
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

Part of Harrow's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

Strategy & Partnerships – Business Intelligence Unit

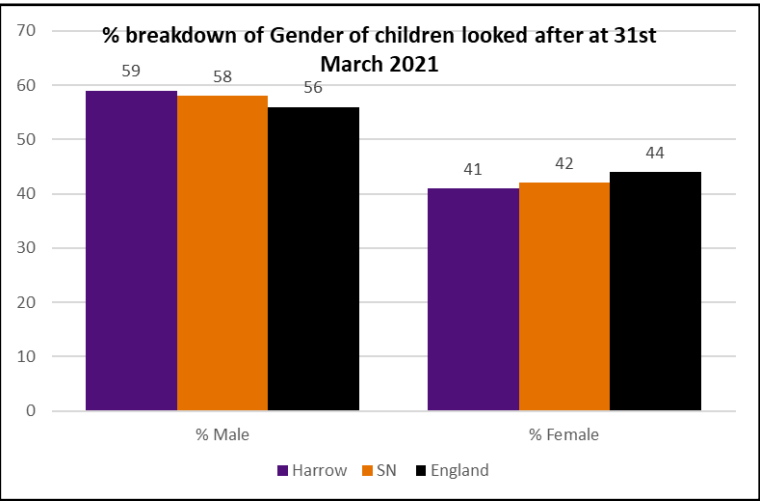
Under s.17.1 (a) of the Children Act 1989, local authorities have a duty to ‘safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need’. The Act is designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of a child and if appropriate provide services that will allow the child to stay with their family.

Where there are serious concerns that a child is at risk of harm if she/he remains at home, the local authority may apply for a court order to remove the child. If this request is granted the child becomes a ‘looked after’ child.

The term ‘looked after’ includes all children being looked after by a local authority, i.e. those subject to court orders and those looked after on a voluntary basis through an agreement with their parents under Section 20 of the Act.

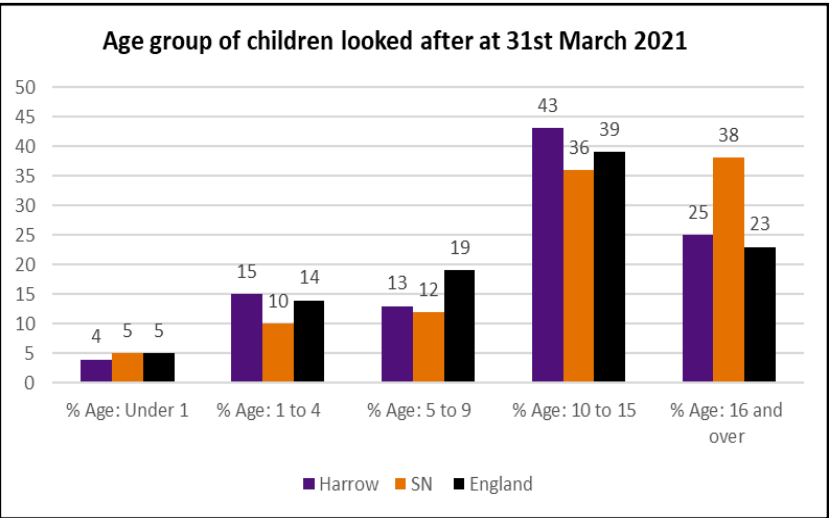
Gender, age groups and ethnicity of children looked after at 31st March 2021

Gender breakdown of children looked after at 31st March 2021 (%)



