higher proportion of BME children

London Borough of Brent Adoptions & SGO's 2009-2012



Data analysis

- Current data shows:
 - 13 children adopted 2009-10
 - 9 children adopted 2010-11; and
 - 6 in the first quarter of this year. With a further estimate of 10 by end March 2013 (16)
- Forecasting for future scorecards:
 - 2010/12 – an average of 871 days – actual in scorecard
 - 2012 – an average of 955 days for the 9 children adopted.
 - 6 adoptions this quarter – an average of 401 days.
 - Children adopted 2010/11 – 8/9 children were Black Caribbean, African or dual Heritage.
 - Children adopted 2011/12 – 6/9 from BME backgrounds.

Overall Strengths

- Senior Management Vision and Aspiration over the last 2 years
- Political and Staff Engagement
- Commitment to Improving Outcomes for Children
- Child focused practice
- Commitment to embedding a culture of high performance across teams
- Establishment of key forums for permanency planning and monitoring of drift from the time a child becomes looked after
- Good legal advice and support which is highly valued

Outcomes for Children (1)

- Statistical data and files indicates (historical) drift & delay has been reduced
- Reports from social workers and adoption teams indicate earlier permanency planning.
- Commitment to permanence for children across the service.
- Improved assessments reported e.g CPR.
- Increased number of children adopted – 9 last year.
- Only one disruption over last 5 years.

Outcomes for Children (2)

- Commitment from social workers re: life story work and life story book , but in practice workloads make this difficult – take up of training.
- Clear evidence that children's views inform permanency planning.
- Excellent service from CAMHS and play therapy:
 - consultancy for social workers;
 - help with direct work; and
 - direct support for adopters
- Brent "Does not give up on a child"

DFE Diagnostic Assessment

Where we are

- 21 adoption assessment under way.
- Last year 2011, 32 Children placed for permanency.
- Average time reduced by half from 827 to 401.
- 9 adoptions 2011 to 16 adoptions 2012.