

## Summary for children and young people

- Services to support children who are looked after in Lambeth have improved since the last inspection in 2015. Managers and social workers know that there is more to do, especially for those children who have a plan for adoption, so that children who cannot live with their families receive good services at the time they need them.
- Children and families receive help at an early stage, and when difficulties arise, professionals work well together to protect those children and young people who are most at risk. This means that they are protected from harm.
- Some social work assessments and plans are not yet good enough. This makes it harder for families to understand what needs to change to make things better. It sometimes takes too long for plans to help improve things for children.
- Social workers spend time with children, listening to their views and to any worries that they may have. Since more social workers have come to work in Lambeth, children are starting to build trusting relationships with them. This is improving for children looked after particularly, as more social workers are choosing to work permanently in the children looked after teams in Lambeth.
- Social workers and police officers are working better together to find children who go missing from home or care and at risk from dangerous people in the community. There is more to be done to make sure that risk is being reduced for children who run away, or who are at risk of getting involved in crime, so that they are supported well and they feel safe.
- Children and young people only come into care if they cannot live safely at home with their families. The right permanent families for children who cannot live with their families are not confirmed soon enough. This means that not all children feel secure about knowing where they will live into adulthood.
- Foster carers provide good support and care, and increasingly more young people are able to live with their foster families after they are 18 years old, particularly if they attend university. Children who are looked after are doing well in education and receive good support to achieve their best.
- When adoption is the best plan for children, the right family for them is not found quickly enough and some children wait much too long to know where they will grow up and be well cared for. When children are placed in their adoptive home, it takes too long for them to become legally adopted.
- Most care leavers live in good-quality accommodation in which they feel safe. Many young people are helped to live independently and are supported to have their own tenancy, which they value. Care leavers get on well with their personal advisers and social workers, although not enough young people are in education, employment or training.