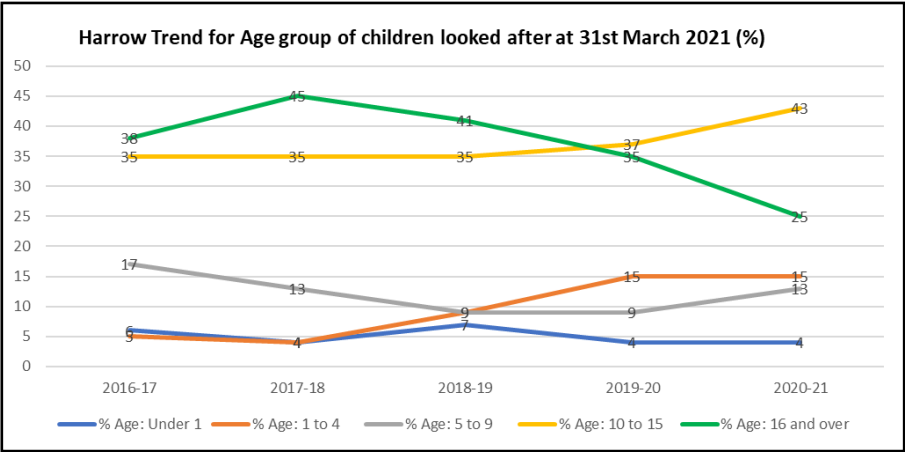
While the gender of looked after children is fairly similar to national and statistical neighbour averages, % of looked after boys is slightly higher (3%) than England.

Age group of children looked after at 31st March 2021 (%)



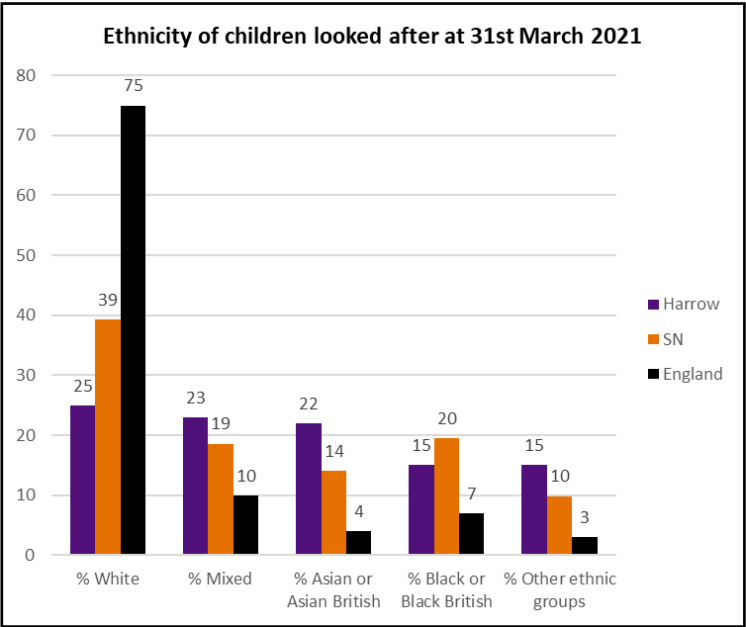
Nearly 68% of Harrow’s LAC population is aged between 10 and 17, which is above the England (62%) but below statistical neighbour averages (74%).

Harrow Trend for Age group of children looked after at 31st March 2021 (%)

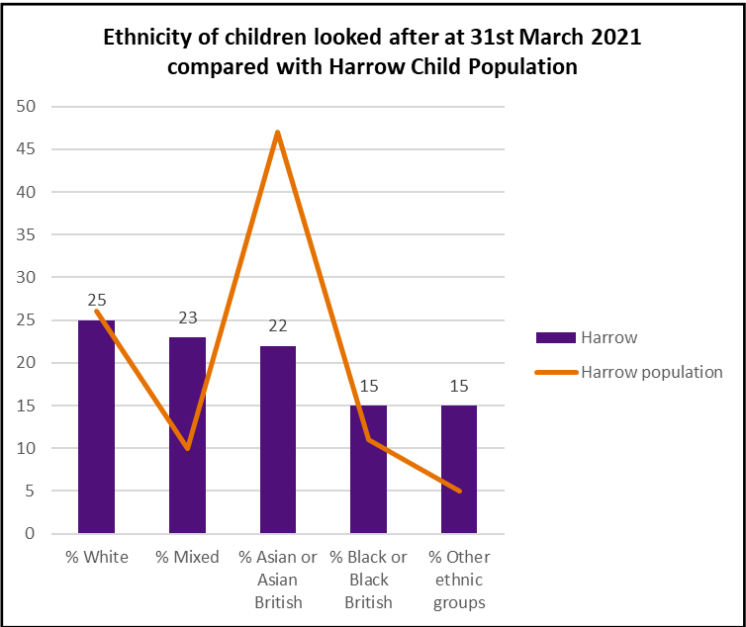


There has been a steady decline in children in the age group 16 and over. The children in age group 5-9 has gone up from 37% in 2020 to 43% in 2021

