

Public Document Pack



**Service Director – Legal, Governance and
Commissioning**

Julie Muscroft

The Democracy Service
Civic Centre 3
High Street
Huddersfield
HD1 2TG

Tel: 01484 221000

Please ask for: Helen Kilroy

Email: helen.kilroy@kirklees.gov.uk

Tuesday 10 December 2019

Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

Corporate Parenting Board

The **Corporate Parenting Board** will meet in the **Meeting Room 1 - Town Hall, Huddersfield** at **10.00 am** on **Wednesday 18 December 2019**.

The items which will be discussed are described in the agenda and there are reports attached which give more details.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie Muscroft".

Julie Muscroft

Service Director – Legal, Governance and Commissioning

Kirklees Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair/Clerk of their intentions prior to the meeting.

The Corporate Parenting Board members are:-

Member

Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)

Councillor Karen Allison

Councillor Fazila Loonat

Councillor John Lawson

Councillor Andrew

Marchington

Councillor Richard Smith

Gill Addy

Christine Bennett

Julie Bragg

Tom Brailsford

Steve Comb

Keith Fielding

Stewart Horn

Charlotte Jackson

Colleen Kenworthy

Barry Lockwood

Sanna Mahmood

Elaine McShane

Mel Meggs

Sara Miles

Jo-Anne Sanders

Ophelia Rix

Melanie Tiernan

Janet Tolley

Designated Nurse for Looked after Children/Care Leavers

Practice Improvement Lead (Children's Services)

Head of Corporate Parenting (Children in Care and Care Leavers)

Service Director (Resources, Improvement and Partnerships)

Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency)

Kirklees Fostering Network

Head of Joint Commissioning, Children & Familie

Improvement Partner (Children's Services)

Kirklees Fostering Network

Kirklees Fostering Network

Looked after Children and Leaving Care

Service Director, Family Support and Child Protection

Director for Children's Services

Interim Head of Service (Child Protection & Review Unit)

Service Director for Learning and Early Support

Principal Social Worker

Service Manager (Kirklees Looked after Children

Independent Service – Children's Rights Team)

Virtual School Headteacher

Agenda

Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

Pages

1: Membership of the Board/Apologies

The Chair will welcome everyone to the meeting and announce any apologies received.

The Chair will formally welcome Stewart Horn, Head of Children's Joint Commissioning, to the Board.

2: Minutes of previous meeting

1 - 18

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on the 10th September and 24th October 2019.

3: Interests

19 - 20

The Board Members will be asked to say if there are any items on the Agenda in which they have disclosable pecuniary interests, which would prevent them from participating in any discussion of the items or participating in any vote upon the items, or any other interest.

4: Admission of the Public

Most debates take place in public. This only changes when there is a need to consider certain issues, for instance, commercially sensitive information or details concerning an individual. You will be told at this point whether there are any items on the Agenda which are to be discussed in private.

5: Deputations/Petitions

The Board will receive any petitions and hear any deputations from members of the public. A deputation is where up to five people can attend the meeting and make a presentation on some particular issue of concern. A member of the public can also hand in a petition at the meeting but that petition should relate to something on which the body has powers and responsibilities.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10 (2), Members of the Public should provide at least 24 hours' notice of presenting a deputation.

6: Public Question Time

The Board will hear any questions from the general public.

7: One Adoption Agency 6 monthly Report (April to Sept) 21 - 76

The Board will consider a 6 monthly report from One Adoption West Yorkshire covering the period April to September 2019. (10am)

Contact: Suzanne Whiteley, One Adoption West Yorkshire

8: Ofsted and Improvement Board Update

The Board will consider a verbal update on key issues from Ofsted and the Improvement Board. (10.20 am)

Contact: Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting

9: Children's Performance Highlight Report (October 2019) 77 - 92

The Board will consider two reports giving key highlights on Performance Monitoring data for the Children in Care, Fostering and Children's Homes up to October 2019. (10.25 am)

Contact: Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting (Children in Care and Care Leavers)
Janet Tolley, Virtual School Head Teacher

10: Overview of number and age of children in Care 93 - 100

The Board will consider an overview of the number and age of children in care. (10.40 am)

Contact: Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting (Children in Care and Care Leavers)

11: Sibling Group Placements 101 - 104

The Board will consider a report outlining the success of placing sibling groups in placements within Kirklees. (10.45 am)

Contact: Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting (Children in Care and Care Leavers)

12: Voice of the Child Update 105 - 110

The Board will consider an update on the Voice of the Child. (11.00 am)

Contact: Anna Gledhill, Social Work Practice Lead

13: Supported Lodgings Scheme 111 - 114

The Board will consider a report on the Supported Lodgings Scheme. (11.15 am)

Contact: Andy Quinlan, Service Manager (Fostering)

14: Staying Put Scheme 115 - 118

The Board will consider a report on the Staying Put Scheme. (11.25 am)

Contact: Andy Quinlan, Service Manager (Fostering)

15: Updates from Board Members on interaction with Services

The Board will consider verbal updates from Board Members who will give an update on progress and key issues following interaction with Services and partners to challenge the role of the Corporate Parent. (11.35 am)

Contact: Helen Kilroy, Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer

16: Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2019/20

119 -
126

The Panel will consider the agenda plan for 2019/20 municipal year.

Contact: Helen Kilroy, Principal Governance & Democratic
Engagement Officer

17: Dates of Future Meetings

To note future meeting dates of the Board during the 2019/20
municipal year:

- 10th February 2020, 10am
 - 4th March 2020, 10am
 - 9th April 2020, 10am
-

Contact Officer: Sheila Dykes

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Tuesday 10th September 2019

Present: Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)
Councillor Fazila Loonat
Councillor John Lawson
Councillor Andrew Marchington
Councillor Richard Smith
Gill Addy
Steve Comb
Keith Fielding
Colleen Kenworthy

In attendance: Anna Gledhill, Social Work Practice Lead
Andy Gresswell, Operations Manager – Youth Offending Team
Sara Hions, Virtual School
Sarah Johal, One Adoption (West Yorkshire)
Andy Quinlan, Service Manager Fostering

Apologies: Councillor Karen Allison
Christine Bennett
Julie Bragg
Tom Brailsford
Barry Lockwood
Sara Miles
Melanie Tiernan

1 Membership, Introductions and Apologies

Apologies from Councillor Karen Allison, Christine Bennett, Julie Bragg, Tom Brailsford, Barry Lockwood, Sara Miles, Melanie Tiernan and Janet Tolley were noted.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Steve Comb was requested to provide feedback in relation to the proposal that delegated authority for personal advisors to approve expenditure on behalf of looked after children be reviewed (ref: resolution 4, item 7).

It was noted that the following had been added to the Board's Agenda Plan:

- sufficiency of foster placements living outside the area (ref: resolution (2), item 8).
- secondary school moves for looked after children (ref: resolution (2), item 10).
- the impact of 'staying put' on foster carers (ref: resolution (8), item 10).

Corporate Parenting Board - 10 September 2019

and that work was in progress in respect of:

- the Kirklees Fostering Network representative liaising with the Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency) to discuss the issues in relation to the support needed for foster carers of birth children (ref: resolution (3), item 8).
- access to employee health care services for foster carers (ref: resolution (6), item 10).
- events for foster carers to raise awareness of the support available (ref: resolution (7), item 10).

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 19th June 2019 be agreed as a correct record, subject to the amendment of resolution (2) of item 7 to read:

‘The Board agreed that arrangements should be made for substance misuse workers from Change *Grow Live* to visit the new drop-in facility in Dewsbury’.

- (2) That the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service and the young persons’ draft version of the Fostering Service Statement of Purpose be circulated to Board Members (ref: resolutions (2) and (3), item 10).
- (3) That details of the foster carer recruitment events be circulated to Board Members.

3 Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

It was agreed that all agenda items would be held in public session.

5 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Animation by Adopted Teenagers

The Board viewed a short animation produced by Adopted Teenagers giving important key messages to social workers, teachers and adoptive parents about what had helped them, and not helped them, throughout their childhood and into adulthood.

Sarah Johal explained that the film had particularly helped to raise awareness about the need to consider and manage connections to/with birth family at an early stage. It was noted that this was an issue that had been highlighted by every age group on the video.

Colleen Kenworthy advised that foster carers received memory box/book training and did work hard on this. Keith Fielding pointed out that life story work should be undertaken from the start and continually updated, not compiled at the last minute, as this could lead to errors and a lack of consistency. Sarah Johal accepted that regular updating had been an issue, associated with staff turnover, and was recognised as an area for improvement.

Corporate Parenting Board - 10 September 2019

In response to questions it was explained that:

- It was considered that many adoptive parents did recognise the importance of children meeting with other adopted young people.
- Activity and celebration events were organised for adoptive families and there were a number of established groups for different ages. There was a gap in this sort of provision for those aged 18+ that the service was looking to address; this group were also given support in terms of information about/contact with birth family.
- There was a greater emphasis now, than had been the case in the past, on the need for understanding and knowledge of birth parents and how to approach this subject.

Members commented that:

- There was an established network of designated teachers who received training and support in relation to previously looked after children and there was awareness of their needs.
- There was a need to support the child and ensure that they did not feel isolated; having peers in a similar position could make a significant difference.

RESOLVED -

(1) That the animation be welcomed as an invaluable insight into the things that adopted teenagers had identified as having helped them, and also those that had not helped them, throughout their childhood and into early adulthood.

(2) That the animation should be seen by all social workers, social work managers and carers.

(3) That it be noted that the animation is available on the PAC-UK and Adopteens websites and Sarah Johal will forward a link to Board Members.

7 Ofsted and Improvement Board update

The Board considered the report from Ofsted on the findings of the inspection of Children's Services in June 2019.

Steve Comb said that the progress made had been acknowledged by Ofsted but it was recognised that a significant amount of work remained to be done.

The priorities for improvement were set out on pages 2 and 3 of the report; in many cases measures were already in place to address these issues. In respect of the comments in relation to care leavers understanding of their health histories, Gill Addy assured the Board that this was undertaken.

In response to questions from Board Members, Steve Comb and Anna Gledhill said that:

- The authority had a good base to move forward and he was confident that the issues would be addressed; a comprehensive improvement plan was in place which included both Ofsted targets and the authority's own stretched targets. This was underpinned by plans within services.

Corporate Parenting Board - 10 September 2019

- Ofsted had acknowledged the issues associated with the change of IT system, which had been very challenging, but improvements could already be seen as a result.
- Audits, both case audits and themed, were being undertaken on a monthly basis.

RESOLVED -

That the update report and the progress being made be noted.

8 Children's Performance Highlight Report (July 2019)

The Board considered a report which provided key highlights on performance monitoring data for the Children's Service up to July 2019, presented by Steve Comb, Gill Addy and Sara Hions.

The Board noted that recruitment of foster carers was a challenge for Councils across the country. Andy Quinlan explained that new ways to advertise and raise awareness were being explored, for example a leaflet had been included in runner's gift bags at a recent 'colour run' event. Colleen Kenworthy said that the Fostering Network was also looking at the offer for foster carers.

In response to a question, Steve said that the figures quoted in terms of adoption levels and timescales were the average of statistical neighbours. It would be possible to provide individual figures for comparable authorities to the Board.

It was reported that a second hub for care leavers had now been established; 'No 12' in Dewsbury, and had been very well received. Ofsted had been impressed by the No 11 facility in Huddersfield.

It was noted that the introduction of bus passes was imminent and over 100 care leavers had Kirklees Active Leisure (KAL) cards.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the Children's Performance Highlight Report (July 2019) be noted.

(2) That, in a future report, individual authority figures be provided for the number of children in care per 10,000 child population for those statistical neighbours regarded as being similar and close in terms of socio-economic status to Kirklees.

9 Overview of Number of Children in Care

The Board considered an overview of the number of children in care.

RESOLVED –

That the report giving an overview of the number and profile of children in care be noted.

10 Annual Private Fostering Report

The Board considered a report giving information on the number of children and young people privately fostered in the District for the period April 2018 to March 2019.

Andy Quinlan explained that responsibility for the welfare of a child in a private fostering arrangement now lay with the Assessment and Intervention Team; and responsibility for assessment with the Connected Person's Assessment Team. Work was ongoing to raise awareness of private fostering and a progress report could be provided in 12 months time.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the annual report in relation to private fostering in Kirklees be noted.

(2) That it be acknowledged that the Virtual School will play a part in raising awareness/training in respect of private fostering arrangements.

11 Annual Report on the Health of Looked After Children

The Board considered an annual report on the health of looked after children, covering the period 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019, presented by Gill Addy.

Gill explained that performance against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) remained very good. Implementation of the new IT system had been a challenge but the team had worked effectively to ensure that assessments were completed within the statutory timescale.

In response to questions Gill explained that;

- Referral could be made to the Emotional Wellbeing Team at any point if there were concerns about a young person's emotional and mental health.
- The possibility of electronic communication with foster carers was being explored.

Sara Hions pointed out that mental health and emotional wellbeing were also included within a child's Personal Education Plan (PEP).

RESOLVED –

(1) That the Annual Health Report for Kirklees Looked After Children, for the period April 2018 to March 2019, be noted and welcomed.

(2) That an update be provided to the Chair in respect of the use of secure electronic communication with carers in relation to the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ).

12 Annual Report on Youth Offending Team (YOT) relating to Work with Children in Care

The Board considered an annual report on the Youth Offending Team, presented by Andy Gresswell, which gave details of the level of offending by Looked After Children (LAC), and the improvement in outcomes for LAC who had been subject to an intervention by the Youth Offending Team (YOT).

Andy explained that significant improvements had been achieved, further to the introduction of a small team of LAC specialists within the team. The use of a restorative approach had been expanded, to try and resolve issues at an early stage and help to divert young people from the criminal justice system. A lot of work had been undertaken with the residential units on this approach and tailored training could now be offered to foster carers.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the report in relation to the level of offending by Looked After Children and the improvement in outcomes for those subject to an intervention with the Youth Offending Team be noted and welcomed.

(2) That arrangements be made for training to be provided for members of the Kirklees Fostering Network in respect of the restorative approach/use of mediation.

13 Updates from Board Members on Interaction with Services

The Board gave consideration to verbal updates from Board Members on progress and key issues following interaction with Services and partners to challenge the role of the Corporate Parent.

Councillor Lawson reported on initial discussions with planning and that a further meeting was to be held in due course.

Members discussed the value of the National Citizen Service scheme (NCS) that was funded by the Government. Colleen Kenworthy suggested that their relaunch should include a linkage to NCS. It was also suggested that this should be promoted through schools.

Councillor Smith reported that he had spoken with the relevant officer in offending and a meeting was to be organised.

Colleen Kenworthy reported on a 'relaxed kids' session that had been undertaken as a pilot and funding for this was being explored. She had also discussed the possibility of organising free/reduced price events with an officer from Kirklees Active Leisure (KAL) along with the possibility of free KAL cards with a +1 feature.

Councillor Kendrick reported that she had attended a partnership support event in North Kirklees and a Social Work Conference both of which had been interesting and inspiring; she had also attended the opening of No 12 in Dewsbury.

Corporate Parenting Board - 10 September 2019

RESOLVED –

(1) That the updates from Board Members in relation to their interaction with services and partners to challenge their role as a Corporate Parent be noted.

(2) That the Kirklees Fostering Network liaise with the Service Manager (Fostering) to explore potential linkages with the National Citizen Service scheme.

(3) That it be noted that Service Directors have been asked to attend future meetings of the Board to discuss what their service does/could do to contribute to the role of corporate parent.

(4) That the Kirklees Fostering Network liaise with the Head of Corporate Parenting in relation to arranging a visit to the No.12 drop-in facility in Dewsbury for the Teenage Support Group.

(5) That it be noted that Ward Councillors who are interested in visiting the No.12 drop-in facility in Dewsbury should contact the Leaving Care Team to make the necessary arrangements.

14 **Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2019/20**

The Panel will consider the agenda plan for 2019/20 municipal year.

RESOLVED –

That an item in relation to 'Staying Put' and supported board and lodgings be considered for inclusion on the agenda for the December 2019 meeting.

15 **Dates of Future Meetings**

RESOLVED –

That the dates of meetings of the Board during the remainder of the 2019/20 municipal year, as set out below, be noted:

- 24th October 2019, 10am
- 18th December 2019, 10am
- 10th February 2020, 10am
- 9th April 2020, 10am

This page is intentionally left blank

Contact Officer: Helen Kilroy

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Thursday 24th October 2019

- Present: Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)
Councillor Karen Allison
Councillor Fazila Loonat
Councillor John Lawson
Councillor Richard Smith
Gill Addy
Christine Bennett
Tom Brailsford
Steve Comb
Colleen Kenworthy
Barry Lockwood
Melanie Tiernan
Janet Tolley
- In attendance: Andy Quinlan, Service Manager (Fostering)
Yasmin Mughal, Complaints and Represent Manager
Andy Quinlan, Service Manager (Fostering)
- Observers: Cllr Andrew Marchington (ex-officio)
- Apologies: Charlotte Jackson
Elaine McShane
Sara Miles
Jo-Anne Sanders
Ophelia Rix

1 Membership of the Board, Introductions and Apologies

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies had been received from Ophelia Rix, Julie Bragg, Elaine McShane, Jo-Anne Sanders, Charlotte Jackson and Sara Miles.
2. The Board noted that Tom Brailsford's new job title was Service Director (Resources, Improvement and Partnerships) and that he would remain a member of the Board.
3. The Board noted that the Head of Commissioning post was currently vacant, but that the new post-holder would be a Member of the Board.
4. The Board noted that the Terms of Reference Membership would be updated accordingly.

2 Interests

No interests were declared.

3 Admission of the Public

It was agreed that all agenda items would be held in public session.

4 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions.

5 Public Question Time

No questions from the public were received.

6 Role of Corporate Parent - Strategic Director (Corporate Strategy Commissioning and Public Health)

The Board considered a verbal report from Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Strategic Director (Corporate Strategy Commissioning and Public Health) on the role of the Corporate Parent.

Rachel Spencer-Henshall highlighted the following key areas where the Corporate Strategy Commissioning and Public Health could act in an enabling role to Corporate Parenting:-

- Concessionary Council Tax relief for Care Leavers;
- Integrating Asylum Seeker looked after children into the local community;
- Job Scheme for Care Leavers – Sanna Mahmood was leading on a pilot to support care leavers into employment, it was hoped this could be continued long term;
- Exploration of gaining access for Care Leavers to employee benefits, such as My Staff Shop and Employee Healthcare;
- Commission services in public health to work directly with children and looking at needs of and assets for carers, including trying to achieve better targets for this vulnerable group;
- Free KAL passes for care leavers now available.

In response to a question from the Board relating to the Saturday Job Scheme for young people who were 16 years of age and in care, Rachel Spencer Henshall agreed to report back to the Board with further information.

The Board agreed to consider a future report on the outcomes of the pilot Job Scheme for Care Leavers and the Saturday Job Scheme. The Board agreed that these schemes should be part of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and that the Head of Service for Assessment and Intervention would make the link via the local community hubs with local business representatives, who might be able to offer employment opportunities to young people in care and care leavers.

In response to a question from the Board relating to Oral Health Care and dental support for looked after children and care leavers, the Board requested that this be included in the Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan 2019. Gill Addy advised that registering looked after children at dentists should be part of the Strategy. Rachel Spencer Henshall suggested that the Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan 2019 be taken to the Health and Wellbeing Board for consideration.

The Board suggested that a strategic overview should be drafted which outlined what was available across the Local Authority for looked after children and care

Corporate Parenting Board - 24 October 2019

leavers, which would ensure that those who were entitled received the same offer and that this was properly communicated to youngsters and carers in Kirklees.

Colleen Kenworthy from the Kirklees Fostering Network (KFN), advised that Kirklees Active Leisure had emailed the KFN with apprenticeship vacancies, which had been really helpful and had not previously been provided. The Board agreed it would be useful for the KFN to receive this information from KAL on a regular basis so that it could be shared with Foster Carers and thus promote potential employment opportunities to care leavers and young people in care.

The Board agreed that further enquiries should be made as to whether Council Tax Relief could be provided for care leavers and that this should be in comparison with other local authorities.

The Board agreed that further consideration should be given to providing KAL passes to foster carers as they had to take looked after children to leisure facilities but currently had to pay entry fees. Rachel Spencer-Henshall and Steve Comb agreed to liaise with KAL on this matter.

In response to a question from the Board relating to providing Max cards for foster carers at a cost of £3 and whether this could be part of the pupil premium funding, Janet Tolley agreed to liaise with the Kirklees Fostering Network to discuss further.

