

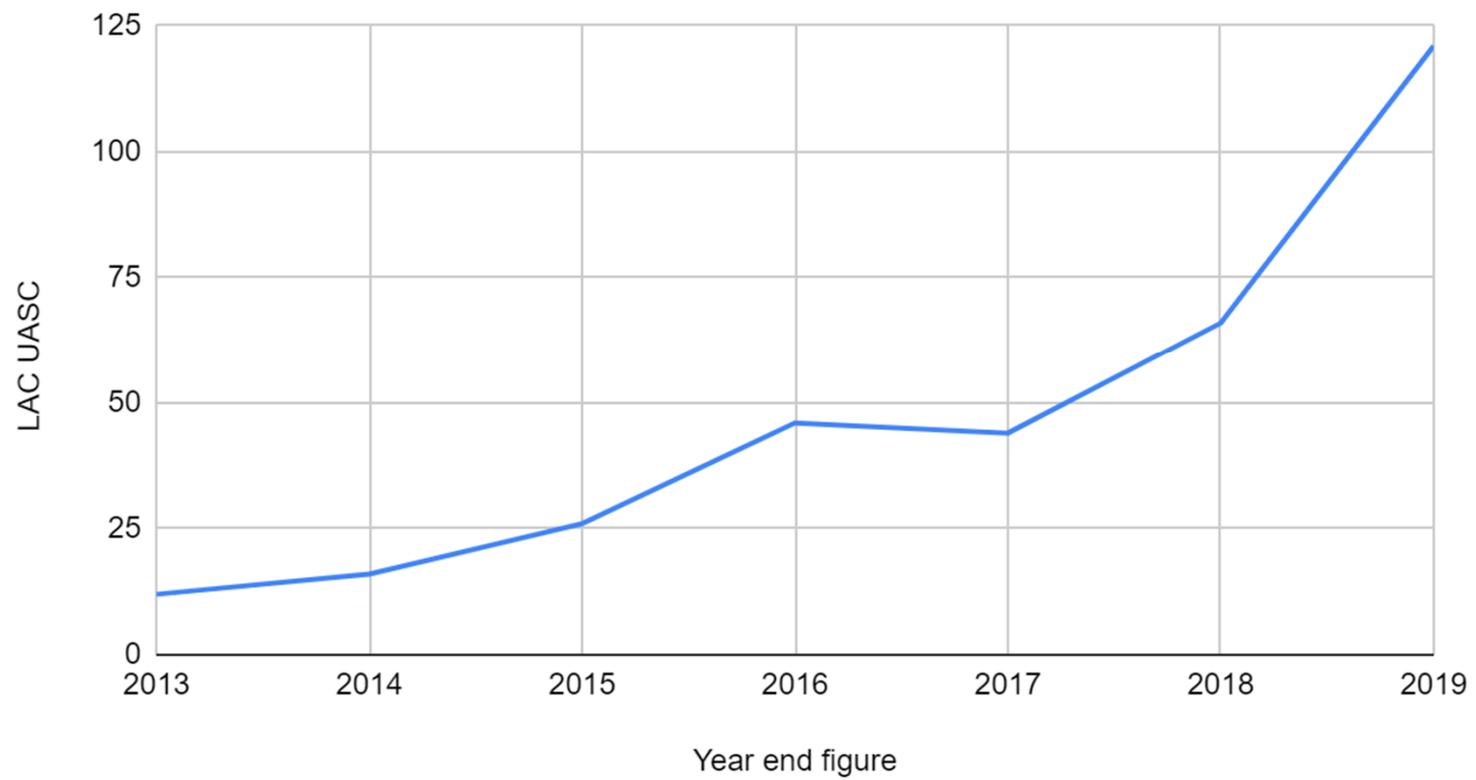
# Responding to the needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking children



## Presenting Issues

- Increase in numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- EU settled status applications for post Brexit arrangements
- Increase in Dublin III assessments, where children in refugee camps in Europe have family members in the UK

## LAC UASC vs Year end figure



## The Changes In Our Demographic Of Children Needs

Along with increases in unaccompanied asylum seeking children, there has also been an increased need/demand in related areas;

- EU children, needing to make a settled status application, prior to Brexit arrangements.
- Increasing numbers of families seeking asylum placed in 'dispersed' accommodation in Manchester.
- Increases in Dublin III assessments, where children in refugee camps in Europe have family members in Manchester and wish to join them and claim asylum.

## Manchester's Multi Agency Offer: Improving Outcomes

UASC in Manchester benefit from a robust partnership team that is targeted to meet their particular needs.