Ethnicity of children look after at 31st March 2021 (%)



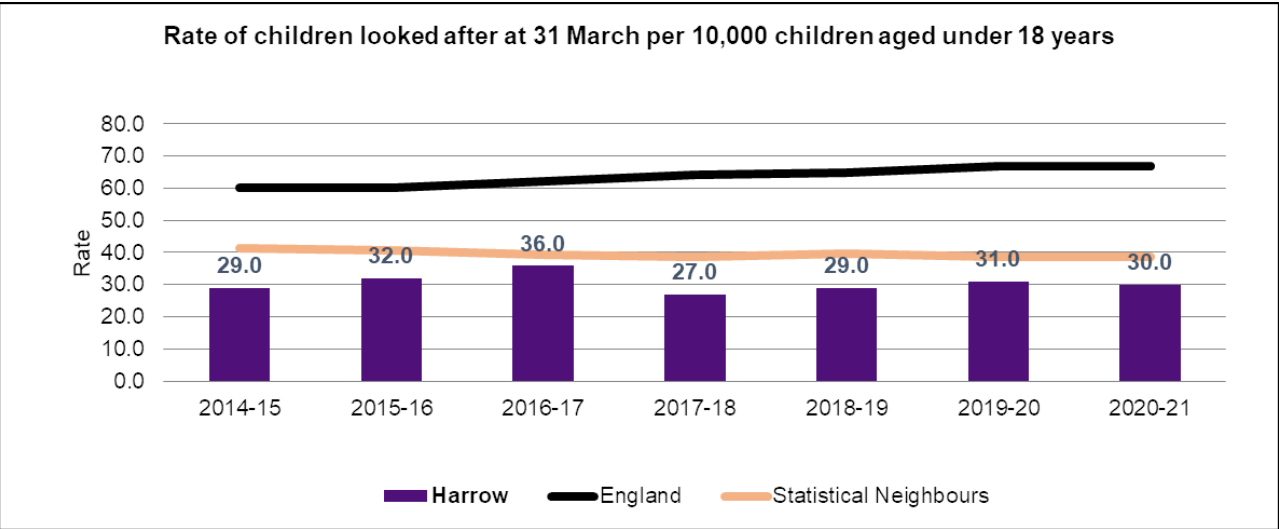
Approximately two thirds of Harrow’s children looked after population are from BME groups. Harrow has a higher proportion of CLA from ‘Mixed’, ‘Asian or Asian British’ & ‘Other’ backgrounds compared to statistical neighbours..



The ethnicity of Harrow’s CLA cohort is disproportional when compared to ethnicity of the children and young people population from Harrow. Fewer children and young people from Asian or Asian British backgrounds and more from ‘Mixed’, ‘Black or Black British’ and ‘Other’ ethnic backgrounds are looked after when compared to Harrow children and young people population..