RESOLVED -

1. The Board noted the verbal update on the role of the Corporate Parent and thanked Rachel Spencer-Henshall for her contributions.
2. That the Board consider a future report on the 'Saturday Job Scheme' for looked after children.
3. That the Oral Health Strategy Action Plan be considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board at a future meeting.
4. That the Board consider a report on the outcome of the pilot job scheme for care leavers.
5. That the Head of Service for Assessment and Intervention make the link via the local community hubs with local business representatives who may be able to offer employment opportunities to young people in care and care leavers.
6. That KAL send regular updates to the Kirklees Fostering Network outlining apprenticeship vacancies so that these could be shared with foster carers.
7. That the Virtual School Head Teacher liaise with the Kirklees Fostering Network regarding max cards for foster carers and how these could be funded via the pupil premium.
8. That enquiries be undertaken to find out if council tax relief could be given to care leavers and that this should be in comparison with other Local Authorities.
9. The Board agreed that further consideration should be given to providing KAL passes to foster carers as they had to take looked after children to leisure facilities but currently had to pay entry. Rachel Spencer-Henshall and Steve Comb agreed to liaise with KAL on this matter.

7 Ofsted and Improvement Board update

The Board considered a verbal update on key issues from Ofsted and the Improvement Board presented by Steve Comb, Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency)

Steve Comb highlighted the following key areas:-

- Unregulated and unregistered Children's Homes provision; unregulated Children's Homes did not have any regulations applied - this was a current focus for Ofsted and Kirklees Children's Services were currently looking at this area;
- There had been a recent increase in the number of children in care and the Improvement Board had requested a report which would identify further information relating to the children and their circumstances.

RESOLVED -

1. The Board noted the update on Ofsted and Improvement Board and thanked Steve Comb for his contributions.

8 Children's Performance Highlight Report (Sept 2019)

The Board considered a report giving key highlights on Performance Monitoring data for the Children's Service up to September 2019 presented by Steve Comb, Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency), Janet Tolley, Virtual Head Teacher and Gill Addy, Designated Nurse for LAC and Care Leavers.

The Board agreed to consider a report in February 2020 showing a breakdown of persistent absentees by foster carers, Connected and Kinship Carer placements.

In response to a question from the Board relating to how the figures for dental checks of looked after children and how the figures compared nationally, Gill Addy advised that Kirklees was above average, but that the team were trying to improve on the collection of data from dentists and carers. Colleen Kenworthy advised that foster carers did inform the supervising Social Worker when they took a child to the dentist. The Board were concerned that this information was not being passed on and Andy Quinlan agreed to follow up.

The following key areas were highlighted:-

- Persistent absentees of looked after children from education – this had improved since last year;
- A bid which had been made to the Department for Education to fund the 'Mockingbird' model of fostering had been unsuccessful; Kirklees was looking at developing its own model and would consult the Kirklees Fostering Network to discuss further.

The Board agreed that the use of acronyms in reports should be avoided where possible but if they had to be used, they should be put in full at least once. The Board agreed that the use of acronyms in reports should also be consistent.

In response to a question from the Board relating to One Adoption and how Kirklees compared nationally and with statistical neighbours in terms of the number of children adopted, Tom Brailsford advised that Kirklees would shortly be reviewing One Adoption arrangements and its partnership with Kirklees.

Corporate Parenting Board - 24 October 2019

In response to a question from the Board relating to how many children remained an adopted child, Steve Comb agreed to ask One Adoption to provide the information in a future report. The Board noted that One Adoption would be attending the December meeting to give a 6 monthly update.

RESOLVED -

1. The Board noted the Children's Performance Highlight Report (September 2019) and thanked Steve Comb, Janet Tolley and Gill Addy for their contributions.
2. That the Board consider a report in February 2020 showing a breakdown of persistent absentees by foster carers, Connected and Kinship Carer placements.
3. That the Service Manager for Fostering liaise with Children's Social Care to ensure that records reported by foster carers on attendance at dental practices by looked after children was passed on to the Designated Nurse Team.
4. The Board agreed that the use of acronyms in reports should be avoided if possible but if used should be consistent throughout.
5. That One Adoption provide figures on the number of children who remained adopted, including the numbers where the adoption had not been successful.
6. That the Board consider a future update on how Kirklees compared both nationally and with statistical neighbours in terms of the number of children adopted.

9 Overview of number of Children in Care

The Board considered an overview of the number and age of children in care, which included information relating to young people aged 16 plus placed in unregulated semi-independent accommodation inside and outside of the District presented by Steve Comb, Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency).

Steve Comb advised the Board that this report was also considered by the Children's Scrutiny Panel.

The Board was informed that there had been a recent increase in the number of children in care and the Improvement Board had requested a report to look at who the children were, their age and what was known about them. Steve Comb further explained that Kirklees did support children to stay with their families, however, if they needed to come into care the necessary steps would be taken.

Steve Comb advised that good progress had been made on the number of children placed more than 20 miles from their home address.

In response to a question from the Board relating to whether the number of foster carers had increased, the Board noted that the numbers were only just stable. The Board was informed that 7 foster carers had been recruited but 12 had left. The Board agreed that more information was needed on why people left foster caring.

Tom Brailsford advised that the Mockingbird model in Kirklees would focus on what was best and would not be financially driven.

In response to a question from the Board regarding what support and information was available for people who might be thinking about becoming foster carers,

Colleen Kenworthy advised that Kirklees Fostering Network held coffee mornings where people could come and get more information and talk to other foster carers. Andy Quinlan advised that the service was looking at a 'buddying up' approach for those who were unsure if foster caring was right for them. The Board was informed that training was also available for potential foster carers to help them decide.

RESOLVED -

1. The Board noted the report on Number and age of Children in Care and thanked Steve Comb for his contributions.

10 Annual Report on Review of Foster Carer Handbook

The Board considered an Annual Report on the Review of the Foster Carer Handbook presented by Andy Quinlan, Service Manager for Fostering.

Andy Quinlan highlighted the following key areas:-

- In early stages of investigating whether the full Handbook should be made available on the internet with links so users could go straight to the information they required; the Board was informed that paper copies of the handbook would still be provided;
- Next review of the Handbook would be July 2020;
- Discussions had begun to look at the fees paid to Kirklees Foster Carers and any proposed changes would be built into the budget at Council in February 2020;
- Foster Carer recruitment process included information regarding allowances and how these could be calculated;
- Foster care was regulated and some information in the Handbook had to be displayed in a certain format.

The Board agreed that a foster carer allowance calculator should be made available on the internet to allow people to calculate their own allowances for foster caring.

The Board suggested that advice regarding Housing Benefits should be made available to foster carers and agreed that training for new foster carers should include information on how to apply for housing benefit for those carers who decided to give up work.

The Kirklees Fostering Network advised that the Handbook was a really useful guide for foster carers. The Board agreed that an early version of the web based Handbook should be shared with the Board as soon as possible.

RESOLVED -

1. The Board noted the Annual Report on the Review of the Foster Carer Handbook and thanked Andy Quinlan for his contributions.
2. That the Board consider the web version of the Handbook before it went live on the Council's website.
3. That a foster carer allowance calculator be added to the website when the Handbook was live so that people could work out their own allowances for foster caring.

4. That the Recruitment Training for foster carers included information relating to how to apply for housing benefit should foster carers decide to give up work to become a foster carer.

11

Annual report on Children's Rights and Independent Visitors Scheme (1st April to 31 March 2019) and a 6 monthly update (April 19 to Sept 19)

The Board considered an Annual Report on Children's Rights and Independent Visitors Scheme (1st April to 31st March 2019) and a 6 monthly update (April 2019 to Sept 2019) presented by Melanie Tiernan, Service Manager (Children's) and Anna Gledhill, Social Work Practice Lead.

Annual Report on Children's Rights and Independent Visitors Scheme

Melanie Tiernan highlighted the following key areas:-

- The highest proportion of work undertaken by the Children's Rights Team between April 2018 and March 2019 related to advocacy for children and young people looked after or care leavers (78%);
- Children and Young people who were supported at their Looked After Review or other meetings, 179 children and young people fed back that a positive outcome was achieved regarding issues they requested support for;
- Children and young people looked after living in another local authority area were some of the most vulnerable children and over the last twelve months a total of 82 had received support from the Children's Rights Team;
- Comments received from young people had been included in the report.

Children's Rights Team - 6 monthly report

Melanie Tiernan highlighted the following key areas:-

- Between 1.4.19 and 30.9.19 the Children's Rights Team supported children and young people relating to 198 advocacy issues and 132 of these were involved providing support at Child Looked After Reviews or other meetings;
- The issues of contact and placement continued to be recurring themes, however, if current figures continued for the next 6 months these would show an overall annual reduction from 2017-2018;
- There had been a reduction in the number wanting to make a formal complaint;
- Children and young people aged 10 or over who were subject to a child protection conference had the opportunity to speak with an Advocate to ensure that their wishes and feelings were heard within the process and taken into consideration;
- The Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum continued to meet twice a month; the 2 groups worked on a piece of graffiti art for a number of weeks which was presented to Corporate Parents in July.

Independent Visitors Scheme – 6 monthly report

Melanie Tiernan highlighted the following key areas:-

- At the end of September 2019, 44 young people were matched with an Independent Visitor; Councillor Kendrick advised that Councillors could help to promote the independent visitors scheme for looked after children;

Corporate Parenting Board - 24 October 2019

- 9 new referrals for young people to be allocated an Independent Visitor were received during 1st April to 30 September 2019, 5 of which were allocated an Independent Visitor of their choice;
- A short questionnaire was completed by Independent Visitors who attended a recent Peer Support meeting to capture the areas of support they felt they provided to young people;
- In September 2019 there were 10 young people who had been referred to the scheme had not been allocated an Independent Visitor, the scheme was currently oversubscribed;
- In order for the Independent Visitor Scheme to develop and support an increased number of children and young people, a business case had been submitted for additional Co-ordinator capacity.

Councillor Kendrick reported on the success of the Achieve Awards Event for Care Leavers held on the 22nd October 2019. The Board agreed it would like to support funding for future events of this type.

RESOLVED -

The Board noted the Annual Report on Children's Rights and Independent Visitors Scheme (1st April to 31 March 2019) and a 6 monthly update (April 2019 to Sept 2019) and thanked Melanie Tiernan and Anna Gledhill for their contributions.

12

Annual report on Complaints and Compliments for Children in Care

The Board considered an Annual Report on Complaints and Compliments for Children in Care during the period 1st April 2019 to 30 September 2019 presented by Yasmin Mughal, Complaints and Represent Manager.

Yasmin Mughal highlighted the following key points:-

- A significant number of complaints received were being resolved in the early stages;
- Working closely with the Children's Rights Teams in terms of complaints;
- Only 5 complainants out of 85 registered at Stage One had proceeded to Stage Two formal investigation;
- 2 complainants who were dissatisfied with the Stage 2 responses had proceeded to Stage 3;
- The Ombudsman had agreed with the view of the Local Authority in relation to all complaints and had taken no further action;
- The majority of complaints were consistently responded to within the statutory deadlines at Stage 1 and there had been a great improvement in the average time taken in responding to complaints;
- 100% of complaints received from young people were being responded to within statutory deadlines;
- Learning identified from complaints investigations was being shared with the Learning and Development Service.

The Board noted that the figures for failing to consult or communicate to complainants were still high, but acknowledged the trend was reducing. Yasmin Mughal advised that where a mistake had been made, an apology would be given by Kirklees and the matter followed up.

Corporate Parenting Board - 24 October 2019

In response to a question from the Board on what had changed as a result of complaints, Yasmin Mughal advised that the team were now reporting a lot more on trends and had made significant improvements in terms of meeting timescales and were striving to respond earlier than statutory timescales.

Christine Bennett, Head of Service for Assessment and Intervention, advised the Board that it was positive that a Senior Manager would apologise where a mistake had been made and that she was working with Yasmin Mughal's team to try and get resolutions to complaints in the early stages. Melanie Tiernan advised that Managers would sometimes go out and visit the complainants when it was felt this was necessary to resolve a complaint.

The Board agreed that the report showed a significant improvement and culture change within the organisation where there was now a better sense of ownership for complaints.

Colleen Kenworthy advised the Board that the Kirklees Fostering Network were also working closely with Yasmin Mughal's team to keep complaints low and were continuing to build links between the Local Authority, looked after children and foster carers to resolve complaints.

RESOLVED -

1. The Board noted the Annual Report on Complaints and Compliments for Children in Care and thanked Yasmin Mughal for her contributions.

13 Updates from Board Members on interaction with Services

The Board considered verbal updates from Board Members who gave an update on progress and key issues following interaction with services and partners to challenge the role of the Corporate Parent.

Councillor Lawson advised the Board that he had been in discussions with Planning to look at future build of Children's Homes and the voice of the child could be taken into account as part of the planning process.

Councillor Kendrick advised the Board that she had presented a challenge to all Councillors at full Council in September 2019 relating to their role as Corporate Parents and the areas where they could help to promote and create opportunities for looked after children and care leavers in Kirklees. The Board was informed that following Council in September 2019, an email had been sent to all Councillors regarding recruitment events for foster carers and they were also sent a copy of the Fostering Newsletter. Councillor Kendrick further explained that some feedback had been received from Councillors and this had been fed back to the Kirklees Fostering Network.

Councillor Kendrick advised the Board that she had attended the following key events:-

- Kinship Carers Workshop at No 12 in Dewsbury on the 8th October 2019 and had agreed to take a number of issues away to follow up;

Corporate Parenting Board - 24 October 2019

- Children in Care Council meeting on 18th November 2019; the Board agreed that it would be good to see more children and young people get involved in the Children in Care Council;
- Achieve Awards for Care Leavers on the 22nd October 2019 which had been a very successful and emotional event.

RESOLVED -

The Board noted the updates from Board Members on interaction with services.

14 Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2019/20

The Board considered the agenda plan of the Corporate Parenting Board for 2019/20.

RESOLVED -

1. That the 2019/20 Agenda Plan for the Corporate Parenting Board be noted and updated as agreed.
2. That the Governance Officer be authorised to liaise with officers on agreed actions.

15 Dates of Future Meetings

The Board noted the dates of future meetings of the Board during the remainder of the 2019/20 municipal year and agreed to schedule an additional meeting in March 2020 to consider the high volume of agenda items on the agenda plan.

RESOLVED -

1. The Board noted the dates of the remaining meetings in the 2019/20 municipal year:-
 - 18th December 2019, 10 am
 - 10th February 2020, 10 am
 - 9th April 2020, 10 am
2. The Board agreed to schedule an additional meeting in March 2020 to consider the high volume of agenda items.

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETC

DECLARATION

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Name of Councillor

Item in which you have an interest	Type of interest (eg a disclosable pecuniary interest or an "Other Interest")	Does the nature of the interest require you to withdraw from the meeting while the item in which you have an interest is under consideration? [Y/N]	Brief description of your interest

Signed:

Dated:

NOTES

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your disclosable pecuniary interests under the new national rules. Any reference to spouse or civil partner includes any person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or as if they were your civil partner.

Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses.

Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -

- under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
- which has not been fully discharged.

Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.

Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.

Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) - the landlord is your council or authority; and the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.

Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -

(a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and

(b) either -

the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or

if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.



Half yearly Adoption Agency report

Date: 2nd December 2019

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report sets out the work and developments within One Adoption West Yorkshire between April and September 2019, with additional information in relation to the performance relating to children in Kirklees.

2. Main issues

Use of Resources

2.1 Staffing & HR

- 2.2 Suzanne Whiteley started work with us on the 1st August to cover Mandy Prout's position on a temporary basis who is on long term sick leave. Suzanne is seconded from Barnardo's where she was responsible for the management of the Yorkshire and Humber Adoption Consortium (Hub manager role). In return Eva Booth, who has been the project manager for the Centre of Excellence moved over to cover Suzanne's role for an initial nine month period.
- 2.3 Jo Hedgecock has sadly made the decision to leave One Adoption due to personal circumstances and left her post as of 31st October. A full time team manager has been recruited and will be based at Kernel House. This manager will also cover for Heather Pipe's maternity leave from January working with a team made up of family finders and recruitment and assessment workers.
- 2.4 A number of business support staff have left in the last three months to take up other career opportunities and there is ongoing recruitment to these positions. These vacancies are causing issues throughout the service and other staff are going over and above their required duties to maintain the business of the service. The aim is to have all the vacancies recruited to and staff in post by the end of the year.

2.5 Accommodation

- 2.6 Work is now completed moving from 5 office bases to 3 main office bases, with desk space remaining in Halifax and Wakefield. These moves have enabled three teams across recruitment and assessment, family finding and adoption support to be co-located with one service manager.
- 2.7 The increase in teams at Kernel House in Leeds is causing pressure on space and is causing low morale and difficulties for staff. Constructive discussions are underway with colleagues and asset management to address this issues and the matter has been escalated to see if there are interim solutions that can be put in place to reduce overcrowding.

2.8 Information Technology

- 2.9 The Bradford, Calderdale and Wakefield portals are now up and running effectively with staff being able to access the local children's systems from the OAWY laptop. The final area to address is with Liquid Logic in Kirklees and discussions underway to address this.

2.10 Budget

- 2.12 The overall position of OAWY is forecasting a balanced position at Month 6, with some potential risks of non-achievement of Inter Agency income (£270k). This has been offset by an underspend on staffing due to vacancies and income from another source.

2.13 Duty System

- 2.14 Following on from an increase in the number of teams based at Kernel House a further evaluation of the duty system took place in summer 2019. This was on the basis that there were more staff based in the Leeds office, but the quota of duty across the 3 bases remained equal which wasn't felt to be fair. Further changes were implemented in September 2019, which saw a 7 week rota introduced with the Leeds office undertaking 3/7 weeks on the rota and Huddersfield and Bradford offices 2/7 weeks each. In addition the following changes were also introduced at the same time:

- Spread sheet for calls ceased to be used – apart from new enquiries about adopting. Everything else now has an enquiry created on Mosaic;
- Adoption adviser capacity is presently at a premium to prioritise initial visits and therefore a decision was made that Advisers don't have to be present on duty all day, but to check in for email contacts and any other messages;
- Duty managers to share duty on a 3 day/2 day split across a week.

- 2.15 The above changes are early in implementation, so it is hard at present to fully evaluate the impact, however we do know that by having to create a Mosaic enquiry

for everything is taking a lot more time for workers and this is being monitored carefully. Further potential changes that have been identified as possible implementation with business support (when staff capacity allows):

- Phones to offer a choice of numbers and letterbox calls be responded to by Letterbox Business Support in first instance;
- Use of back up workers at busy times – to be brought forward to take calls and free up front-line workers to create Mosaic records.

2.16 Partnership working

2.17 Operational leads group

2.18 Over the last 6 months this group has met twice and looks at interface issues. There have been recent discussions regarding streamlining our approach to adoption allowances and moving children onto adoption looking at research and evidenced based practice. There is ongoing project work being undertaken to develop a protocol regarding the interface between OAWY and children's services regarding adoption support as well as a piece of work about access to records and archiving of adoption files. Changes to the national collection of adoption data was also recently discussed which will assist in tracking the progress of sibling groups.

2.19 Centre of Excellence Project

2.21 The Department of Education has extended the funding for the One Adoption Centre of Excellence project until 31st March 2020 and training of staff across the region continued into May. The creation of multi-disciplinary model has been completed and the report has been circulated to board members and health commissioners across the region for discussion about future funding of the model and the benefits this can have for children and families in the region.

2.23 Meetings with medical advisors

2.24 The agency continues to meet with Medical Advisors across the region where there is a need to discuss practice issues. A medical advisor protocol has been agreed and there has been a series of peer support and auditing across the region to look at the quality of reports and this is helpful to improve the information provided for adoptive families. There has been challenges across two local authorities regarding capacity of medical advisor time and these issues continue to be addressed. There have been recent improvements with Wakefield, however, there is still continuing delays for children in progressing care plans in Bradford and this is being addressed at a local level.

2.25 Virtual school heads (VSH)

2.26 The work across the region from our education worker alongside the five virtual school heads (VSH) continues to progress positively in implementing the new duty

placed on VSH in each locality last year for previously looked after children who are adopted. The helpline is accessed by adoptive parents and schools and other professionals and the development of the web site will imminently provide an additional source of information for adopted parents and schools. We continue to work to increase the awareness of attachment and trauma at West Yorkshire schools by delivered training to school staff and by providing workshops to adopters in partnership with the service delivery teams and are continuing to explore piloting the secure base model for schools in the region. The discussions with the VSH involved the project workers for special guardians from Grandparents plus and these meetings are an opportunity for further exploration of the issues that need addressing for all these families moving forward. The team has completed and published the protocol for “Moving a School Age Children” and this has been shared as an example of good practice by the Department of Education and the National Association of Virtual School Heads.