- **Education;** Links with virtual school ensure all young people can access education
- **Health;** specialist UASC looked after nurse, bespoke health assessments. Child and family mental health service (CAMH's) providing specialist trauma therapy for UASC.
- **Accommodation;** Commissioning of 16/17 year old supported accommodation, capacity building and foster care recruitment.
- **Asylum and settled status applications;** working in partnership with Greater Manchester Aid Immigration unit

## Education and attainment outcomes

Our asylum seeking children are keen to access education and have aspirations and a desire to contribute to society. We work closely with education partners via the Virtual school to ensure access into education, this can be formal statutory education, ESOL courses or training eg:

- One young man is at college and completing courses so that he can become an **electrical engineer**.
- Another young person would like to become a **pilot**, he is currently at school and attending air cadets to help him.
- One young person wants to become a **doctor**. She is completing her A Levels and is hoping to study medicine at university.
- Another young person would like to be a **fashion designer**, he has started College and undertaking related courses.
- Another young man who is teaching himself **coding**, his college has reported he is one of their best. The aim is to go to university.
- One young person would like to be a **maths teacher**, she is aiming for a Masters degree and is currently studying A Levels.
- There is another young man who dreams of being an **architect**. He is being supported by his college so that he can go onto study this after he has finished.
- Another young person who wants to become a **dentist**.
- We have another young man who would like to become an **air traffic controller**.

With partnership support our UASC children will achieve improved outcomes in education, training and employment.

## The Pledge

On the 4th March 2020 Manchester City Council via the Corporate Parenting Panel pledged its commitment to all children in care and care leavers affected by Brexit immigration changes:

*'To our children in care and care leavers affected by Brexit immigration changes. In Manchester our looked after children and care leavers will not become part of the next Windrush generation because of Brexit immigration changes. We will:*

- Identify all our looked after children and care leavers affected by Brexit*
- Connect them with legal advice so they can make the most appropriate immigration applications*
- Support those who are eligible to apply for British citizenship'*

## The pledge: Improved outcomes

As of the 31st August 2020 there were 51 children in our care who are EU/EEA/Swiss nationals, 22 young people formerly in our care who are EU nationals.

- Working with Greater Manchester Aid immigration Unit, we have developed a pathway to support our children to claim 'settled or pre-settled status.'
- Of the 51 looked after children, there have been 18 successful applications for settled status.
- There are 20 live applications awaiting a home office decision and 12 pending applications, where we are awaiting documents from embassy's.
- There has been one application for settled status that has been refused due to the criminal conviction of the child.
- Of the 22 young people who are open to leaving care services, there have been 9 successful settled status applications, 8 live applications awaiting a home office decision. 2 Young People have had their applications refused due to having a criminal conviction and 3 have pre-settled status granted.
- Pre-settled status is where a person has not been in the UK for a consistent period of 5 years and full settled status can only be granted at the 5 year point.

## Partnership working; improving outcomes

- Concerns were raised that Refugee families were placed in 'temporary' accommodation in a Hotel in Manchester.
- A team around the Family approach was developed, with education, health, adult services, early years, early help, social work services
- Improved and targeted specialist offer of Health screening, legal advice, school/nursery provision and SureStart support.
- Improved communication, information sharing and joint working led to better outcomes

## Making a difference - a case study

K arrived in Manchester a year ago aged 11. He told us that he saw Father and older Brother killed, following this his Mother arranged for him to be taken out of the country to safety. The smugglers (who his mother paid for safe passage) took him via a lorry, on a journey that took many weeks. In this time K was injured falling from the lorry, he reports he was placed in the wheel arch due to his small size.

K was 'dropped off' in Manchester, tired, hungry, dirty, with injuries from his journey and very afraid.

On arrival, K was placed with in house foster carers and he had health screening from the specialist UASC looked after nurse. Partners in education assessed him to ensure he accessed the right support and he joined a year 7 class in school.

K loves sport and plays on the school badminton and cricket team, he described watching a cricket match at Old Trafford as 'the best day of his life'. Via the red Cross K located his mother and has some contact with her when she is able to get internet/telephone.

K's asylum application is pending. He is a popular child at school who is meeting all his targets. He is settled, happy and healthy. He is described as a polite, confident and funny child who has great ambitions for his life in Manchester.

## Improving outcomes for our children

A travelled to the UK alone at 13 years old, he is from Kuwait and his family were part of the Bedum tribe which meant that they are not entitled to access any education and there are very limited opportunities for members of the Budum tribe.

Since arriving in the UK in May 2018 he has done extremely well in school, he volunteers with the Hope services ran by the Children's Society and works with 'Pot of Gold' sitting on the panel that decides which money is given to which service. A takes this role very seriously and enjoys making these decisions, although he says at times it can be hard as he feels they all deserve the money.

A has achieved a number of awards and trophies for his extracurricular activities and engagement with the childrens society. A has aspirations to become a pilot, He has joined the air cadets to help fulfill his dream.