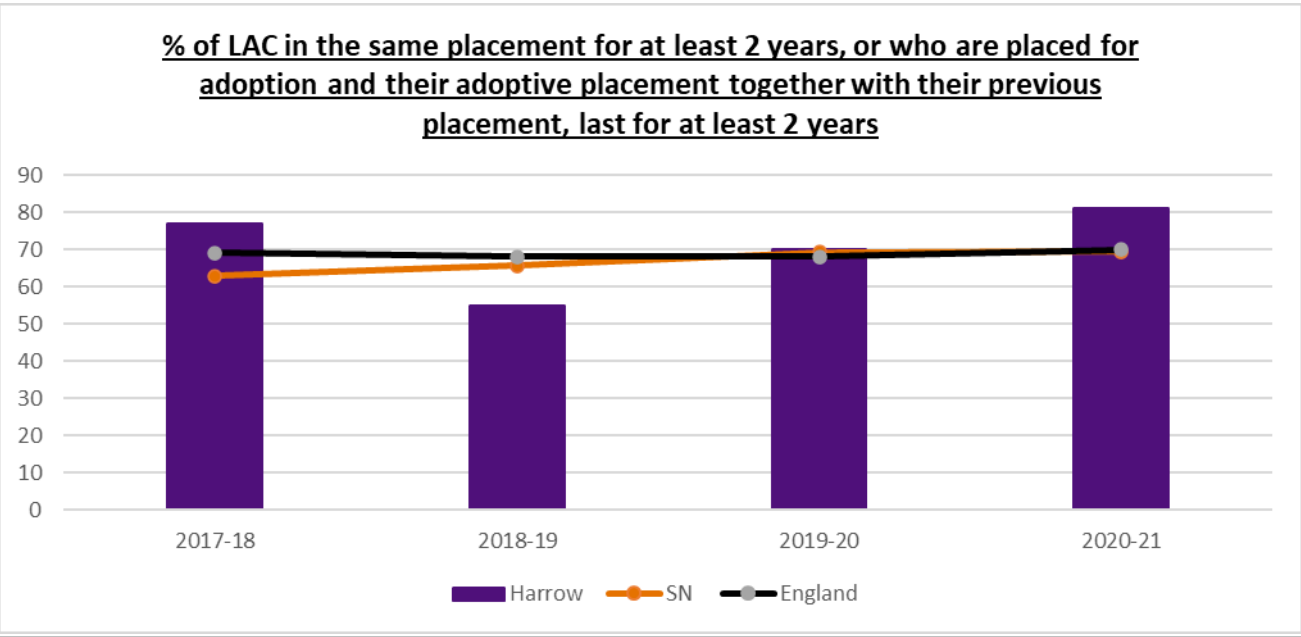
Children Looked After Rate at 31st March 2021:

At the end of March 2021, Approximately 80,850 children were looked after in England, an increase of 1% on the previous year. Nationally, the rate of looked after children per 10,000 is 67, in Harrow this rate is 30.



Our rate of CLA per 10,000 population remains below both statistical neighbour and England averages. Harrow’s CLA rate has increased since 2017/18, Children Looked After (CLA) numbers are averaging at around 180. The Keeping Families Together / Edge of Care Service is now operational and preventing children entering the care system and focus is on returning home or to an alternative placement. In addition, improved Public Law Outline practice has reduced number of care proceedings being initiated, there is also tighter oversight of children's circumstances through the Access to Resources Panel.

% of LAC in same Placement for at least 2 years/placed for adoption:



Harrow’s rate of LAC in the same placement for at least 2 years continues to improve. Due to the small cohort that makes up the indicator, any shifts in stability can have a big impact on the overall indicator score.

% of LAC with three or more Placements:

Harrow's rate of LAC who had 3 or more placements has been dropping since 2017 and now in line with our SN but slightly higher than England averages. Arrangements for all CLA placements and placement moves are based on assessed needs and are tracked and monitored by the Access to Resources Panel.

Distance LAC Placed from Home:

Harrow's rate of LAC placed more than 20 miles away from home has been increasing but remains below the national and statistical neighbour averages. Arrangements for all children looked after placements are based on assessed needs and are robustly tracked and monitored with a focus on outcomes and timeliness by the Access to Resources Panel. All out of borough placements are agreed by the director as per regulations and guidance. Children looked after who live outside of the local authority area have the same level of support and opportunities as children looked after and placed in Harrow, (e.g. contact with family; social work visits; access to health, education and leisure activities; attendance at celebration events). Their voice is heard and social workers take account of their views.