2.28 *Special Guardianship*

The regional work regarding the special guardianship commenced earlier this year with the five local authorities and other key stakeholders including Grandparents plus and the department for work and pensions, seeking to create a standardised policy and approach regarding adoption and special guardianship support, including financial support. The stakeholder meeting held in early October considered recommendations from the various task and finish groups and further discussions are taking place with special guardians and adopters and the management board to progress decision making.

2.29 The Kinship Connected project, working across the 5 local authorities, in partnership with grandparents plus and the five local authorities is providing a strong focus on developing peer led support groups as a sustainable and effective way to support kinship carers. The two project workers also provide individual support and signpost for advice and link with charities and other avenues of support to meet needs. This is very much an early help provision and is being used in some local authorities for other kinship carers, as well as special guardians and the website and helplines provide support for all kinship carers in the Local authority area. There has been an interim evaluation report regarding this project and consideration is being given by the local authorities as to whether to extend this project which comes to an end in March 2020. The interim evaluation report is attached at Appendix 1. The project is still in its infancy but the support is “having a positive and statistically significant impact on kinship carers’ mental wellbeing and sense of isolation” .

2.30 Comments from Special Guardians accessing support from the project:

"I don't necessarily need to access a lot of support but knowing that it's there is good and being contacted to be involved in the media side of Grandparents Plus as a case study/being on a video is positive.

"[My project worker] has done everything that has been asked and has been willing to support and advocate for me."

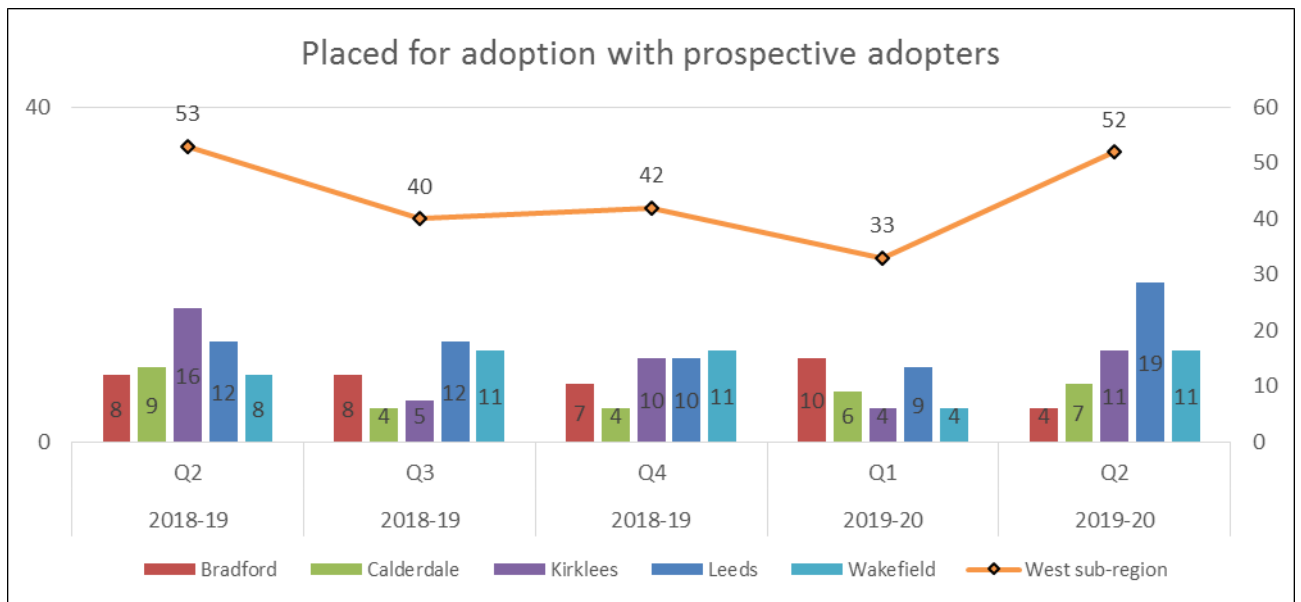
"If it wasn't for the support I got from [name of project worker] and the kinship support group at [name of LA] I would still be sat here making no progress. The help has been invaluable."

"I wouldn't have coped without the support."

2.31 Performance Management

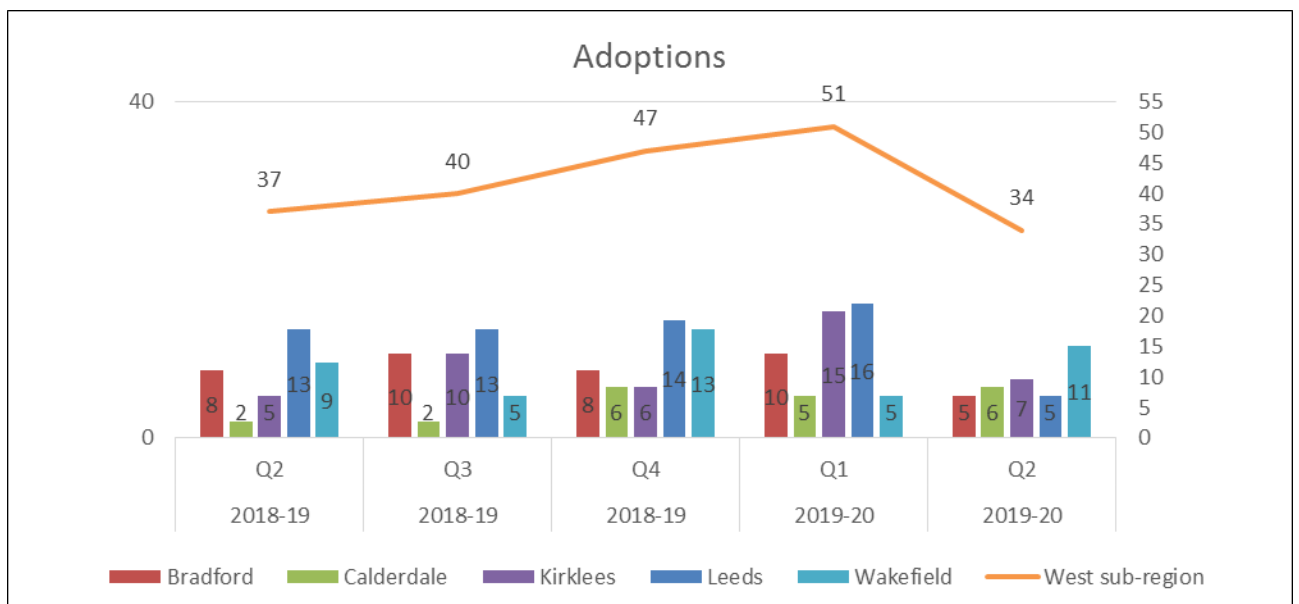
2.32 Children

- 2.33 During the first half of 2019/20, 21 children had a plan for adoption ratified by the Agency Decision Maker in Kirklees. During 2018/19 there were 24 children who had their plan of adoption ratified by the Agency Decision Maker; the first half of the year demonstrates a likely increase in the number of children who have a plan of adoption in Kirklees.
- 2.34 25 Placement Orders were granted by the courts; giving the legal authority for adoption to be pursued as the permanence plan for a child. 30 Placement Orders were granted in 2018/19. The half yearly figures for 2019/20 show an increase on the half yearly numbers for 2018/19 when 18 Placement Orders had been granted and it is likely there will be an in year increase.
- 2.35 14 children were matched with prospective adopters, this is a decrease against the half yearly numbers from 2018/19. 37 children were matched with prospective adopters during 2018/19. There are a number of children who are linked with prospective adopters and awaiting matching panel, there is proactive family finding for children who have a placement order and are awaiting a match.
- 2.36 15 children have been placed for adoption. This is a reduction on the half yearly numbers for the previous year. In the second half of 2018/19 there was a reduction in the number of children placed for adoption; the current half year numbers are reflective of the second half of 2018/19.
- 2.37 The graph below highlights that there was an overall reduction in the number of children adopted in West Yorkshire in quarter 1 of 2019/20. Quarter 2 shows an increase in the number of children across the region matched with prospective adopters; a number of matches have been made for children who wait longer due to their needs.



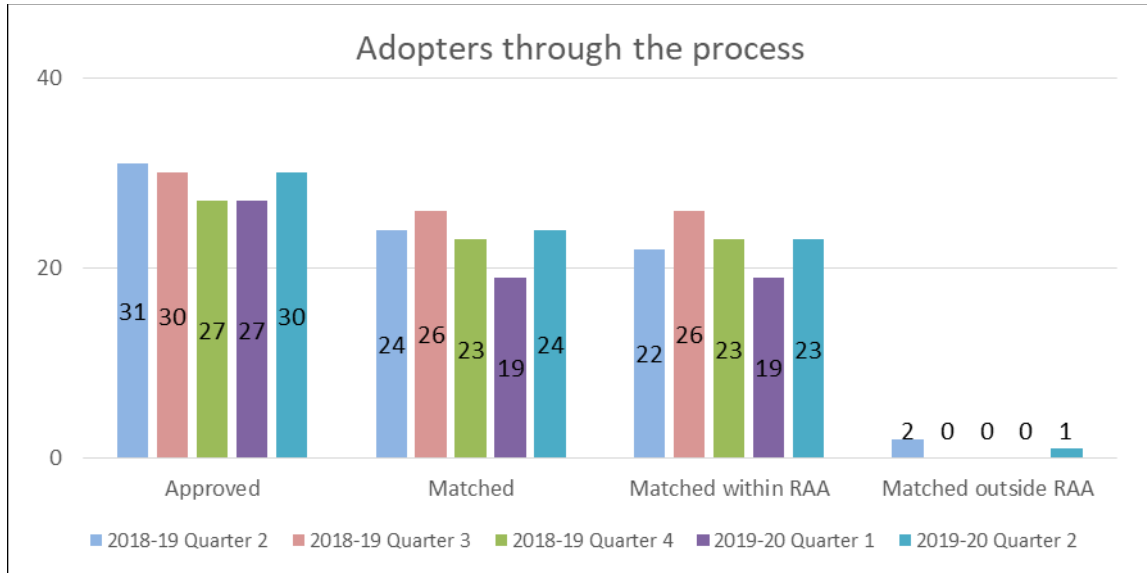
2.38 22 children have been adopted in the first half of 2019/20, 12 children were placed with OAWY approved adopters. During 2018/19 a total of 28 children from Kirklees were adopted. It is likely that the number of children adopted in 2019/20 will exceed that of the previous year.

2.39 The graph below shows the number of adoptions per quarter of the 5 local authorities in West Yorkshire. It shows an increase in the number of adoptions in Kirklees for quarter 1. Overall there has been a decrease in the number of adoptions in the quarter. There are a small number of children within the region who have not been adopted in anticipated timescales. The number of children placed for adoption in the year previous generally is reflective of the number of children adopted.

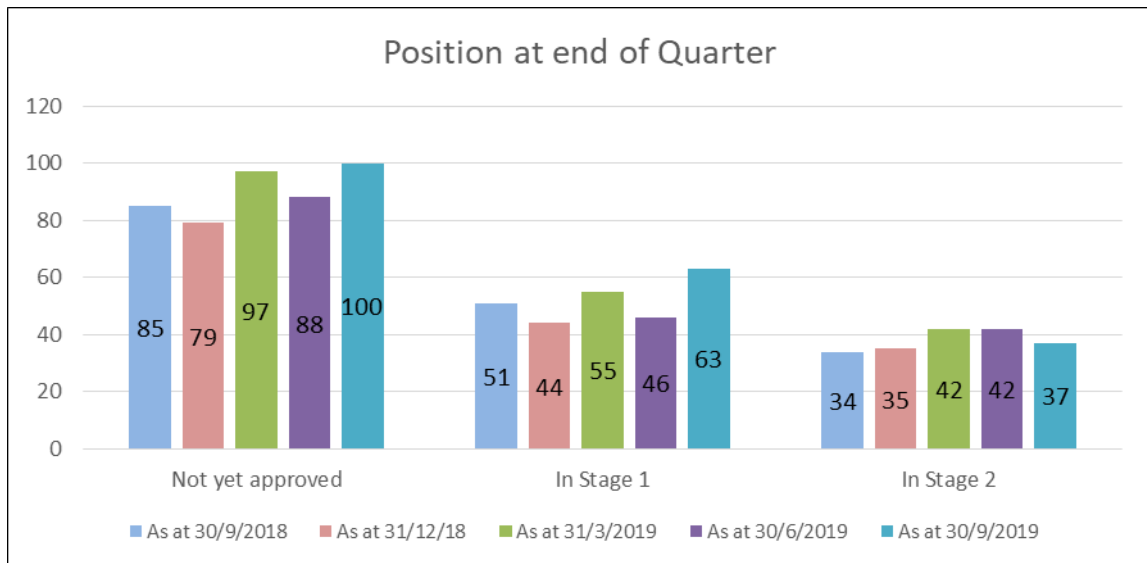


2.40 Adopters

2.41 In half year 57 adoptive families have been approved, 43 families have been matched with children, 42 of these being with children from the West Yorkshire region.



2.41 At the end of quarter 2 there are 100 families who are not yet approved, 63 of these families are in stage 1 of the assessment process and 37 are in stage 2. OAWY has seen an increase in the number of prospective adoptive families entering the adoption process over quarter 2. This will impact on the number of applicants in stage 2 of the process in the next quarter and should result in an increase in the approved adopters by the end of quarter 4.



2.41 It is anticipated that OAWY will approve over 110 adoptive families in year.

2.42 Practice, quality of provision and management oversight

2.31 *Recruitment and Assessment*

In May 2020 Coram Baaf awarded OAWY the quality mark for Early Permanence Placements. This will assist us in attracting adopters and is a partnership approach with the five local authorities, giving confidence in the court arena that adopters are fully prepared for this task and that support is available for all parties involved in these arrangements.

The pilot project of using the virtual reality headsets has been extremely positive over the last 18 months with an increase in adopters understanding more about the felt impact of trauma, increased empathy and understanding the need for a therapeutic parenting approach. The headsets have also started to be used with adopters post approval in adoption support where they are struggling to understand the issues that children face and have been taken into schools to help teachers understand the impact of trauma.

- 2.32 The preparation training is being updated and reviewed with the involvement of adopters given feedback and the fact we have not reviewed it since going live, although feedback is very positive about the training (comments below). The team are also implementing an extra days training looking at adopting siblings in order to attract more adopters to consider siblings.

“Day 3 was my favourite day! I loved throughout the whole training that there was a parent at the training to answer any questions. I also found the family finder great on day 3!”

“I learnt about the Importance of identity. Telling your child that they are adopted and how to go about this. When/How/Age. To be honest and open from as early as possible.”

“Kept our attention throughout, topics explained at a good pace (not too fast, giving us time to think) used humour as well, which was definitely needed when discussing some difficult topics.”

- 2.33 A review of the website is currently underway. Additional content has already been added alongside the online forms within the secure area accessed by adoptive parents. The structure of the website is also to be updated to make it more attractive to potential adopters and more user friendly.

2.34 *Adoption Support*

- 2.35 Although there are still a number of families waiting for a social work service, this has started to reduce overall, and requests for therapeutic support from the adoption support fund are the situations where families are waiting the longest. The referrals are prioritised according to need and whilst families are waiting for this they are able to access a service through our core support service and the peer support service is been well utilised. Kirklees has a number of families awaiting for adoption

support assessments and these are being monitored closely and reviewed on a regular basis to prioritise the allocation of cases.

2.35.1 There are currently have 26 peer mentors, all of whom are supporting between 1 – 3 families. Two training workshops have been provided for mentors in the last 6 month period with another two planned for January 2020. 45 new referrals have been received in the last 6 months. The scheme is currently unable to accept referrals, unless they are urgent, until more mentors have been recruited and trained, as all our current mentors are at capacity. Adoption UK are currently recruiting experienced adopters from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences to support our families. A training date is set for 19th November 2019 for newly recruited mentors to develop their mentoring skills.

2.42 One Adoption has continued to make significant use of the Adoption Support Fund Over the last 6 months and the DfE has agreed further funding for 12 months.

We have run a number of well attended and successful activity based events in the last 6 months across the region and these involved a large number of children and families attending with One Adoption staff attending in support.

2.43 A newsletter went out to all adoptive families across the region in June. There is a timetable and an editorial working group now in place to ensure these go out to families four times a year.

2.44 A 2nd single adopters group in the west of the region has commenced and the next three day 'Building Underdeveloped Sensory Systems' programme will be run with Sarah Lloyd, Occupational Therapist, towards the end of the year in the Wakefield/Leeds area.

2.45 A pilot has been completed looking at a consultation model to offer adoptive families who are currently waiting for a service with assistance from the centre of excellence staff. We are currently considering the learning from this pilot.

2.46 All Adoption Support staff have been trained in the last 6 months in Non violence resistance training and Dyadid Developmental Psychotherapy (level 1). This training is an approach and model for practice that uses what we know about attachment and developmental trauma to help children and families with relationships. Developng trust with the help of PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) this DDP provides interventions for families and those who support them.

2.47 The Adoption support service is now running a series of evening workshops for adoptive parents on subjects including Brain Based Parenting and Education. These are being rolled out across the region throughout the year. The Adoption support managers and 2 social workers undertook training around access to records in Post-commencement Adoption cases which came into force in April 2019.

2.48 *Family Finding*

2.49 OAWY have agreed to work with the University of East Anglia in implementing a research and evidence based approach to managing transitions from foster care to adoption. This requires a partnership approach with local authority fostering and social work teams and workforce development leads. Beth Neil introduced the model at our all staff event on the 24th October and is discussed in more detail in the service improvement section towards the end of the report.

2.50 The children's profiling events continue to take place and the last event was in September, inviting adoptive families from across the region and beyond to consider a selection of children awaiting adoption who were featured with high quality photos, DVDs and personalised displays. 22 families attended and we featured 34 profiles totalling 47 children, resulting in 25 expressions of interest. 2 of these expressions of interest have led to linking visits and 4 are being explored further.

2.51 We are currently in the process of commissioning a number of voluntary agencies to provide 30 placements for OAWY. The aim of this is to ensure that children are placed more locally in order for support to be more effectively provided.

2.52 Two Fun Days have taken place, June and October 2019. The Fun Days enable adopters to mix with children who have a plan of adoption and active family finding is taking place. 47 children attended the events, 13 sibling groups and 20 single children. 31 adopters attend the events, these being a mix of adoptive families approved by OAWY and those approved by local authorities and voluntary adoption agencies. There were 27 expressions of interest in children at the event. 1 linking visit took place following the initial Fun Day and this is progressing to a match, 4 linking visits have taken place following the October event.

2.53 *Case File Audits*

2.54 Dip sampling case file audits have been undertaken with three Local authorities in the last four months to look at family finding activity for those children waiting (Leeds, Wakefield and Kirklees). The HOS and Service managers also completed audits in October looking at cases and team managers have audit activity planned during the autumn term. This is a helpful exercise to look at the quality of work and the preparation of adopters, adoption support work and planning for the children which is generally of a good quality.

2.55 Continuous Professional Development and Service Development

2.56 Service Improvement Plan (SIP)

2.57 OAWY 2019/20 plan has actions link to the 3 Year Plan, the Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact Assessment, the Adoption Charter and actions identified by the team. The SIP is tracked via quarterly meetings with service

managers (the action owners) with shared actions discussed at SLT. A quarterly update report is presented to SLT to provide an overview of progress and discuss/resolve any issues.

2.58 *Feedback*

2.59 Online feedback is now in place for information events, adopter preparation training, Early Permanence Placement training, bump into meetings, adoption panel and twilight sessions. These are looked at and reviewed to inform future training and events. There are also annual surveys for adopters, staff and designated teachers. Further surveys for connected and day 4 adopter training are in development.

2.60 The 2019 staff survey identified positive areas as being a strong team, training & development, communications, innovation and adoption support as positive areas. The areas that attracted the most constructive comments related to lack of capacity in terms of undertaking the work, training and consistency - there are plans in place to address each of these areas:

- Consistency – reviews are underway for matching and contact. This will identify and address areas of inconsistency.
- Resources – caseload reporting is in place and work is underway to capture non-casework activity. Whilst we understand how the resource is allocated we can capture how resource is deployed and ensure it is targeted appropriately;
- Training – a skills development plan is being produced for social work staff and core competency framework for business support;

2.61 The report card regarding the voice and influence of adopters and children is attached at Appendix 2. The adoption panel chairs write a 6 monthly report for the agency and this will be shared with the management board once received.