LAC Offending:

The LAC offending rate for Harrow remains above the national and statistical neighbours average, due to small numbers in the cohort our figures fluctuate, the last two years has seen a drop in CLA offending. There are good working relationships and joint attendance at relevant meetings discussing social care and offending risks and planning. These include CLA reviews and the Safety, Wellbeing and Risk Management Panel (SWARM) (for highest risk Youth Justice clients).

% of LAC Substance Misuse:

The rate of LAC being identified with substance misuse in Harrow remains above the national and statistical neighbours average. All LAC identified with an alcohol or substance misuse problem are offered an intervention and closely monitored. This is also followed up at their annual reviews and health assessments.

Emotional Health of LAC:

% of LAC who had a missing incident during the year

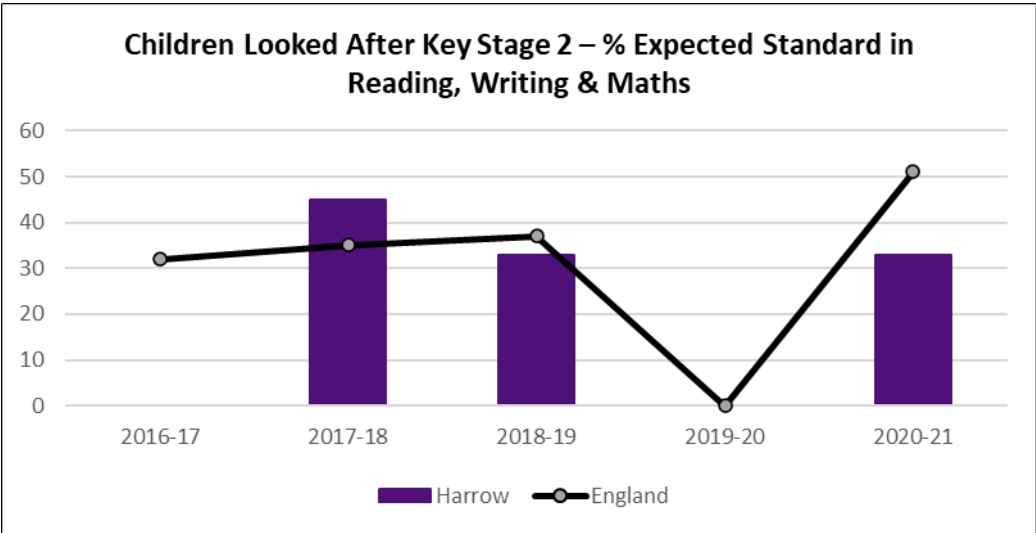
The LAC missing rate for Harrow has had a declining trend and is below statistical neighbours and London average. Harrow (and the multiagency partnership) adopted the Pan London (LSCB) Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocol which is followed when children run away or go missing. Missing children data and strategic analysis is reviewed at the HSCB & VVE Sub-group, this includes thematic information from return home interviews regarding patterns and trends, push and pull factors, locations and risks. Multiagency Strategy meetings are held for children who are missing from home or care. "Grab Packs" are shared with police for children who are at high risk of missing episodes in order to quickly locate and safeguard children. Sharing of information across partnerships has led to an improved analysis of vulnerable young people who go missing. It can identify those at greatest risk, repeat victims, vulnerable persons and perpetrators and identify County Lines and exploitation activity at an earlier stage.

Harrow is ambitious for care leavers, and the outcomes for care leavers have been above SN and England averages. Care leavers, like many other young adults, have been impacted by Covid19 and the closure of businesses in the hospitality, retail and service industries which are key employers. While some care leavers have been furloughed, many have unfortunately lost their jobs. Some young people in college have also put their studies on hold and have found it difficult to engage in online classes. Aftercare personal advisors and our specialist careers services, are working hard to support young people back into education, training and employment, and we expect this to improve when businesses reopen gradually. We have increased number of care leavers attending further and higher education including university (16%).