2.62 *Adoption Panels*

2.62.1 The adoption panels meet 7 times a month with three panel chairs. Panel Chairs complete a 6 monthly report and any learning from these is fed back in to the agency. Comments from adopters attending the panel are generally very positive. We had a response from 17 questionnaires from applicants between April and September, out of these the lowest score was 7 out of 10 with 11 of these returned scoring 10 out of 10.

“The panel was very friendly and we felt very at ease and comfortable talking to everyone and answering the questions we were asked. A very positive experience. The Chair of panel was very friendly and welcoming.”

“Everybody put is at ease. It was clear they had read and absorbed the PAR. The questions were not trying to 'trip us up'. Everybody was very kind. We were nervous, but we both found it an enjoyable experience.”

2.63 *Staff Skills Development*

2.64 Two all staff events have been held since April. One in June and October relating to key priorities in our 3 year plan.

a) The first event focussed on the importance of building an adoption system that supports children's relationship and identity and the issue of contact was looked at. Adopted teenagers, birth parents and adopters spoke at the event about their experiences and the research regarding contact in adoption was presented. Staff had an opportunity to put forward their ideas about opportunities, suggestions and barriers to developing a more open attitude to contact with birth families in adoption. A project plan has been developed to take forward strands of improvement work around this issue and we have linked with One Adoption North and Humber to take this project forward as part of our pan regional work. A conference for social workers across the wider Yorkshire & Humber region on this issue will take place in February 2020 with key input from adopted adults and teenagers, birth and adoptive parents.

b) the second all staff event in October focussed on the practice of Moving children from foster carer to adoption and hearing from Professor Beth Neil about the research and looking at implementing this in OAWY and getting ideas from staff on things that would be a model of undertaking this focussing clearly on children's needs as well as life story work and a session in the afternoon about Life stories and narrative therapy which can be used in adoption support but also to assist family finders support social workers in the local authorities and assessment workers support their families more effectively.

2.65 The Business support team has worked together to agree a core competency framework which will feed into the development of bespoke training for business support staff.



**KINSHIP CONNECTED - WEST YORKSHIRE
EVALUATION – INTERIM REPORT FOR GRANDPARENTS PLUS**

**by
Starks Consulting
September 2019**



CONTENTS

	Page
1 INTRODUCTION	3
2 FINDINGS FROM THE DATA ANALYSIS	4
Demographics	4
Background to becoming a kinship carer	4
Support from Grandparents Plus	7
Impact of the support	9
Summary	15
ANNEX A: KINSHIP CARER BASELINE AND REVIEW QUESTIONS	

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been produced for the five local authorities in West Yorkshire (Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield) by Starks Consulting Ltd, who is carrying out the independent evaluation of Kinship Connected nationally on behalf of Grandparents Plus and the Department for Digital, Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS) and Nesta.
- 1.2 Findings presented here include an analysis of quantitative baseline and review data generated by Grandparents Plus from 24 kinship carers. This is matched data generated from registration and review meetings carried out by Grandparents Plus project workers.
- 1.3 The report covers the period October 2018 – September 2019 and only contains analysis of kinship carers with complete baseline and review data. 78 kinship carers have received one-to-one support to date but have not all completed reviews yet. A full analysis will be completed in April 2020.
- 1.4 Two project workers were recruited in October 2018. One project worker had to leave in January due to personal circumstances and a replacement was recruited in March 2019.
- 1.5 Interviews with five kinship carers receiving support have been completed to provide additional detail on kinship carers' family circumstances, their needs, and the support provided by the local authority and Grandparents Plus.
- 1.6 When reading this paper, the reader should keep in mind:
 - the information contains initial findings on Kinship Connected for the West Yorkshire area only;
 - the views on the support provided and the outcomes presented here are interim findings and may not be representative of the findings of the wider evaluation.

2 FINDINGS FROM THE DATA ANALYSIS

Demographics

- 2.1 Kinship carers with complete baseline and review data are drawn from the five local authorities as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Kinship Carers' Local Authority

Local Authority	Count	% of all local authorities
Bradford	4	17%
Calderdale	3	12%
Kirklees	8	33%
Leeds	3	12%
Wakefield	6	26%
Grand Total	24	100%

Grandparents Plus database

- 2.2 All but one (23) of the kinship carers have a special guardianship order (SGO) for the child(ren) in their care. Of these 23, 21 receive a local authority allowance for the care of their child(ren).
- 2.3 Age profiles of the kinship carers are mixed with the majority (75%) being 45 or older and 45% being aged 55 or over.

Table 2.2: Age of Kinship Carers

Age	Count	Count of Local Authority
25-34	1	4%
35-44	5	20%
45-54	7	29%
55-64	9	38%
65-74	2	8%
Grand Total	24	100%*

Grandparents Plus database

*Numbers do not add up to 100 due to rounding

- 2.4 Data shows that 22 (92%) were white British. This is somewhat surprising given the ethnic mix of the population in the local authorities (two did not record their ethnicity.)

Background to becoming a kinship carer

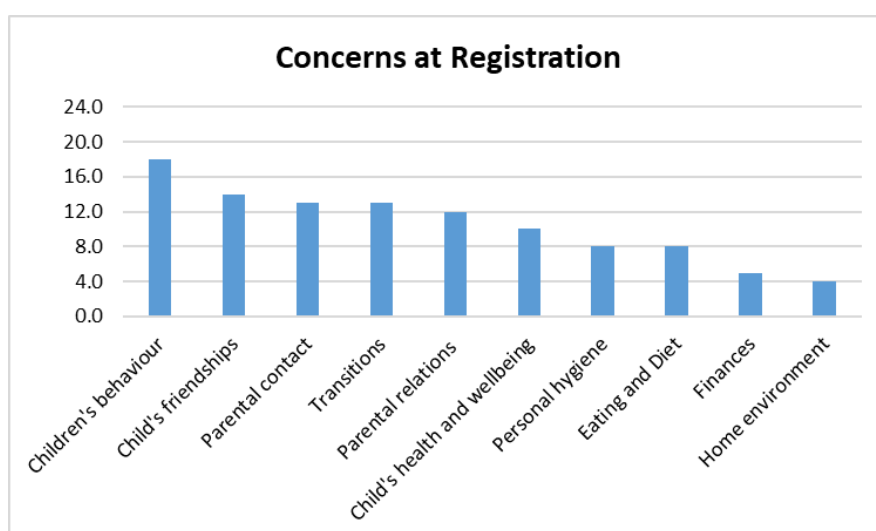
- 2.5 From the data, the majority (58%) of kinship carers supported through the Kinship Connected programme in West Yorkshire have been a kinship carer for five years or more. None were new kinship carers. Therefore, many of the initial uncertainties around being a kinship carer had already been experienced, although as the case studies revealed, many had significant ongoing issues.
- 2.6 Reasons why the parents could no longer look after their own children included safeguarding concerns relating to: substance misuse (6, 25%), concerns over parents' capacity to care for their children (24, 100%), domestic abuse (3, 13%), and parents' mental health (1, 4%) which ultimately led to children being removed from the care of their parents by social services.

2.7 The five qualitative cases evidenced the complexities around becoming a kinship carer.

- The first case is of a kinship carer who, together with her husband had taken on the care of their grandson when he was five years old in 2012. Social services had removed the child from his parents' care with safeguarding concerns related to neglect. This led to him being placed with his grandparents under a Residence Order. The family has experienced considerable challenges over the years with their grandson's behaviour due to attachment issues.
- The second case is of a kinship carer who took on the care of her six-month-old granddaughter after concerns were raised that her mother was neglecting her. The kinship carer was also caring for her husband who died shortly after being awarded an SGO for her granddaughter. She has considerable and ongoing concerns over contact issues with the baby's mother - her own daughter, and over the years has had abuse and threatening calls and messages from her daughter. This has caused considerable stress and affected her own mental wellbeing.
- The third case was of a kinship carer, who, together with his wife, has taken on the care of a severely disabled granddaughter. Concerns were raised of the ability of their parents to care for their disabled daughter and social services asked the grandparents if they would become a kinship carer. They were awarded an SGO two years ago and have been managing the care of their granddaughter since then.
- The fourth kinship carer had taken on the care of her sister's two children after social services became concerned about the ability of their mother to care for her children due to mental health and addiction issues. Contact arrangements were not put in place from the beginning and this has resulted in the kinship carer having to endure significant threats and abuse, having to move house, and changing jobs to get away from the level of abuse.
- The fifth case was a kinship carer who had taken on the care of her two grandchildren after her own daughter was failing to keep her safe from sexual exploitation. Her grandchildren were born in different local authorities and as a result, the kinship carers were having to liaise with two different Connected Families teams, which they found very difficult. Children had physical disabilities and learning difficulties and attachment issues. The stress of the situation had caused the kinship carer to have a breakdown due to stress she was enduring.

2.8 Kinship carers in West Yorkshire had a range of concerns relating to their role as a kinship carer and the wellbeing of their children.

Figure 2.1: Concerns of kinship carers



Source: Grandparents Plus database

- 2.9 Although most kinship carers had been caring for their children for several years, many still had concerns regarding:
- children's behaviour (18, 75%)
 - their child(ren)'s ability to maintain friendships (14, 58%)
 - parental contact with children (13, 54%)
 - concerns over transitions relating to education (13, 54%)
 - concerns with parental relations (12, 50%).
- 2.10 Interviews between project workers and kinship carers provide a little more detail on the nature of kinship carers' concerns.

Figure 2.2: Kinship Carers Concerns

"[Name of kinship carers] feels he [their grandchild] may have attachment disorder. He worked with a play therapist when he was younger, and the issues listed for attachment disorder matched his behaviour."

"[Name of kinship carer] is concerned about [name of child's] behaviour as she feels she is struggling to behave in an acceptable manner. She is accessing various support agencies through social services."

[The kinship carers] have concerns about destructive behaviour, breaking mirrors in the wardrobe and damaging blinds."

"[Name of child] struggles to make friends and once he does make friends, he struggles to keep them. His behaviour is erratic, ranging from very loving and trusting to aggressive."

[Name of kinship carers] has ongoing health concerns for [name of child]."

Source: Project worker baseline registration data

- 2.11 Nine kinship carers (37%) stated their child was diagnosed with a physical or learning disability and an additional five (20%) were in the process of being assessed for a learning difficulty. These statistics reveal the high levels of need among these families for support.
- 2.12 All five kinship carers interviewed for this report spoke about having to give up employment, despite all being under the age at which they draw a state pension. In the case of the kinship carers looking after their disabled daughter, they had received a high level of support, both financial, practical and emotional support from social services over the years. The other cases were very critical of the level of support they had received from their local authority, although, according to one kinship carer their local authority had more recently improved their level of support to kinship carers.
- 2.13 Two case studies revealed the challenges kinship carers had faced in trying to bring up their children where parental contact was difficult. Both reported they had received very little or no support from the local authority from the time they received their care order.

Figure 2.3: Kinship carers' view of local authority support

"Social services were not particularly very clear about anything. I would have to say the support was zero. When we came out of the court after we had got him permanently, the social worker asked if she wanted me to explain it, and she did and then it [the support] just stopped. We asked for help with the contact but were told we had to pay £60 per contact. We couldn't afford it and we've struggled on though." (Kinship Carer of seven years)

"At the time the judge gave me the SGO, there was supposed to be a year's support. She [the judge] had noted the aggravation between me and my daughter, so social services were supposed to give me a year's support. I didn't get that support. The social worker came every month to see [name of daughter], but she wasn't there for me, wasn't interested in me....she just came to see if I was keeping a house tidy." (Kinship Carer of six years)

Source: Telephone interviews, August 2019

2.14 Kinship carers continue with their caring role despite enduring considerable challenges and stresses with their circumstances. In these cases, both kinship carers stated the lack of support has had repercussions on their children's behaviour, due to attachment issues and the kinship carers not understanding how to deal with the symptoms. As a result, one child has struggled to cope with mainstream education and is moving into alternative provision.

2.15 Kinship carers revealed that they felt they were not being listened to, and no-one, at the time of them receiving their orders, was there to help them navigate their way through the complex situation they had found themselves in.

"When this happened [being awarded an SGO], I knew nothing about it at all, it's been so difficult." (Kinship carer of six years)

2.16 It seems there was a lack of support from local authority services, at a time when kinship carers needed to be able to understand where they could go to for support, what support they were entitled to. None seemed to have been put in touch with other kinship carers who were experiencing the same thing.

Support from Grandparents Plus

Peer-to-peer support groups

2.17 The setting up of local support groups is an effective way of reducing isolation and provides an opportunity for kinship carers to exchange experiences and receive information and advice about their role and the care of their children. There are 12 peer support groups operating across West Yorkshire. Four of these groups were set up by local authorities – two of which receive Grandparents Plus support and one will become independent in September. Three of the 12 are independent groups – two in Leeds and one in Bradford. The Bradford group has requested support from Grandparents Plus to help it to continue. There are five Grandparents Plus groups/ coffee mornings (one in Calderdale, which was previously run by the local authority, two in Kirklees and two in Wakefield). There are plans to set up four more peer support groups in September and October (two in Bradford, one in Calderdale and one in Leeds). These groups provide a lifeline for many kinship carers who experience isolation and high levels of stress.

2.18 Over one half (n=13, 54%) of the sample attend the local groups across West Yorkshire and seven (29%) attend regularly. These groups are a mix of kinship carer-led/independent support groups and Grandparents Plus-led support groups.

"I love going to my groups, I actually go to two groups, one is more formal, where we have guest speakers and one is just sitting around having a cup of coffee."

(Kinship carer)

- 2.19 All kinship carers received a visit from the project worker at the start of their support. The total number of visits carried out to date, according to Grandparents Plus is 78 visits for 78 kinship carers.
- 2.20 When project workers visit kinship carers in their home, they take background detail regarding their circumstances and needs and offer information, advice and support early on. Goals have been agreed, which allow the support to be tailored to kinship carers' needs.
- 2.21 There were 39 goals identified across the 24 kinship carers. A review of the data suggests that most goals related to:
- Getting involved with a local support group and sharing experiences
 - Receiving advice and support on particular issues relating to their circumstances, for example, housing or schooling for their child
 - Reducing a sense of isolation
 - Gaining skills and training through volunteering
 - Applying for a grant/accessing some financial support for furniture or other goods
 - Improving levels of confidence.
- 2.22 Evidence from interviews with kinship carers reveal how project workers have carried out advocacy on behalf of kinship carers, have assisted kinship carers to access local welfare grants and have provided emotional support and advice.
- 2.23 All kinship carers have also been signposted to their advice line or to other services. Five kinship carers have joined Grandparents Plus online support group as a way of keeping in touch with others virtually.
- 2.24 The perceptions from all but one kinship carer were that the support is either of excellent or of good quality.

Figure 2.4: Kinship carers' view of the quality of Grandparents Plus support

General rating of support	Count	%
Excellent	12	50%
Good	11	46%
Satisfactory	1	4%
Grand Total	24	100.00%

Source: Grandparents Plus database

- 2.25 Specific feedback from kinship carers gathered by project workers is included below.

Figure 2.5: Kinship carers' feedback on the quality of Grandparents Plus support

"I don't necessarily need to access a lot of support but knowing that it's there is good and being contacted to be involved in the media side of Grandparents Plus as a case study/being on a video is positive.

"10 out of 10 – [we] need someone else to talk to and have someone to help you through."

"[I have a] very helpful Project Worker"

"[My project worker has] opened up so many possibilities for me"

"[My project worker] has done everything that has been asked and has been willing to support and advocate for me."

"If it wasn't for the support I got from [name of project worker] and the kinship support group at [name of LA] I would still be sat here making no progress. The help has been invaluable."

"I wouldn't have coped without the support."

"My project worker is really supportive and helpful, and I have made greater progress with her support than years on my own."

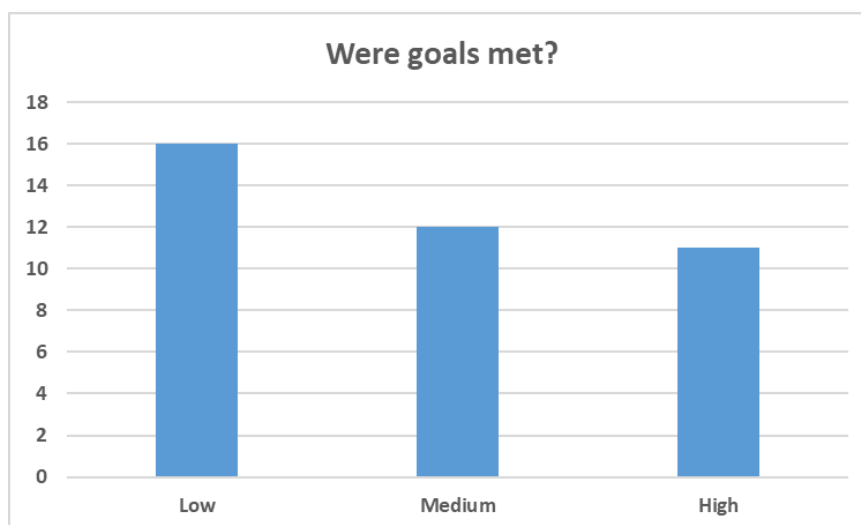
Source: Feedback generated from review forms completed by project workers interviewing kinship carers.

Impact of the Support

Impact on individual needs/goals

2.26 In terms of measuring whether or not kinship carers' goals have been met (e.g. attending local support groups, developing skills and confidence in being a kinship carer, gaining advice about an issue), project workers asked kinship carers to rate to what extent they feel they have met their goals. Data shows that most goals were considered to have been met to a medium extent or to a high extent (33), but 16 goals were not met (low).

Figure 2.6: To what extent were goals were met?



Source: Project workers' outcomes data

2.27 Whether goals were met varied according to each kinship carers' circumstances (e.g. some attended support groups and some did not). Goals that had been met included:

- Attending a support group
- Improving knowledge and keeping up to date with policies that impact on their caring role
- Growing in confidence
- Having a voice and feeling part of something
- Managing anxieties
- Learning about how to support their child better

- Eligibility for support

2.28 Goals that had not been met included:

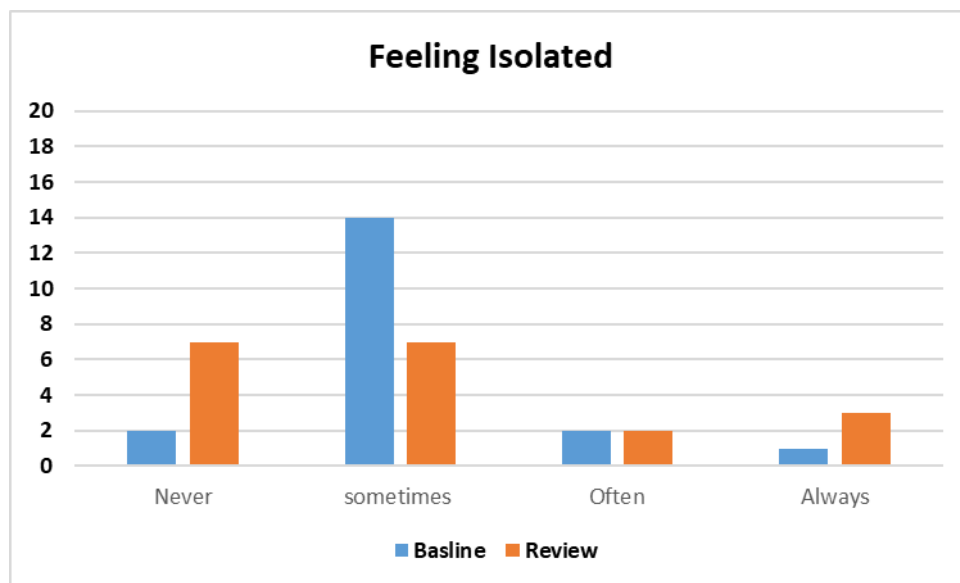
- Help with housing situations
- Reducing a sense of isolation
- Joining a support group.

2.29 Feedback from project workers suggests that some kinship carers struggled to get involved in support groups due to the location and/or timing of the groups conflicting with school pick-ups. Resolving housing issues is also likely to be beyond the responsibility of the project worker and may need additional support from the local authority.

Feelings of isolation

2.30 Most agreed that attending a local support group helped them feel less isolated. Kinship carers were especially asked about their sense of isolation at the registration/baseline and review stages. Data shows that the support has had a positive impact on the frequency with which kinship carers experience a sense of isolation.