Care Leavers- Suitable Accommodation (%):

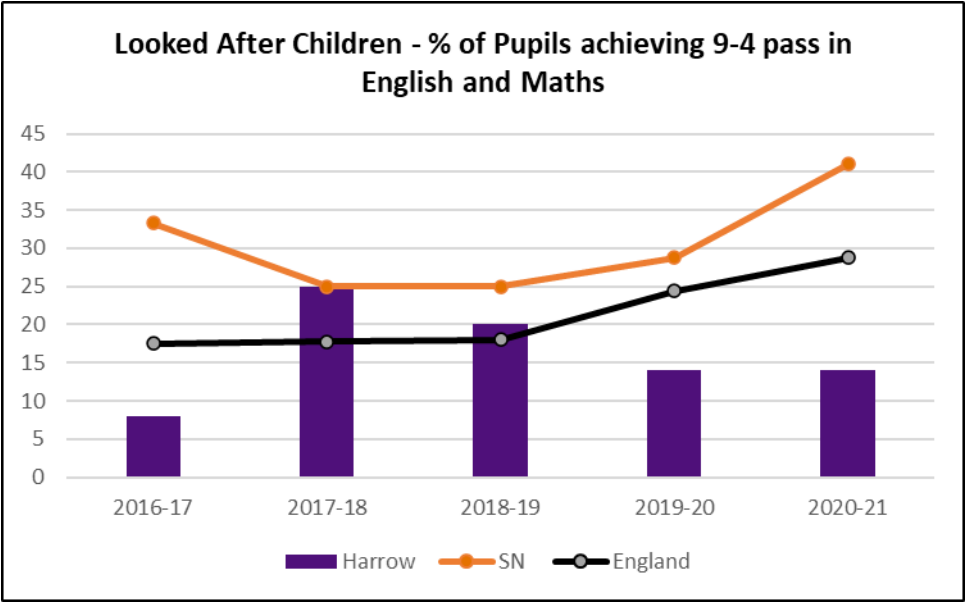
The rate of care leavers with suitable accommodation in recent years for Harrow lies slightly above the national and statistical neighbour's average. The LCT works closely with the Access to Resources team and the housing department to ensure there is a wide range of placement and accommodation options for care leavers. This includes staying put fostering arrangements, supported lodgings and residential housing options with a range of support from 24 hours a day to a few hours a week depending on the assessed need. There is a comprehensive preparation for independence training programme for Care Leavers covering finance, relationships, education, employment and training, health and accommodation.

Children Looked After Key Stage 2 – Expected standard reading, writing & maths.



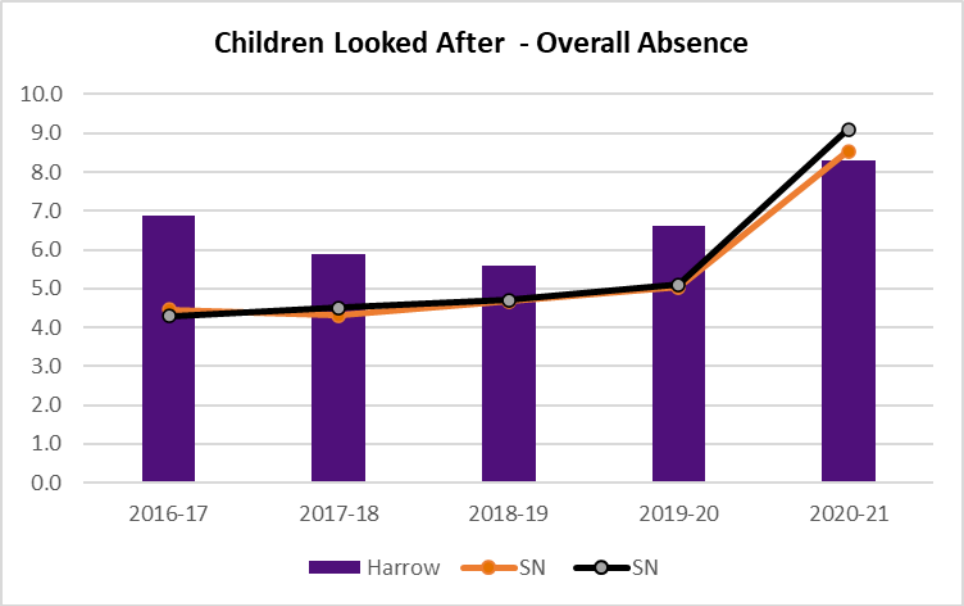
The rate achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths was 33%, there were no assessments in 2019-20 due to the pandemic. Our KS2 cohorts are very small and usually have 5 or less children and therefore small variations in education outcomes impact on the performance figures. Improving the progress of CLA from KS1 to KS2 in reading, writing and maths and outcomes for CLA at Key Stage 2 (KS2) especially in reading and writing are a priority for the virtual school.