Figure 2.7: Changes in perception of isolation from baseline to review



Base: 19 kinship carers completing wellbeing data

2.31 This shows an increase in the number of kinship carers who stated they never experience a sense of isolation from 2 at baseline to 9 at review and a decrease of 7 kinship carers. However, three kinship carers reported 'always feeling a sense of isolation' at review stages. Data shows that two of these did not attend the local support groups and one attended just a few times. It would seem that for some kinship carers local support groups are not the type of support they feel able to become involved with.

Impact on mental wellbeing

- 2.32 Grandparents Plus has adopted the use of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, a validated tool for measuring mental wellbeing (See Annex A). Mental wellbeing is important as an indicator of quality of life¹. Mental wellbeing is not just the absence of mental ill-health; it includes the way that people feel about themselves and their lives. Therefore, measuring mental wellbeing was considered an important factor as a way of understanding the impact of additional support for people living with potentially challenging family lives.
- 2.33 The maximum available score across the 14 questions is 70 (5 being the highest rating individuals could give themselves on a scale of 1-5, where 1 equals 'none of the time' and 5 equals 'all of the time').
- 2.34 Surveys have been completed at the point of registration and a review three to six-months later. An analysis of 19 kinship carers' baseline and review data has been completed to compare changes in their wellbeing². The table below provides a summary of the matched scores.

Figure 2.8: Kinship carers' change in WEMWBS from baseline to review

Kinship carers' individual wellbeing scores at baseline and review			
KC ID	Baseline	Review	Difference
KC01	30	51	21
KC02	49	30	-19
KC03	43	51	8
KC04	29	43	14
KC06	48	44	-4
KC08	66	65	-1
KC09	24	50	26
KC10	49	51	2
KC11	28	42	12
KC12	33	53	20
KC14	34	48	14
KC16	37	48	11
KC17	64	53	9
KC18	38	43	5
KC20	46	57	11
KC21	48	58	10
KC22	42	54	12
KC23	34	24	10
KC24	38	52	14
Totals	780	917	137
Average Scores	41	48	

Total scores from 19 special guardians

¹ Department of Health. Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England. Department of Health, 2010.

² Currently we have matched data for 19 kinship carers as not all kinship carers referred for support have completed a review form.

- 2.35 The majority of kinship carers (n=16, 67%) experienced an increase in their mental wellbeing. However, for three kinship carers, their mental wellbeing reduced according to how they have scored themselves. Two of those had low scores at outcome (30 and 44). A closer look at their circumstances shows that:
- The kinship carer who scored 30 at outcome is aged between 65-74yrs and has had three children placed with her three years ago. She receives no financial support from her local authority. There are no services involved in her support and she reported having a range of concerns including parental contact; parental relations with children; children's behaviour; children's health and wellbeing; children's eating and/or diet. She has attended the local support groups and stated the support was excellent. However, she appears to be struggling with the behaviour of one child in particular who has physical and social and emotional development needs.
 - The second kinship carer who scored 44 is aged between 55-64 and is unemployed. She has been looking after one child for nine years. Other services were involved but she still had concerns with child's behaviour; child's health and wellbeing; maintaining friendships for her child and her home environment (space, privacy, carpets, doors, white goods etc). She was moving property and put the added stress down to that. She was very grateful for the support she had received from her project worker, but her situation meant she was still struggling to cope with her stress levels.
- 2.36 The average WEMWBS score at baseline across 19 kinship carers was 41.0 out of a possible 70. At the review stage, the average score had increased to 48.3 These scores are slightly below national average of 49.8. These scores show an increase in the total average scores and an overall statistical significance of P=0.008 when applying the student t-test. **This indicates the change is statistically significant across the population of kinship carers.**
- 2.37 Two studies have looked at the WEMWBS in relation to two measures of depression and psychological distress and found that a WEMWBS score of fewer than 40 could indicate a high risk of major depression, and scores between 41 and 45 could indicate a high risk from psychological distress³.
- 2.38 **Twelve (63%)** kinship carers had scores below 45 at baseline and **ten (53%)** had scores below 40. This is a concern and indicates high levels of mental and psychological distress which could have a long-term impact on their wellbeing. At review, six **(31%)** kinship carers had scores below 45 and **two (10%)** had scores below 40. This shows a drop in 14 cases of those kinship carers with high-level mental wellbeing concerns, which may lead to longer-term positive impacts on kinship carers' health if this continues.
- 2.39 The two vignettes provided below show how challenging being a kinship carer can be and how important it is that support needs to be put in place as early as possible to prevent deterioration in both the mental health of kinship carers and the behaviour and wellbeing of the children they are looking after.

Figure 2.9: Case Study One

Background

This kinship carer has had significant challenges with her sister who suffers from very poor mental health and substance misuse. Her sister had three children - in 2005, a primary school raised the alarm with social services about one of the children. The child, who was eight at the time, was not communicating with others, would not engage and was very emotionally disturbed.

³ Taggart, F., Stewart-Brown, S., & Parkinson, J. (2015). Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) User Guide, Version 2. NHS Health Scotland

The original intervention in 2005 from social services did not result in any formal care order, but the kinship carer was asked to take the children on a temporary basis. This informal arrangement continued for a number of years until the kinship carers herself raised alarms with social services and the children were placed under child protection. The sister's health has continued to deteriorate.

The support the kinship carer has received from the local authority has been very limited. She was awarded an SGO in 2013 for the care of two boys and has been receiving financial support since then but no other practical support relating to contact with the boys' mother/her sister.

"This has been the biggest concern, I have had to move house and change jobs because of the level of harassment and still I don't get any support with contact arrangements."

Support from Grandparents Plus

She has had a project worker now for a year and has developed a very good relationship with her. The project worker has accompanied her to meetings with school to liaise about the children's education and care.

She spoke very positively about the emotional support she received from the project worker:

"I really admire her, she listens to everything I say, and she remembers things, and texts me to make sure she's okay. It's very positive support." (Kinship carer)

Unfortunately, she is not able to go to the local support groups as she works shifts. She would like to be able to attend and share her experiences with others as she feels she would be able to draw strength from their stories, but the timing of the meetings means she is unable to attend.

She has, however, trained to become a Kinship Carer Champion and promotes awareness of the charity by handing out leaflets in the community. She has enjoyed moving into her voluntary role and stated it has been good for her sense of wellbeing. She admitted that she suffers with her health and her mental health as a result of her circumstances.

The one thing she would like Grandparents Plus to be able to do would be to support kinship carers with contact arrangements. *"This would make a real difference to me to have someone who could liaise between me and my sister."*

Source: telephone interview with kinship carer by Starks Consulting Ltd

Figure 2.10: Case Study Two

Background

This kinship carer and her husband, who are both in their 50s look after their daughter's two children: one girl aged nine and one boy aged two. They have been awarded an SGO for both children after their daughter was failing to keep them safe from sexual exploitation. One child has physical disabilities and learning difficulties and has been diagnosed with global development delay. The other child has behaviour and emotional problems and attachment issues.

Since taking on the care of the children she has had to give up her full-time work as a teaching assistant in a school and financially struggles. *"Financially we're not in the best place at all."*

Due to the children being born in two different local authorities, the kinship carers have to deal with two social services. This affects the effective coordination of support. For example, having to

complete two sets of paperwork for financial assistance and having to liaise with two Connected Persons teams. She was very critical of the support from both local authorities initially.

Since May 2010, we had no support. We had such a rough time with social services, it was very 'airy-fairy'. For a long time, we didn't have anything to do with them, but then I found out about their Connected Person's team and I rang them straight away." [Kinship carer]

They needed support to learn about how to talk to their daughter who was beginning to display very challenging behaviour.

From one local authority helping coordinate her granddaughter's support, they now receive an immense amount of support. *"They have done life story work with them and my daughter looks on her [name of practitioner] as a real friend."* [Kinship carers].

They have also benefited from a range of training to help cope with their granddaughter's behaviour.

However, the stress of their family life has taken a toll on the kinship carer's health and she had a nervous breakdown in 2012. She went to the doctors who sent her for some cognitive behavioural therapy which has helped develop her resilience and ability to cope.

Support from Grandparents Plus

She described the support from Grandparents Plus as *"absolutely fabulous"*. She found out about them on the internet in the early hours of the morning when she couldn't sleep.

The project worker has done considerable liaising with school on her behalf. Her school was determined not to see the behaviour issues as the result of attachment disorder but were labelling her daughter as a naughty child and this was affecting the relationship between herself and her school. The Grandparents Plus project worker has liaised with the school to ask how they are using the Pupil Premium money to support [name of child] in her education.

She has signposted the kinship carers to organisations such as Family Rights Group where she has accessed free legal advice and called the Grandparents Plus advice lines on several occasions to get advice about support for the children.

She has also been to conferences to speak about her experiences.

"It has given me my self-esteem back, made me feel like me again. They have listened to me and taken on board my opinion...You've no idea how this feels when you've not been listened to for years. It eats away at you." (Kinship carer)

She feels she is finally on the right path with her granddaughter as she has been referred for play therapy, which is helping her understand her better and parent her better. She wishes that the local authority had put in place training years ago for her to understand her daughter's behaviour.

"All these children have such needs, such issues relating to attachment. We just want this to be acknowledged as we struggle to maintain their normality."

Source: Telephone Interview with kinship carer by Starks Consulting Ltd

Summary

- 2.40 This report has revealed the very complex and challenging circumstances that kinship carers find themselves in when they take on the parental responsibility of their kin children. Many experienced family breakdowns due to children being removed and placed with family members. When kinship carers receive an SGO they often have a considerable need for support and advice regarding contact arrangements. In most cases, the local authorities appear not to be supporting kinship carers in this and kinship carers struggle without this form of support. There is evidence that this leads to a highly stressful situation and kinship carers suffering with their own health.
- 2.41 Another unmet need appears to be around understanding their child(ren)'s behaviour and how it has been affected by their removal from their parent(s).
- 2.42 In these contexts, Grandparents Plus provides a vital source of support. In some areas, the local authority has improved their level of support and has set up Connected Families teams and local support groups.
- 2.43 Grandparents Plus staff are able to reach out to more kinship carers and provide additional support, either by establishing new groups, or coordinating existing groups. Either way, those kinship carers that are able to attend the support groups, reported they provide a vital opportunity to share experiences and access information and advice.
- 2.44 Grandparents Plus project workers provide a key source of advice, advocacy and emotional support to kinship carers. Without this, some kinship carers would have struggled to cope. They have also signposted kinship carers to various organisations, including their own helpline for information and advice.
- 2.45 This support is having a positive and statistically significant impact on kinship carers' mental wellbeing and sense of isolation.
- 2.46 More reviews with carers receiving support as part of the programmes – 78 have received one-to-one support to date – in order to be able to report with greater levels of confidence on the impact of the support on the wider kinship carer community.

ANNEX A: BASELINE AND REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES

Project Worker: *Confidentiality Policy discussed*

Use of personal information:

I understand that in order to access the services provided by the Kinship Connected programme, the information I give will be used by Grandparents Plus staff to understand my needs, what support was received and how this has made a difference to myself and my family. In addition to Grandparents Plus seeing the data, Starks Consulting Ltd in partnership with Ecorys has been commissioned to carry out an evaluation of Kinship Connected. They will have access to all **anonymised** data and will use this for the purposes of evaluating Kinship Connected only. They will not share this with anyone outside of Grandparents Plus. This data will be analysed to understand the impact that Kinship Connected has had on all those who have been involved in the programme. All data collected and shared with Starks Consulting and Ecorys will hold no personal data (relating to names, dates of birth or addresses) and no reporting of findings will reveal yours or your family's identity.

Do you agree to your data being used in this way?

Yes

No

- If no, do you require any additional information regarding how your data will be used in order for you to give consent?

Name: _____

Signed _____ Date: _____



Kinship Connected: Registration Form

KC No: Today's Date [dd/mm/yyyy]:

Project Worker:

Local Authority

We'd like to ask you a few background questions. We will keep the information you provide confidential and anonymous.

Please provide the details below, so we can get back in touch with you:

Preferred method of contact: email or mobile telephone:	
First Name	
Surname	
Telephone number	
Mobile number	
Email address	
Address	
Postcode	

1. Do you currently look after a relative's or friend's child(ren)?

Yes

No

2. How many relative's or friend's child(ren) do you look after?

1

2

3

4

5

3. Question 3 (this is landscape on the next page).

4. Are you receiving any local authority allowance related to the order for the kinship children?

Yes

No

5. Do you also currently look after your own children, who live with you?

Yes

No

6. How many of your own child(ren) do you look after?

1

2

3

4

5

(If yes), please tell us more about your children or anyone else in household

Name	Gender	Date of Birth

3. Pleased provide details on each child.

Name	Gender	DoB [dd/mm/yy]	Age 0-4) (5-9) (10-14) (15-19) (20-24)	Date child came to live with you mm/yyyy	Relationship to kinship carer: - Grandchild - Niece/nephew - Sibling - No relationship - Foster - Cousin - Other	Care Order - RO - CAO - SGO - SO - CO - ICO, - Foster Care - Informal	Circumstances that led to them living with you? - LA Safeguarding - Parental capacity to care - Substance misuse - Parents mental health - Incarceration - Domestic abuse - Parental absence - Other/.....

Interviewer Note: Please complete by writing in one of the choices as laid out above

PLEASE RETURN TO QUESTION 4 ON THE PREVIOUS PAGE.

6. Has your role as a kinship carer impacted on your own child(ren)?

Yes

No

6a.(If Yes) In what ways have the children being impacted

7. Is there anybody else living in the house?

Yes

No

8. If relevant, please provide details about any statutory support and educational needs for each child in the table below

Name	Prior to you taking on the care of the child, was there any children's services involvement? - No - CIN - CP - LAC - Don't know	Prior to you taking on the care of the child, was there any concerns regarding the child's school attendance?*	Has the child ever been excluded from school either temporarily or permanently? - Yes - No	Are there any concerns you have relating to the children's development needs? - Physical development - Speech and language development - Social and emotional development - Cognitive development	Has the child been diagnosed with a special learning difficulty or disability or physical disability? - Yes - No - In the process of being assessed

* Attendance concerns are based on a 90% or less attendance (this is one half day each week or 1 full day every two weeks or 20 days off in a school year)

9. Thinking about your support needs, do you have any concerns with the kin children relating to: (tick all that apply)

Parental contact

Parental relations with children

Child(ren's) Behaviour

Children's health and wellbeing

Maintaining child(ren's) friendships

Transitions

Personal hygiene

Eating / diet

Finances

Home environment (space, privacy, carpets, doors, white goods etc)

Other

Description.....
.....

10. Are there any other services, agencies or informal sources of help/advice you have accessed for the children?

Yes Which agency(ies).....

No

11. If No, was help sought but not received?

Yes

No

12. Have you been feeling isolated or lonely over the past 6 months? (please tick one only)

Never

Sometimes

Often

Always

13. How would you like to be involved in Kinship Connected?

(Please tick all options that apply to you)

Join a face to face support group	
Join a virtual support group	
Join the Grandparents Plus support network	
Access the Grandparents Plus advice service	
Access the Someone Like Me service	
Apply for a grant	
Access one-to-one case support (to review my circumstances)	
Volunteer for Grandparents Plus	
Get a signposting/referral to another organisation	
Would you like to be involved in any other ways?	

14. Thinking about all the above, do you have any additional support needs or referrals you would wish us to consider that you think might be helpful for your children?

Question 15 is printed on a separate sheet – this should be completed by the kinship carers and you can probably continue with this questionnaire or wait until the end to hand it out.

15. Now we are going to ask you to complete this short set of questions on how you are feeling and your confidence in your role as a kinship carer. **Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks.**

Statements	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
1. I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	4	5
2. I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
3. I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
4. I've been interested in other people	1	2	3	4	5
5. I've had energy to spare	1	2	3	4	5
6. I've been dealing with my problems well	1	2	3	4	5
7. I've been thinking clearly	1	2	3	4	5
8. I've been feeling good about myself	1	2	3	4	5
9. I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
10. I've been feeling confident	1	2	3	4	5
11. I've been able to make my mind up about things	1	2	3	4	5
12. I've been feeling loved	1	2	3	4	5
13. I've been interested in new things	1	2	3	4	5
14. I've been feeling cheerful	1	2	3	4	5
15. I've been feeling that I have appropriate support when I need it*	1	2	3	4	5
16. I've been feeling confident in my parenting role*	1	2	3	4	5

*Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) © NHS Health Scotland, University of Warwick and * denotes additional questions relating to Kinship Connected.*

16. How did you learn about Kinship Connected? (tick all that apply)

Event <input type="checkbox"/> Please state:	Social Worker <input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Centre <input type="checkbox"/>	Another Kinship Carer <input type="checkbox"/>
Social Media (Facebook/Website) <input type="checkbox"/>	School <input type="checkbox"/>
Friend <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/> Please state:

17. What would you like to achieve by being engaged in the programme? Include training requirements. (These should be outcomes focused and be expressed for example as 'reduce my sense of isolation', 'socialise a little more', 'learn about being a kinship carer', 'learn about my rights' etc) and not 'join a group'.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Demographics: Now we need to collect some statistical information about you to review our engagement and to monitor whether our services reach all sectors of the population

18. Are you: (Please tick **one**) Male Female

19. What is your date of birth?

DD	MM	YYYY
----	----	------

(Please tick what age category they fall in to for analysis purposes)

20-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75-84 85 +

20. What is your family's ethnic group? (Please add KC for kinship carer, C1 for child 1, C2 for child 2, etc)

White		Asian or Asian British	
British		Indian	
Irish		Pakistani	
Gypsy/Roma/Traveller		Bangladeshi	
Other White background		Other Asian background	
Mixed Heritage		Chinese	
White and Black Caribbean		Black or Black British	
White and Black African		African	
White and Asian		Caribbean	
White and Chinese		Other Black background	
Other Dual Heritage background		Other ethnic background	
Other			

21. What is your main language? (Please tick **one** box)

English Other If Other, please specify.....

22. What is your religion? (Please tick **one** box)

Christian <input type="checkbox"/>	Buddhist <input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu <input type="checkbox"/>	Jewish <input type="checkbox"/>
Jewish <input type="checkbox"/>	Sikh <input type="checkbox"/>
Muslim <input type="checkbox"/>	Muslim <input type="checkbox"/>
No religion/Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>	Other religion <input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>	

23. Do you have any long-standing physical or mental illness, or disability?

(By 'long-standing', we mean anything that has troubled you over a period of at least 12 months or that is likely to affect you over a period of at least 12 months.)

Yes if Yes, can you tell us about this.....)

No

24. How did you learn about Kinship Connected? (tick all that apply)

Event <input type="checkbox"/>	Social Worker <input type="checkbox"/>
Please state:	
Children's Centre <input type="checkbox"/>	Another Kinship Carer <input type="checkbox"/>
Social Media (Facebook/Website) <input type="checkbox"/>	School <input type="checkbox"/>
Friend <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
	Please state:

25. Our evaluation includes doing some face-to-face discussion groups and one-to-one interviews with kinship carers and their children if possible. This is to better represent your needs and the impact of the service in our research findings.

These will be arranged at a suitable time and are completely voluntary. Your name and the name of your children will not be divulged in the research. Are you happy to be contacted to participate in the research? [You may not be contacted but we need to ask your permission before we do so].

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
------------------------------	-----------------------------

If yes, do you give permission for your contact details to be passed on to our evaluators for them to contact you directly once we have agreed our sample?

Yes

No

Thank you for providing this information



Kinship Connected: Outcomes Form

Please help us understand how the programme has supported you by completing the form below:

Key Details			
Kinship Carer Name			
Kinship Carer ID Code		Date dd/mm/yyyy	
Local Authority			
Your Experience of Kinship Connected			

Firstly we'd just like to understand how you were involved in the Kinship Connected Programme

1. Did you ever attend a Local Support Group?

Yes (Go to 1b)

No (Go to 1a)

1a. (If No) why not?

- Did not want to attend a group
 - Could not physically get to the group
 - There was no group in my area
 - Other
-

1b. (If Yes) How frequently did you attend?

- Once
- Regularly (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)
- Just a few times

1c. (If Yes) What impact did attending the local support group have on you and your role as a kinship carer?

- It improved my capacity to cope with the child(ren)
- It provided me with an opportunity to share my experiences/concerns
- It gave me ideas on how to improve my child(ren)'s behaviour
- It helped me feel less isolated
- I made new friends and improved my circle of support
- Other

Please comment

- None of the above
- I did not like attending the groups
 - They were not well run/organised
 - They were too far away
 - Other

Please comment

2. Did you participate in a virtual support group?

Yes

No

2a) If Yes –

What are your views of the value of the virtual support group? (what support did get from it?)

Please comment

3. Did you access the wider Grandparents Plus Support Network?

Yes (Go to 2a)

No

3a. (If Yes) Why and what did you achieve?