Looked After Children - % of Pupils achieving 9-4 pass in English and Maths:



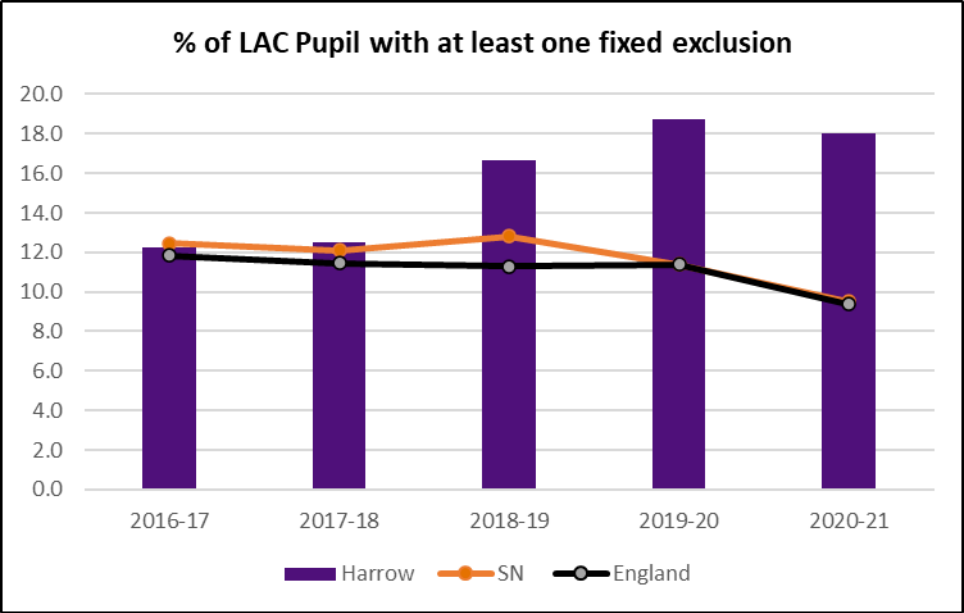
Our KS4 cohorts are relatively small with approximately 10 to 15 CLA pupils and therefore small variations in education outcomes impact on the performance figures. It is important that children in Year 11 leave with some qualifications and therefore support, tuition and mentoring is made available when required; the rationale behind Every Child Can Achieve is intended to ensure that CLA do not leave school without any qualifications. A programme has been put together which includes support packages for those hard to reach as well as functional skills qualifications, which offers a different approach to learning to help boost confidence.

Looked After Children - Overall Absence:



Recent trend indicated a higher overall absence rate for Harrow than the national and statistical neighbour's average except in 2020/21 where it is below England and inline with SN. The council promotes school attendance and punctuality for all its CLA. This message had been conveyed to carers as well. Personal education plans are taken seriously and there was continuous dialogue with schools so that where interventions were required, these were put in place at an early stage. Intervention included the provision of 1-1 tuition and/or support from a mentor.

% of LAC Pupil with at least one fixed exclusion:



Historically fixed term exclusions for LAC in Harrow have been high. In 2021 it is almost twice as much the England and SN. Reducing fixed term exclusions is a priority for the virtual school, a number of fixed term exclusions are for children placed out of borough. CLA placed outside of the LA have the same level of support from the virtual school as those placed in Harrow.