.....
.....

4. Did you access the GP+ Advice Service? (Please tick if Yes)

4a. (If Yes) What advice were you seeking?

- Advice about financial support
- Advice about legal orders
- Advice about children's services' decisions
- Other

.....
4b. Did this advice meet your needs?

Yes

No

If not, why not

5. Did you access the Someone Like Me Service? (please tick if Yes)

6. Did you receive a grant? (please tick if Yes)

a. What did you use the grant for?

- Purchasing furniture/white goods
- Purchasing soft furniture
- Improving the home (carpets, doors etc)
- Going on a short break
- Other

.....
7. Did you become a KC Champion? (Leading Peer Support Groups) (please tick if Yes)

a. How long have you been a KC Champion?

- i. Less than 3 months
- ii. Less than 6 months
- iii. Over 6 months

b. During this time, did you organise / lead groups

- i. Yes

ii. No

c. Do you think you will continue to organise/lead groups for a while?

i. Yes

ii. No

Please comment on your experience of being a KC Champion (e.g. skills gained, confidence in leading a group)

.....
.....

8. Other volunteering (Other roles)(If yes please tick)

a. What other roles were you volunteering for? (e.g. admin, social events)

.....

9. Did you receive training to become a volunteer? (If yes please tick)

a. Did this training meet the needs of your volunteering role?

o Yes

o No (Go to Q9a)

9a. (If No) Why did it not meet your needs?

.....

10. Were you signposted/referred to other services (please tick if yes)

o GP

o Health clinic

o Local support group/network

o Local activities group

o Addiction services

o Children's Services

o Early Help (Children's Services)

o Other

.....

a. Did you access this service?

o Yes

o No

11. Were you involved in Kinship Connected in any other way?

.....

Now we'd like to ask you a little about your experience of the support.

12. In your Registration Form you indicated things that you wanted to achieve by being involved in the programme. To what extent have you achieved these? (Please check back with the planning form)

- | | Low | Medium | High | N/A | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

13. In general, how would you rate the quality of the support and services you received from Kinship Connected?

- 1. Very poor
- 2. Poor
- 3. Okay
- 4. Good
- 5. Excellent

Please comment

14. What suggestions, if any, do you have for improvements of the programme?

Now we'd just like to recap on any services involvement and school attendance and how this may have changed **since you have been caring for the child(ren).**

Name	Are children's services currently involved with your children? - No - CIN - CP - LAC	What is the legal order status of your child(ren) Residency Order Care Arrangement Order Special Guardianship Order Supervision Order Care Order Interim Care Order Foster Care	Has there been any concerns regarding the child's school attendance?* - Yes - No - N/A - Don't know	Had the child been excluded from school either temporarily or permanently in the last 3 school terms? - Yes - No

15. Do you have any concerns with the kin children in relation to: (tick all that apply)

Parental contact

Parental relations with children

Child(ren's) Behaviour

Children's health and wellbeing

Maintaining child(ren's) friendships

Transitions

Personal hygiene

Eating / diet

Finances

Home environment (space, privacy, carpets, doors, white goods etc)

Other

16. Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks.

Statements	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
17. I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	4	5
18. I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
19. I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
20. I've been interested in other people	1	2	3	4	5
21. I've had energy to spare	1	2	3	4	5
22. I've been dealing with my problems well	1	2	3	4	5
23. I've been thinking clearly	1	2	3	4	5
24. I've been feeling good about myself	1	2	3	4	5
25. I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
26. I've been feeling confident	1	2	3	4	5
27. I've been able to make my mind up about things	1	2	3	4	5
28. I've been feeling loved	1	2	3	4	5
29. I've been interested in new things	1	2	3	4	5
30. I've been feeling cheerful	1	2	3	4	5
31. I've been feeling that I have appropriate support when I need it*	1	2	3	4	5
32. I've been feeling confident in my parenting role*	1	2	3	4	5
33. I've been feeling optimistic about my financial situation*	1	2	3	4	4

6. Have you been feeling isolated or lonely over the past 6 months? (please tick one only)

- Never
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

What is your current employment status? *(Please tick **one** box only)*

Retired	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employed: Full-time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employed: Part-time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other status <i>(Please describe below)</i>	

Voice and Influence of Adopters, Children & Young People report Card April 2019 to September 2019

Outcome: Children and adoptive families to have an influence over decisions affecting their families' lives and the services we provide.

Best ideas - what has worked?

The 2019 One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY) Annual Adopter Survey

An on-line survey was sent to all OAWY adopters to gather their views on the service we provide. We asked adopters to tell us what we do well, here are some of their responses:



- *We think that the courses you run are important and insightful;*
- *Family finding side support and every dealing has been great, timely, supportive, genuinely care;*
- *Regular newsletter - good source of info;*
- *Opportunities to meet other (prospective) adopters at training events;*
- *My social worker is amazing. She is accessible and extremely helpful when I need her;*

- *We have always found a listening / no judging ear. Supportive when we need it most and encouraging;*
- *Supporting adopted children in school;*
- *Empathy, advice, training, experience.*

We also asked adopters what we need to improve on. One of the main themes picked up was time waiting for support, see comments below:

- *You need more staff so parents can be seen in better time frames;*
- *The time it takes to access support;*

- *The timescales for post adoption support..;*
- *Reducing waiting times for support;*
- *Timescales are excessively long and unnecessary.*

OAWY Fun Days!



OAWY held its first Fun Day in June 2019 and it's second in October 2019. This was in response to prospective adopters getting a better understanding of the children waiting for adoption in the region. The Fun Day is a chance for adopters (OAWY & external) to meet some of the children who are waiting to be adopted, allowing them to interact with the children in an enjoyable environment. The children who attended these events were those who would typically wait longer to be adopted. There is careful preparation for these events with children, their foster carers and adopters.

The June event resulted in 2 matches (1 internal and 1 external) and 16 expressions of interest have been received following the October event. Here are some of the comments from the adopters who attended:

- *Really great experience. Well worth it;*
- *It was so useful to meet the children and their carers, it was invaluable;*
- *...it was great to talk to the foster carers about the children and to meet the children..;*
- *I had a fantastic time, thank you very much;*
- *Thank you. It was a really nice event, I enjoyed it;*
- *We loved the day. Thank you;*
- *Very friendly atmosphere made welcome.*

Profiling Events

Profiling events continue to be a success in raising the profile of children waiting for adoption. 3 have been delivered by OAWY so far this year and have resulted in 3 matches to date:

- April event – 2 matches (2 children)
- July event – 1 match (1 child);
- September event - 1 is



Here is some of the positive feedback from those who attended the events:

- *It's very nice to have event where we can put our interest in;*
- *The staff are very welcoming and helpful;*
- *Good and compact and easy to talk with social worker;*
- *Good venue, well set out.*

Adopter Voice

Adopter Voice continue to influence and help us improve the adoption service. Some of the things they have done are:

adoptervoice

Creating empowerment and engagement for the adoption community

- Tested the OAWY website for ease of use and content - the website is now live for adopters to access for information, resources, support groups and events;
- Involvement in developing the new assessment framework training;
- Involvement in developing the new multi-disciplinary team model;
- They have recruited adopted children/ young adults for the prep training from a network of adopters;
- Sought new panel members, specifically male or same sex adopters & black and minority adopters currently under represented.
- Being involved in staff events to provide perspectives
- Involvement in recruitment of staff with young people from the adoptees group also involved in recruitment of service manager post.

Information Events



Adopters have said our paper system for processing applications is slow. We are changing this and now have an electronic sign-in system for those attending information events. This links to an on-line survey that is sent to prospective adopters after the event so we can capture feedback. OAWY have held 14 information events in the first 6 months of 2019/20 with 215 households attending. Here are some of the views of the prospective adopters attending:

- *Brilliant staff;*
- *Loads of great insight and real life clarity on what to expect;*
- *Was really informative but also a relaxed atmosphere which was nice as was a little nervous at first;*
- *It was great to hear from a lady who has her own adopted child;*
- *The staff hit a very good balance of transparent and frank. And also motivational and compelling;*

- *Everyone were really welcoming, gave us very clear information and put at ease with the process as we were slightly nervous;*
- *It was good to hear from someone who had been through the adoption process and become a parent for the first time.*

Virtual Reality

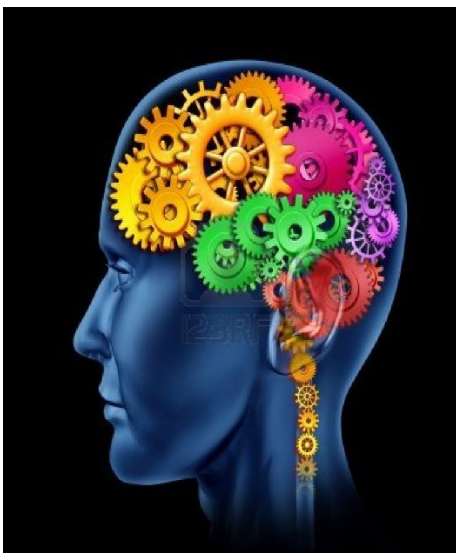
The use of Virtual Reality (VR) being embedded in to adopter preparation training has been very successful. We have purchased an additional headsets which now means they can be routinely used within individual assessment sessions to support preparation to adopt and are being rolled to be used in family finding and adoption support over the next year. Here are some prospective adopters thoughts regarding VR:



- *Very powerful. Very sophisticated;*
- *The last VR video stuck with me and I learnt there is more to this than what I originally thought;*
- *Great experience;*
- *Very thought provoking..;*
- *This opened my eyes to what looked after children could have been through.*



Brain Based Parenting – Twilight Session



This workshop provides an opportunity to examine the impact of abuse and neglect on children's brain development and explore parenting strategies that best support repair and healthy brain development. The content of the session covers:

- How brains develop pre-birth and in infancy;
- The stress response system (fight, flight, freeze);
- Facing the realities of children's experiences;
- Shame;
- Distressed behaviour;

Here are some of the comments received from those adoptive parents attending:

- *We found the course very interesting and has given us a good understanding of how the brain works and what tools we could use to aid us in being adoptive parents;*
- *It was an excellent session. Very well delivered. The complex and scientific information was presented in clear, creative and informal manner;*
- *The staff were very welcoming & clearly knew what they were talking about when it comes to brain based parenting;*
- *Very useful, informative session.*

Birth Parent – Twilight Session

Adopted teenagers have talked about the importance of identity and lifelong relationships & birth families and adoptive families are key in helping children develop a coherent sense of identity, usually through contact arrangements and being open with children about their history. Many adoptive families have misconceptions about birth parents and therefore we have introduced workshops in preparation training, delivered by birth parents talking about their experiences of contact. The introduction of this has been very powerful for adopters and has helped dispel myths about birth parents.



Here are some comments from the adopters who have attended:

- *Contact with birth parents can make such a valuable difference to their lives but also for the child and to adoptive parents. In a very positive way;*
- *The session certainly humanised the idea of birth parents and have an understanding of the kinds of things they have gone through in order for children to be taken from their care;*
- *I felt the ladies were incredibly brave! It made me appreciate how much they rely on the letterbox contact even if they don't feel in a position to reply straight away;*
- *Mixed emotions. Understand from birth parents side now;*
- *I thought that the experience was very powerful;*
- *It's a very powerful experience and I feel it is highly useful for all adopters to meet birth parents and humanise the people whose circumstances mean they lose their children into care.*

ADOPTTEENS

FORMERLY KNOWN AS AT-ID

Adopteens Timeline Animation

<https://youtu.be/ZA-5DCCK-8E>

This animation completed by young people in the Adopteens group as they reflect on important stages in their lives, sharing their thoughts and feelings about the various support they have received providing important messages for professionals and parents and carers. This is a useful learning tool for anyone professionally and/or personally linked to adoption and has been shared with corporate parenting boards and at conferences. Please share widely.

Best ideas - what next?

Website Redesign

Over the next few months we will be working with our website developer to redesign the One Adoption website in order to make it more up to date, accessible and user friendly.



Siblings training

We are developing a specific days training programme for adopters to consider siblings to enable more children to live together locally with adopters who feel well supported to meet the needs of two or more children moving in together.

This page is intentionally left blank



Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 18 December 2019
Title of report: Children in Care Services Performance Highlights

Purpose of report

This report outlines key performance highlights for children in care and care leavers up to October 31st 2019, for the board to consider and comment upon.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not applicable – for information
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services? Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	Mel Meggs Not applicable Not applicable
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr V Kendrick (Children)

Electoral wards affected: None

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Have you considered GDPR? Yes GDPR considered no service users identified

1. Summary

This graph shows the number of children in care 641 (excluding any looked after children receiving only S20 short term breaks) alongside the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC).

The current number of LAC equates to a rate per 10,000 population aged 0-17 of 64.0.

This compares to a statistical neighbour average of 86.1 and a national average of 64.0 based on published data for March 2018.

Kirklees (Oct 19) = 64.0

Statistical Neighbours (2018) = 86.1

England (2018) = 64.0

Placement Stability and Support

The Legal Gateway Permanence Panel continues to support consistency in regards to decision making and planning around placement moves for children and young people. A weekly External Placement Review Panel is now in place, to provide better oversight of children who are not placed in council provision. We are reviewing all children who are placed out of Local Authority to consider their care planning and explore options of returning to the local area if this is in line with meeting the children and young person's needs, we have already made progress reducing this number placed more than twenty miles away from Kirklees from 127 in 2017 to 78 on 1st August 2019

The total number of children in care was 641 on 31st October, the same as September, but up from 635 in August. In terms of comparators Kirklees (Oct 19) 64.0 data shows 10.000 CIC per child population for Kirklees. Statistical Neighbours (2018) = 86.1 England (2018) = 64.0 per 10.000 child population

For Placement Stability the placement support team are very active and we have implemented innovative solutions to support several placements. An example of plans to limit unplanned moves is as follows: where a foster carer or placement is given 28 day notice, the Team Manager will coordinate a meeting within 5 working days to look at what can be provided to avoid placement breakdown and to maintain the current placement.

Whilst the data shows improvement in certain areas we are focussing particularly on the areas where data does not show improvement, for example LAC with three and four placement changes in the previous 12-month period. We are currently reviewing the work of the team which will ensure that we are able to improve our outcomes for children and young people.

Health of Children in Care

Initial health assessments:

Kirklees Local Authority (LA) rolling 12-month data shows 87.4% were completed in timescales. Locala monthly data reports that 100% were completed in timescales. The difference in comparison with Locala data is that in August, 4 siblings' assessments placed with a parent, were asked to be re-arranged on the final date of statutory timescales. This will affect the LA data until August 2020.

Review health assessments:

Kirklees rolling 12-month data for developmental assessments completed in timescales, i.e. children under 5 years old, were 94% and for annual assessments, i.e. children over 5 years old, were 96.4% on time. Locala monthly data records that 92% of the developmental and 100% of the annual assessments were completed in timescales. There were 2 late RHA's. (Reasons – 1x carer cancelled and then not in for re-arranged appointment, 1 x Other LA capacity issues). All Kirklees children who decline an assessment, are informed that a 'Virtual' assessment will be completed if they agree. The 'Virtual' assessment gathers available health information from current records and discussions with carers and the social worker. The assessment information helps to inform the LAC reviews and those caring for the children of any outstanding health needs. These are not counted in the data.

Dental Checks within last 12 months:

Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that 79.3% of LAC have been recorded as having received a dental check. This figure will be higher, as it relies on being notified after each dental attendance, in between health assessments. Additional actions are undertaken to find this information other than at their health assessment i.e. when an SDQ is sent out, monthly lists of missing information etc. The missing information is less likely for children up to age 5 as this is asked at their '6-monthly' RHA. For children over age 5, this information is reported annually.

Registered at dentist:

Locala monthly data shows 100% of children up to age 5 (omitting babies under 18 months) and 98% of children over age 5 were registered with the dentist at the time of their RHA. The Designated Nurse is informed following the child's health assessment by electronic task from Locala, of any children not registered to allow action to be taken. The Designated Nurse met with a Public Health colleague in July 19 to look at including Looked after Children and Care Leavers, as a cohort to automatically access dental registration, in the 'Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan 2019-24', which is in draft format currently.

Substance misuse:

1.05% (n5) of looked after young people were identified at their last review health assessment, as having a dependant problem with substances. The number has reduced by 1 in the 12 month rolling data collection. Consideration must be given to the difficulty in obtaining an accurate figure, as it is dependent on the young person admitting the extent of the issue, given that it is illegal and they may not wish to share the information. (National figure 4%). Those young people who refuse any support are discussed with the local support service, to try to have a targeted response. Any young person misusing substances at any level is offered support.

What difference did we make?

To the end of October 19, 15.9% (31 children) had been adopted as a percentage of children leaving care in a 12-month rolling period. At the level of performance to October 19, Kirklees is now above the England rate of 13.0% (2018) and the Statistical Neighbours rate of 15.5% (2018).

The average timescale has been increasing and reached 461.8 days in September 19, reducing slightly to 460.8 in Oct 19. Overall this remains better than the Statistical Neighbours and National averages, 512.4 and 486.0 days respectively, from the most recent Adoption Scorecard (3-year average outcome to March 2018). Kirklees performance on the Scorecard was 487 days, so performance has improved since this time.

The average timescale improved slightly to 218.9 days in October 19. Overall this is close to the Statistical Neighbours average of 215.3, from the most recent Adoption Scorecard (3-year average outcome to March 2018). Kirklees performance on the Scorecard was 198 days, so there has been an increase in the average timescale since this time.

We have established weekly clinics to support children's social workers who are undertaking child permanence reports, sibling assessments and considering whether a plan for adoption is appropriate. This is a joint initiative between the Assessment & Intervention Service and One Adoption and will be supported by regular training and workshops. One Adoption continue to attend legal gateway on a weekly basis in order to track children with a plan for adoption and to ensure a family finder is allocated.

If an adoption placement ceases then One Adoption have a 'disruption review' and their new procedure is on our procedures website. There will be work with Kirklees staff as to the implementation of this process. We have a structured Agency Decision Making process in relation to adoption planning. This includes legal and medical advice as well as advice from One Adoption West Yorkshire.

Adoption Support Fund – there has been an increase in successful applications for Kirklees children that resulted in an increase of support, training and therapeutic input.

What do we want to improve?

Develop an even closer working relationship between One Adoption West Yorkshire and Kirklees social workers and managers, to ensure we maximise the potential benefits of the regional adoption agency in Kirklees. The family finding team at One Adoption with responsibility for Kirklees have now moved into Civic centre 1 which will improve areas of communication and partnership working to assist timely adoption for our children.

Head of Service Narrative: Janet Tolley- Virtual School Head Teacher:

What difference did we make?

94.3% initial PEP's have been completed within 10 school days of notification to the Virtual School since 01/09/2019. We continue to work with social work teams to improve both PEP and initial PEP completion and the quality assurance of PEP's. This includes weekly updates to Social Work managers and regular chase up emails and phone calls to Social Workers where there is missing information. We are currently moving to termly PEP's to meet statutory requirements and this will need to be clearly communicated and implemented across the service as a priority. Percentage of LAC attendance is similar to this time last year, and the percentage of persistent absentee pupils has improved.

81% of school moves have been carefully planned across service to ensure a smooth transition with no break in provision.

What do we want to improve?

We will have a focus on termly PEP completion as all pupils should now have a termly PEP from 1st Sept 2019. Attendance/PA is an ongoing concern as we remain slightly below regional data. All pupils with attendance less than 90% have a PA plan in place agreed by all professionals working with the young person.

We continue to maintain a strong focus on pupils not in full-time education provision. Wherever possible we look to ensure a return to full time education as soon as possible but these situations are often very complex. The number of young people not in full-time education has slightly decreased.

Reduce the number of young people who have 20 plus days between a school move.

Looked after Children Reviews and Missing

Service Narrative

What difference did we make?

22 requests for Initial Review forms (SR1's) were received by the Child Protection and Review unit in October 2019 – relating to 32 children in total. This was an increase of 13 children from previous Month (September). 100% were allocated an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) within 24 hours.

In October there were 176 Review Meetings held for children. Child Looked after Reviews held within timescales remained at over 90%. Independent Reviewing Officer's closely monitor Review timescales to ensure that a high percentage of reviews continue to be held on time. Mid-ways reviews are embedded in practice and this continues to improve evidence of Independent Reviewing Officer's oversight on children's files.

There has been an increase with regards to the number of Children in Care who have received a statutory visit in line with practice standards we continue to monitor the visits as part of our service performance meetings. The recent introduction of Advanced Practitioners within the service will further enhance the improvement with regards to our performance. Twenty children were supported at their Looked after Review by an Advocate from the Children's Right's Team.

What do we want to improve?

The Service Manager is increasing focus on statutory visit compliance to improve the performance. Regular performance meetings are held within the service to ensure that we are able to improve our performance.

We will ensure that the issues of risk and vulnerability are clearly considered at each Child Looked After review, where relevant.

Children New into Care referrals to the Child Protection Review Unit to be made in a consistent and timely manner.

Child participation in the Looked after Reviews – Delays in recording on Liquid Logic affect reporting of the monthly performance.

Children in Care involved in the criminal justice system

Service Narrative

For the year 2018/2019 65.8% of CIC young people have successfully completed their interventions which in comparison with the previous year is a decrease of 10% but is however a much-improved picture from 3 years ago when less than 30% of CIC young people successfully completed their interventions. For the 2nd quarter of this year (July to Sept 2019) the percentage of CIC offending is 1.15% which is an improvement from 2.13% for the same period last year. The figure for the period April to September 2019 is 2.01% of CIC offended which again is an improvement on the same period last year where the figure was 4.26%. Although there has been a slight increase in the number of CIC offending these continue to be relatively small numbers of young people in comparison to the larger CIC cohort.

This figure continues to be encouraging when in 2010 almost 13% of Kirklees CIC were convicted of an offence, this compared with a national average of about 5% and a local average of 7%.

The number of CIC involved with the YOT has reduced by four from the previous month. Recent West Yorkshire data indicates that rates of reoffending overall by young people is lower in Kirklees than neighbouring Councils.

What do we want to improve?

There has been a significant reduction in offending by CIC between 2017/18, 7.26% and 2018/19 5.48%. The latest quarterly figure for offending 1.15% is also better than the second quarter of last year 2.13%. Through interventions by the YOT CIC team, restorative processes, liaison with Children's Homes and creative out of court disposals it is hoped the offending rate will continue to fall.

LEAVING CARE

What difference did we make?

Contact with care leavers

There has been a slight increase however we continue to maintain a high percentage of care leavers we are in touch with, currently in touch with 83.6% of care leavers, this has to be viewed in the context of this group all being aged 18 plus. In some situations, young people are not wanting to keep contact with their Personal Advisor, the team work innovatively to keep in touch, we have a best practice protocol in place.

Number of young people in suitable accommodation

There has been a decrease in the number of young people in suitable accommodation. This is linked to young people who are taken into custody, rather than a lack of suitable accommodation in the borough. We continue to maintain strong links with KNH and Housing and the Housing Panel is enabling us to ensure that suitable accommodation is available in a timelier manner when young people are moving to their own accommodation. We have recently made some strong links with private housing providers and are considering how collectively we can improve our skills for independence training. We now have life skills and pre-tenancy training in place held weekly at "No.11" and "No 12" and where possible link young people with tenancy support when housed in KNH tenancies.

Kirklees Commitment to Care Leavers

We now have an established service at our new drop in no 12 in the North of the district which has improved our reach with our young people.

Personal Advisors

The service report shows that 100% of our Young People aged 17 and 4 months have an allocated PA, as well as an allocated Social Worker. We have been able to strengthen our pathway planning in relation to developing timely transitions with young people.

Education Employment Training

Our performance in relation to Employment, Education and Training (EET) indicator is a focus for improvement. We have a C&K Careers Advisor in the Leaving Care Service. We have a pro-active multi agency group to improve opportunities in partnership working and there is a real desire to ensure our young people are afforded the best of opportunities in relation to EET.

Pathway Plans

We continue to work with the Personal Advisors to ensure pathway plans are completed in a timely manner to meet targets with a focus going forward on the improvement of the quality of plans, the involvement of young people and ensuring we capture their wishes and feelings.

What do we want to improve?

Number of young people with a pathway plan

The number of young people with a pathway plan has increased which is in part due to the better recording of plans on Liquid Logic. Work is currently ongoing within the service and it is expected that the measure will improve further. We continue to work with the Personal Advisors to ensure pathway plans are completed in a timely manner to meet targets with a focus going forward on the improvement of the quality of plans, the involvement of young people and ensuring we capture their wishes and feelings. We are currently undertaking work to analyse the decline in young people placed in suitable accommodation.

2. **Information required to take a decision**
Not applicable

3. **Implications for the Council**

3.1 **Working with People**
Not applicable

3.2 **Working with Partners**
Not applicable

3.3 **Place Based Working**
Not applicable

3.4 **Improving Outcomes for Children**

Oversight and monitoring of children in care performance to continue at future Corporate Parenting Board to monitor progress, as requested by the Chair.

- 3.5 **Reducing demand of services**
Not applicable
- 3.6 **Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**
Not applicable
4. **Consultees and their opinions**
Not applicable
5. **Next steps**
Managers to lead the focus on areas of performance with staff, in areas where outcome data is not what we expect it to be.
6. **Officer recommendations and reasons**
That the report and key highlights on performance within Children in Care Services be noted.
7. **Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**
Not applicable
8. **Contact officer**

Julie Bragg 01484 221000
julie.bragg@kirklees.gov.uk

Janet Tolley, 01484 221000
janet.tolley@kirklees.gov.uk
9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**
Monthly performance information is used to inform the narrative for this report
10. **Service Director responsible**

Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director (Learning and Early Support)

Elaine McShane, Service Director (Family Support and Child Protection)

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 18 December 2019
Title of report: Children in Care Services Performance Highlights
 (Fostering and Children’s Homes)

Purpose of report

This report outlines key performance highlights for children in care and care leavers up to October 31st 2019, for the board to consider and comment upon.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the Council’s Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not applicable – for information
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Tom Brailsford for Mel Meggs (6.12.19)
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	Not applicable
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	Not applicable
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr V Kendrick (Children)

Electoral wards affected: None

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Have you considered GDPR? Yes GDPR considered no service users identified

1. Summary

Fostering Service

What difference did we make?

A review of the Fostering Service operating model has begun to ensure we are focussing our resources in the correct way, and that our existing carers are receiving good support. It was also highlighted more positively that at the time of the 2016 inspection 66% of children were cared for in family settings at this inspection this had risen to 75%, due to increases in connected persons and other fostering, and a reduction in residential use.

Recruitment and retention of foster carers is a priority as is reducing use fostering agency care. The Service Manager is focussing on these challenges as two separate matters, improving our offer for existing carers and a focus on recruitment, we currently have eighteen prospective households at stage 1 and 2 of the recruitment pathway. We continue to develop the Recruitment Team to increase numbers of Kirklees carers and will have focussed campaigns for respite care that can be a softer introduction to fostering, and teenagers exhibiting troubled and troublesome behaviours. A recruitment and retention focus for our foster carers is a key strand of our improvement work and the Service Manager is working closely with the Recruitment Team to ensure that the numbers of assessments increase and that they are completed in a timely fashion. Capacity has been realigned to improve timelines for applications to foster Form F assessments. All foster carer resignations are scrutinised by the service manager and panel, and expression of interest in fostering that does not progress is peer challenged within the fostering team

What do we want to improve?

The Challenges re carer recruitment are a national issue. Latest figures from the National Fostering Network show that 8,500 more fostering households are needed across the UK. The carer supply and demand activity has led to supply constraints, with less choice of carer availability across the UK, we experience this at a local level.

Fostering Placements Profile October 2019

Internal Fostering 225

Connected Person Fostering 95

Independent Agency Fostering 173

Funded Staying Put 19

There is a specific piece of work taking place with the Fostering Team and Children in Care Social Work Team, tracking long term family finding challenges and focussing on long term family finding for a number of children in short term fostering placements.

The Service Manager is working closely with the Kirklees Fostering Network to continue to develop our fostering service and ensure that carers are supported appropriately. A foster carer is now attending the Corporate Parenting Board.

A regular meeting is now in place to review calls to the foster carer helpline and we meet with the foster carers who operate the helpline. We have launched a new package of carer benefits including access to the employee health scheme, and access to the staff discounted shopping scheme.

Our bid to the Department for Education to fund the “Mockingbird” model of fostering, was not successful however we now have some internal funding available. We will be consulting with Kirklees Fostering Network, and other stakeholders to discuss how we can develop our Kirklees model, and work with the National Fostering Implementation team, who hold responsibility for monitoring the application and “fidelity” of the licensed model. A Service Manager with commissioning background is now line managing the Placement Finding Team, the Placement Support Team is now line managed within Children in Care social work. A new Reviewing Officer post is in place for foster carers, ensuring challenge and scrutiny is appropriate and carers feel supported by the service, this is the first time our carers have had the benefit of independent review rather than fostering manager peer reviews.

A Carer Training analysis and refresh is to take place. All Private Fostering assessments now take place within the fostering service. It was highlighted during the Ofsted inspection that recording latency was causing an issue in the Fostering Service, and that the service needs to make better use of data.

Childrens Homes

The Councils five Ofsted Registered Childrens Homes have all been inspected unannounced by Ofsted in the 18/19 financial year, for their main annual inspection four are graded as Good and one Outstanding. The homes will all be re inspected unannounced in this financial year, and reports will be published in due course this information will then be put on the agenda for a future Corporate Parenting Board.

2. **Information required to take a decision**
Not applicable
3. **Implications for the Council**
 - 3.1 **Working with People**
Not applicable
 - 3.2 **Working with Partners**
Not applicable
 - 3.3 **Place Based Working**
Not applicable
 - 3.4 **Improving Outcomes for Children**

Oversight and monitoring of children in care performance to continue at future Corporate Parenting Board to monitor progress, as requested by the Chair.
 - 3.5 **Reducing demand of services**
Not applicable
 - 3.6 **Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**
Not applicable
4. **Consultees and their opinions**
Not applicable
5. **Next steps**
Managers to lead the focus on areas of performance with staff, in areas where outcome data is not what we expect it to be.
6. **Officer recommendations and reasons**
That the report and key highlights on performance within Children in Care Services be noted.
7. **Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**
Not applicable
8. **Contact officer**
Steve Comb, 01484 221000
steve.comb@kirklees.gov.uk
9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**
Monthly performance information is used to inform the narrative for this report
10. **Service Director responsible**

Tom Brailsford, Service Director (Resources Improvement Partnerships)

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 18th December 2019
Title of report: Number and Age of Children in Care

Purpose of report

To provide information to Corporate Parenting Board on a regular basis relating to the number and profile of children in our care. Including information related to the number placed outside of the District.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	NA
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	NA
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	NA
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Elaine McShane for Mel Meggs (3.12.19)
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	NA
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	NA
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr V Kendrick Childrens Portfolio

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

(Have you considered GDPR?)

Yes GDPR has been considered. The information in this report does not identify any individuals.

1. Summary

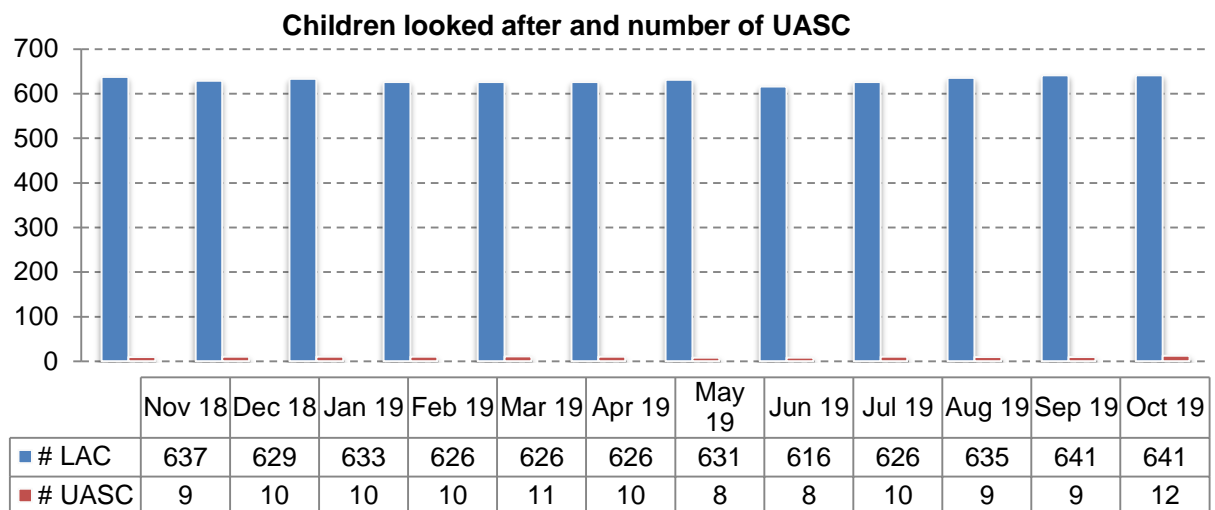
This graph shows the number of children in care 641 (excluding any looked after children receiving only S20 short term breaks) alongside the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC).

The current number of LAC equates to a rate per 10,000 population aged 0-17 of 64.0. This compares to a statistical neighbour average of 86.1 and a national average of 64.0 based on published data for March 2018.

Kirklees (Oct 19) = 64.0

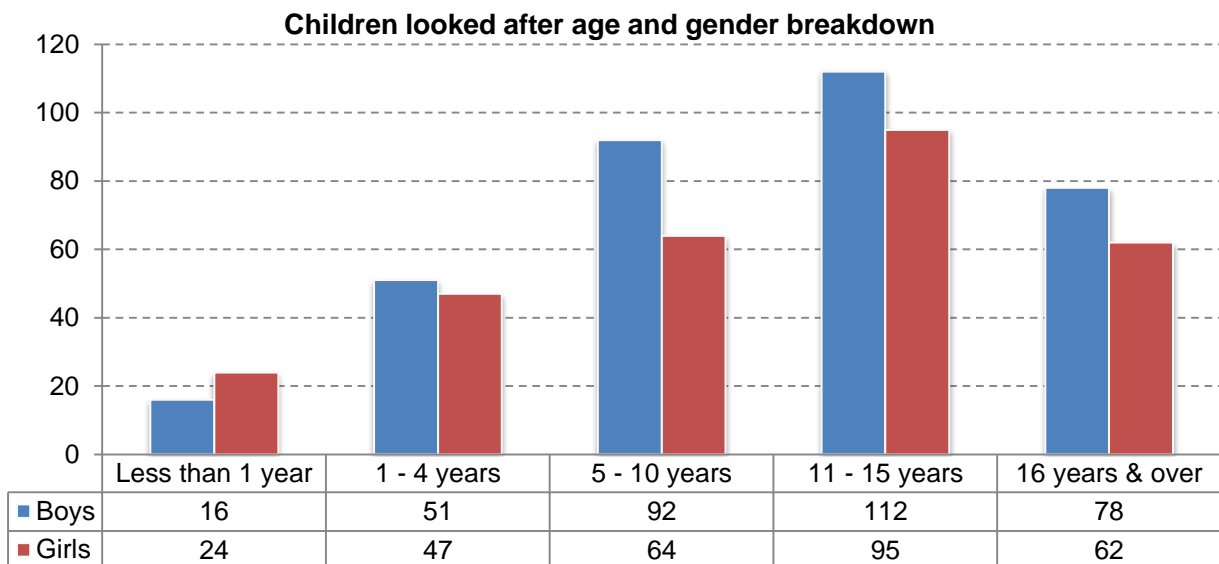
Statistical Neighbours (2018) = 86.1

England (2018) = 64.0



This graph shows the breakdown by age and gender of the children in care.

The largest age group for boys is 11 - 15 years with 112 children and the largest age group for girls is 11 - 15 years with 95 children.

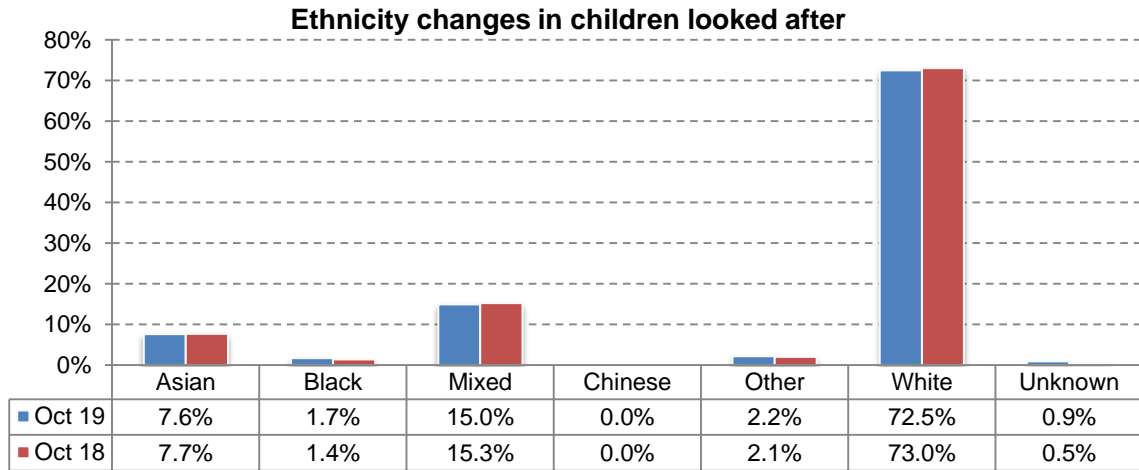


Statistical Neighbours

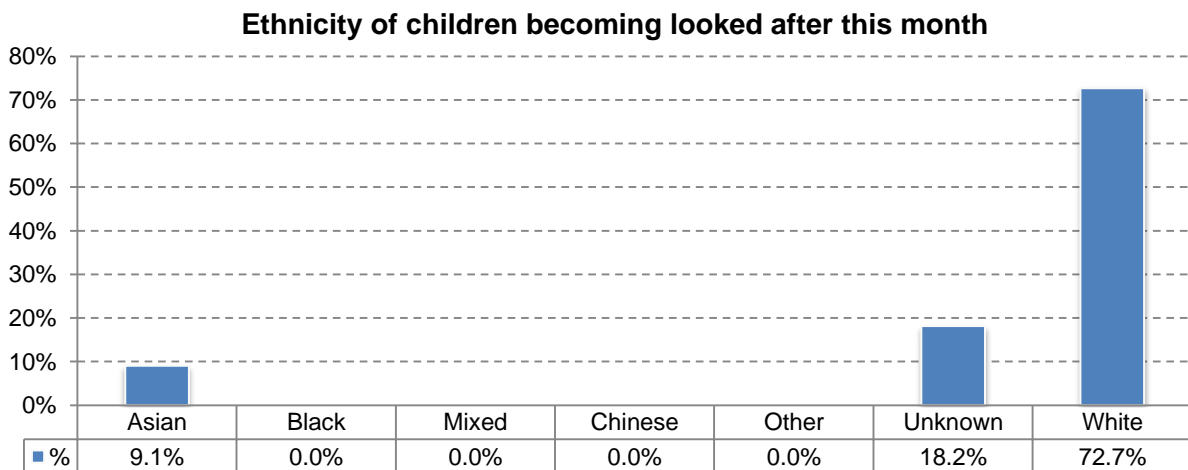
Local Authorities that the Department for Education regard as similar and close socio economically to Kirklees, not measured by population size.

Local Authorities "Very Close"* to Kirklees (* Source LAIT)
Kirklees Council
Rochdale Borough Council
Bolton Council
Calderdale Council
Bury Borough Council
Dudley MBC
Derby City
Lancashire Council
Stockton-on Tees Borough Council
Leeds City Council
Telford & Wrekin Council

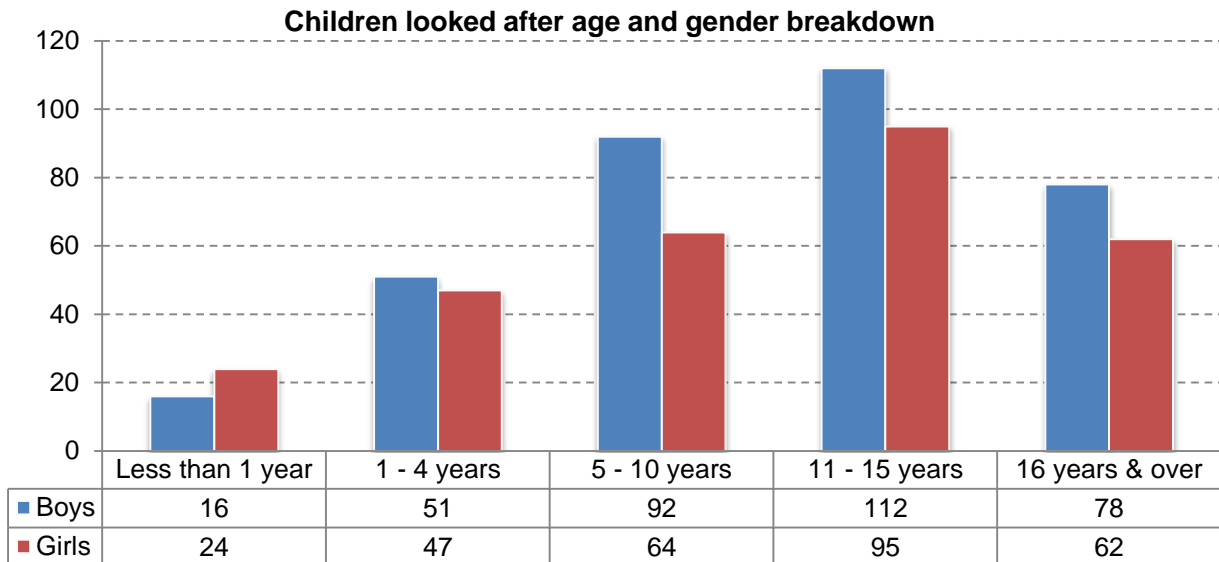
This graph shows the ethnic breakdown of the children looked after population at the end of October 2019 and the same point 12 months ago. This has been relatively stable throughout the period.



This graph shows the percentage breakdown by ethnicity of children entering care this month. Note that this outcome is based on small numbers. In October 2019 there were 11 young people who were recorded as entering care at the point of data extraction in the month of whom 8 were White, 1 was of Asian ethnicity and 2 did not yet have an ethnicity recorded.



This graph shows the breakdown by age and gender of the children in care. The largest age group for boys is 11 - 15 years with 112 (116) children and the largest age group for girls is 11 - 15 years with 95 (96) children.



Children and Young People placed more than 20 miles outside of Kirklees

The number of looked after children placed outside Kirklees District 20 plus miles from their home address was 81 on 31st October 2019. This follows a continuum of decline from a number of 127 in 2017, and a reduction of 20 over the last six months. The majority of our children and young people placed out of area are placed in foster care, the remainder are placed in children's homes, semi-independent homes, a small number in youth custody or other specialist settings.

Current Number of Children and Young People placed more than 20 miles is 81 this equates to 12.6% of cohort, recent historical position is detailed below

	31 Mar 2019		30 Apr 2019		31 May 2019		30 Jun 2019		30 Sept 2019	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Placed outside Kirklees & over 20 miles from home address	105	16.8%	101	16.1%	103	16.3%	89	14.4%	78	12.2%

Semi Independent Accommodation aged 16 plus

On 30th September there were forty three young people currently accommodated in semi-independent accommodation, thirty within District and thirteen of our young people are placed outside of the Kirklees District details below.

Placements outside of Kirklees in semi-independent living accommodation (not subject to Children's Home regulations)			
As at 30/09/2019			
LA of Placement	Aged 16	Aged 17	Total
Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council		1	1
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council	1	3	4
Devon County Council		1	1
Leeds City Council		7	7
Total	1	12	13
Legal Status	Aged 16	Aged 17	Total
Full Care Order	1	8	9
S20 CA 1989 - Single Placement		4	4
Total	1	12	13

2. **Information required to take a decision**

No decision is required, this report is submitted at the request of children's scrutiny to monitor the number of children in care.

3. **Implications for the Council**

3.1 **Working with People** Not applicable

3.2 **Working with Partners** Not applicable

3.3 **Place Based Working** Not applicable

3.4 **Improving Outcomes for Children**

This information is provided at the request of Corporate Parenting Board to monitor the number of children in care their age and location of placements.

3.5 **Reducing demand of services**

Not applicable

4. **Consultees and their opinions**

Not applicable

5. **Next steps**

A similar report will be presented at a future Corporate Parenting Board.

6. **Officer recommendations and reasons**

That the report be noted.

7. **Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**

Not applicable

8. **Contact officer**

Julie Bragg Corporate Parenting

9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Previous reports to the Corporate Parenting Board on number and age of children in care.

10. **Service Director responsible**

Elaine McShane, Service Director (Child Protection and Family Support)

This page is intentionally left blank

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 18th December 2019
Title of report: Siblings in Care

Purpose of report: To give an overview of siblings in care and whether they are placed together.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Not Applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)</u>?	Key Decision – No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not Applicable
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Elaine McShane for Mel Meggs (6th December 2019)
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	N/A
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	N/A
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Kendrick

Electoral wards affected: N/A

Ward councillors consulted: N/A

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes.

1. **Summary**

The Corporate Parenting Board have asked for an overview of the numbers of siblings in care.

2. **Information required to take a decision**

There are currently 58 groups of siblings in care who are subject to a Full Care Orders, 38 groups of siblings are currently placed together in the same placement and 20 groups of siblings are placed in separate placements. The number of siblings range from 2 – 5, there are currently 35 groups of 2 siblings, 19 groups of 3 siblings, 2 groups of 4 siblings and 2 groups of 5 siblings. The children and young people are currently placed in a range of placements which include fostering, residential and supported accommodation.

When a decision is made and approved for a sibling group to come into the care of the local authority and where appropriate there is a placement search for the children to be placed together. In some situations this might not be the best option and this is dependent on the assessments of the individual needs of the children and young people.

In some situations when concerns are raised with regards to sibling relationships the allocated social worker will undertake a sibling assessment to determine whether it is in the sibling's best interests for them to remain living together.

If the assessments identify that it is not possible for siblings to remain together then contact arrangements are made taking into account a number of factors which include the individual care needs of each child, relationships and their age, type of contact including activities dependant on age to build positive family connections balanced against ensuring that each child continues to have a stable placement. The arrangements are reviewed at their looked after children reviews to ensure that positive sibling relationships are maintained into adulthood.

3. **Implications for the Council**

3.1 **Working with People**

Not applicable

3.2 **Working with Partners**

Not applicable

3.3 **Place Based Working**

Not applicable

3.4 **Improving outcomes for children.**

To ensure that children and young people are able to maintain relationship with their birth siblings.

3.5 **Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**

Not applicable

4. **Consultees and their opinions**

Not applicable.

5. **Next steps and timelines**

Not applicable.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

That the report be noted.

7. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

Not applicable

8. Contact officer

Julie Bragg, Head of Service (Children in Care and Care Leavers)

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

None

10. Service Director responsible

Elaine McShane, Service Director (Family Support and Child Protection)

This page is intentionally left blank

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 18th December 2019
Title of report: Voice of the Child update

Purpose of report: To provide the Corporate Parenting Board with an update in respect of the Voice of the Child Plan.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Not Applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	Not Applicable
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not Applicable
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Tom Brailsford for Mel Meggs (11.12.19)
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	Not applicable
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	Not applicable
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Viv Kendrick Children's

Electoral wards affected: None

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Summary

This report provides an update of the Voice of the Child Plan. The Voice of the Child Plan was developed through a the Voice of the Child Task and Finish Group with a key objective: To ensure that all children and young people are involved in the decisions that affect them; their participation is essential to improve services and respond to their needs, and the shared aim of their participation should be change; and to actively promote young people's participation in co-production and contributing to service development.

2. Information required to take a decision

No decision is required.

2. Implications for the Council

- **Working with People**
Not applicable
- **Working with Partners**
Not applicable
- **Place Based Working**
Not applicable

- **Improving outcomes for children**

The Voice of the Child Plan outlined expectations in relation to how we will engage with children and young people to elicit their views and ascertainable wishes and feelings. The key principles of the plan was to ensure the views of children and young people influence the care and services they receive and service development. The plan was to support improved outcomes for children, young people and their families by improving professional practice and the quality of service delivery.

The Voice of the Child Task & Finish Group was established in June 2018 and comprised representatives from teams and services across Kirklees Council. The objectives for the group were:

- To ensure that the Voice of the Child was promoted and on the agenda for each service within children's Services.
- To ensure that all children and young people are involved in the decisions that affect them; their participation is essential to improve services and respond to their needs, and the shared aim of their participation should be change; and to actively promote young people's participation in co-production and contributing to service development.

The group was responsible for developing the Voice of the Child Plan, oversight of the delivery and responsibility for quality assurance of each area within the plan, with the overall aim of working towards developing a culture within the workforce which supported, promoted and valued the participation of children, young people and their families. Below is a summary of the work the plan has achieved to date:

- Children's Services have a history of involving children, young people and their families in the recruitment of foster carers and professionals within the authority. Further work with HR to review involving young people in the wider recruitment of all staff has been undertaken, resulting in a finalised recruitment procedure. This is due to be considered by the Workforce strategy group for agreement and introduction.
- In order to ensure that elected members effectively champion the views of children, young people and their families *Total Respect* training was delivered by young people from the Children in Care Council in October 2019 to elected members, to support their understanding of the issues which affect children and young people who are Looked After and help them represent and promote the views of children and young people.
- A Youth Participation Vision task and finish group has been established with partners, to help develop a shared vision which will provide a common understanding of youth participation and why youth participation is a vital part of everyday practice. The group will focus on the identification and development of engagement resources, sharing of good practice and aims to become an effect conduit for two way dialogue with children and young people. The work of the group also includes the development of a Children and Young People's Participation Strategy.
- In order to ensure Learning and Development pathways promote the voice of a child, there have been changes made to the training provided to the Children's Social Care workforce. There is now an increased frequency of the delivery of the *Engaging the Mind of the Child* and the content has been developed to support practitioners to effectively engage with teenagers. Learning and development pathways for Social Workers have also been updated to ensure that, *Engaging the Mind of the Child* and *Total Respect* training is mandatory for all new starters. In addition to this, a training programme in relation to child development and attachment has been developed and is now available for the Children's Services workforce. In consultation with the Kirklees Safeguarding Partnership, this training is also available for partner agencies.
- The Children's Social Care Duty and Advice team have a '*Child's Voice guide*' and are utilising this when having contact conversations.
- A protocol has been drafted to ensure that concerns or queries raised by Looked After children and young people via the Children's Right's Team are considered and responded to in a timely manner. This protocol is at the consultation stage.
- The Children's Rights Team and the Child Protection and Review Unit have consulted with representatives from IT, to consider the development an app or alternative platform to enable Looked After children and young people to share their views on an on-going basis. How this could be achieved is currently being considered.
- There is a pilot working group consisting of Social Workers, Early Support workers and Child Protection Conference Chairs who are considering how best to obtain feedback/children's views regarding their experiences. The Early Support service

have committed to organising a Voice and Influence working group, and the Family Group Conference Team have collated feedback from Children and Young People which has demonstrated the impact of their service provision, the team intend to present their findings to other service areas.

- Children's Social Care audits have included contacting a small number of children and young people to obtain their views and experiences to inform the overall audit findings. However, the method used did not achieve meaningful participation, this is an area of development which will be considered within a new Children's Service's Quality Assurance Framework, due for consultation early in the New Year.
- Annual Fostering reviews now include input and feedback from children and young people to inform the review.
- **Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**
Not applicable

3. Consultees and their opinions

Not applicable

4. Next steps and timelines

The Voice of the Child Task and Finish group has concluded and the stand alone Voice of the Child Plan has ended. The objective of the plan has been achieved in that capturing and strengthening the voice of the child is now a central aim for services when working with children. For Children's Social work, monitoring will continue via the Children's Social Work Improvement plan, to ensure that the Voice of the Child is an integral element of service delivery. Development work is being undertaken with the wider Children's Services, teams, with two Young People's Voice and Influence workers helping to embed and oversee the work, working in partnership with service areas and teams.

5. Officer recommendations and reasons

That the report be received and noted by the Corporate Parenting Board as per Section 13 of The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.

6. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

Not applicable

7. Contact officer

Anna Gledhill, Social Work Practice Lead

Anna.gledhill@kirklees.gov.uk

8. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Not applicable

9. Service Director responsible

Tom Brailsford, Service Director, Resources, Improvement, and Partnerships.

This page is intentionally left blank

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 18th December 2019
Title of report: Supported Lodgings Scheme

Purpose of report

To inform the Corporate Parenting Board of Kirklees Council supported lodgings scheme.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	NA
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	NA
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	NA
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Tom Brailsford for Mel Meggs (6.12.19)
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	NA
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	NA
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr V Kendrick Childrens Portfolio

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

(Have you considered GDPR?)

Yes GDPR has been considered. The information in this report does not identify any individuals.

1. **Summary**

This report is provided for information after a request by the Corporate Parenting Board, to better understand what supported lodgings provide. Kirklees Council has a duty to offer a supported lodgings scheme for our Children in Care. This report outlines the scheme and how it functions.

2. **Information required to take a decision**

No decision is required, this report is submitted at the request of the Corporate Parenting Board for information.

3. **Implications for the Council**

3.1 **Working with People** Not applicable

3.2 **Working with Partners** Not applicable

3.3 **Place Based Working** Not applicable

3.4 **Improving Outcomes for Children**

We provide supported lodgings provision post 16 to twelve of our young people placed.

The aim of the scheme is to offer young people the opportunity to live in the home of an approved person who will help them prepare for independent living. This will be a safe and supported environment where a young person can develop the practical skills, confidence and emotional maturity to move on and cope with living independently.

Most of the young people placed in supported lodgings will have been living in care, some may have been at risk of homelessness. They will all be 16 or older and encouraged to be engaged in, or actively seeking education, training or employment.

Supported lodgings providers offer opportunities for young people to develop the life skills and confidence needed to move onto independent living. They provide a spare room and some meals for each young person, but also support and assistance - to make a difference.

Kirklees Council recruit people who live in Kirklees, who have a spare room in their home, a positive attitude towards young people and a commitment to helping a young person become more independent. They must have suitable accommodation and the skills and abilities to offer both emotional and practical support.

We encourage families, couples or single people to apply, they can work full time, part time or be in receipt of benefits. The most important thing is that they like being around teenagers and have an understanding of some of the issues they may face, as well as the time and flexibility to offer advice and support.

Most young people who need supported lodgings placements have been through some difficult and challenging times and may have some specific support needs. Providers will be required to work closely with various professionals to provide for the needs of young people.

The kind of help we would expect to be provided includes:

Some meals - this should reduce in frequency as the young person becomes increasingly more independent and prepares meals for themselves

Support to gain the practical skills e.g. shopping, cooking, budgeting etc. that young people will need to achieve successful independent living

Support and guidance regarding money management and budgeting to enable the young person to pay their bills, live within their means and access any benefits they may be entitled to. Advice and support to achieve and maintain a reasonable level of personal and household hygiene.

Advice and guidance to maintain positive health and wellbeing which may involve supporting the young person to register with a GP, dentist and/or to attend medical appointments

Our supported lodgings carers are provided with allowances, training and support they receive a supported lodgings rate of £218.29 per week, made up of:

£100 per week skills payment one per household.

£118.29 per week maintenance allowance in respect of each young person

When there is no young person in placement, but the provider remains available to take placement, the skills element will continue to be paid.

3.5 Reducing demand of services

Not applicable

3.6 Other (e.g. Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

Not applicable

4. Consultees and their opinions

NA

5. Next steps

N/A

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

That the report be noted.

7. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

Not applicable

8. Contact officer

Andy Quinlan, Service Manager

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

N/A.

10. Service Director responsible

Tom Brailsford, Service Director (Resources, Improvement and Partnerships)

This page is intentionally left blank

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 18th December 2019
Title of report: Briefing Staying Put Fostering for Children in Care

Purpose of report

To Inform the Corporate Parenting Board of Kirklees Council Staying Put Scheme, for Young People in Care.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	NA
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	NA
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	NA
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Tom Brailsford for Mel Meggs (6.12.19)
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	NA
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	NA
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr V Kendrick Childrens Portfolio

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

(Have you considered GDPR?)

Yes GDPR has been considered. The information in this report does not identify any individuals.

1. Summary

Providing long term placements in family settings is a key objective of the fostering service. The Care Matters initiative, the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and the Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers 2010 (Regulations and Guidance) require each local authority to have a “Staying Put” Policy. The policy sets out arrangements whereby the authority will promote the opportunity for a young person to remain in a former fostering arrangement beyond a young person’s 18th birthday. This arrangement promotes stability in preparation for independent living and adult life. The policy builds on the Children Act, 1989 Guidance and the initiatives explored by the Government’s Department for Education Pilot Schemes. It sets out the conditions required to extend a former fostering arrangement beyond a Young Person’s 18th birthday, and outlines the associated financial implications, the social care requirements associated with extending former fostering arrangements guidance on where to get further detailed advice on consequential Income Tax, National Insurance and Welfare Benefit issues.

The Kirklees “Staying Put” Policy was developed to address the requirements of the Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011 and related Guidance and the National Minimum Standards (NMS) for Fostering Services (2011). Staying Put is applicable to young people looked after by Kirklees Council if they are living with foster carers on their 18th birthday, whether that be Kirklees carers, Connected Person’s Carers or Independent Fostering Agency Carers (IFA). Young people who are in residential placements are not covered by the “Staying Put” Policy, however we do consider “Staying Close” in terms of semi-independent accommodation being within reasonable distance of the residential home, when leaving care.

The aim is to promote the development of independence skills in looked after young people from an early age. Moving on from foster care should be a planned process and young people need to be prepared and supported as appropriate according to need. In all circumstances plans and preparation for moving on should be set out in the young person’s Pathway Plan.

A proposed end date for a Staying Put Arrangement should always be negotiated with the young person, their Personal Advisor and the carer and be part of the Pathway Plan. When the arrangement is made, timescales will be considered along with details of what needs to happen to achieve the move within those timescales. There will be circumstances where the young person is not ready to move on within the initial agreed timescale and any requested extensions should be discussed with all parties. In accordance with Fostering Regulations, the Fostering Allowance will cease when the young person reaches 18 years and will be replaced by Staying Put Allowances (during any transitional period this will be equivalent to Fostering Allowances.) Initially this payment will be the equivalent of the Skills Payments and Continuous Service element of the Fostering Allowance and will be maintained for a transitional period.

Following a young person’s eighteenth birthday, the legal basis on which he or she occupies the property changes and they become an ‘excluded licensee’ who is affectively lodging in the “Staying Put” carer’s home. Whilst the term ‘excluded licensee’ is a legal one, it should not denote that the young person will be treated differently than they were as a fostered child. The young person will need a DBS check before their 18th Birthday if there are other foster children in the household or plans to place other children in the placement. The change from being a fostered young person to adult member of the household, and for the carer from foster carer to “Staying Put” carer, should be carefully planned in order to ensure that both young people and the carers understand the nature of the arrangement and that the positive aspects of being in foster care are not diminished by the new legal and financial arrangements and terminology.

To qualify for a Kirklees “Staying Put” Placement which has to be with the agreement of the Foster Carer, the young person will usually have been living with the foster carers for more than 12 months prior to their 18th birthday and still be living with them on their 18th birthday. The young person will be deemed on their 18th Birthday to be a Former Relevant Young Person under the terms of the Children Act, 1989. If a young person is undertaking a full time further education course or training course which began before their 18th birthday a “Staying Put” placement may be agreed with the young person and their former foster carer to enable young people to complete education or training and make the gradual transition to independent living.

Young People may be able to remain with their former foster carer due to issues of exceptional vulnerability for an agreed period of up to one year after their 18th birthday. Where a young person may meet the criteria for Adult Services, a referral could be made to the Transitions Team when the young person is aged 16. If the young person meets the threshold for Adult Services, the option of the former foster carers becoming a “Shared Lives” carer will be explored and if agreed, Adult Services will take over the arrangements. If a young person is awaiting allocation of a tenancy or actively bidding for a tenancy, subject to approval, they may be able to stay with their former foster carer beyond their 18th birthday if the foster carer is in agreement with this arrangement payments will be made of £218.29 per week, made up of: £100 per week skills payment one per household, and £118.29 allowance.

The allowances paid are the equivalent of a supportive board and lodgings payment paid to “Staying Put” carers where the young person continues in the same arrangement following the 30th of Sept after their 18th Birthday. The fee covers all costs in relation to all rent, support, utilities, insurance, food and meals. The young person will contribute to the food and meals “board” element of the costs. The “Staying Put” carer will not be expected to give the young person a clothing allowance, pocket money, holiday allowance or birthday and festival allowances. The young person will always make a contribution to the agreed maximum weekly allowance for their “board” which will be a minimum of £20 per week dependent on their allowances, grants, bursaries, benefits or income. Where a young person reaches the age of eighteen and fostered children also remain in placement, all aspects of the legislation relating to fostering continue to apply and govern the regulation of the household. The major change being that the previously fostered child (from age 18) becomes a “Staying Put” young person and an adult member of the household.

2. Information required to take a decision

No decision is required, this report is submitted for information at the request of the Board.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 **Working with People**
Not applicable

3.2 **Working with Partners**

Not applicable

3.3 Place Based Working

Not applicable

3.4 Improving Outcomes for Children

This information is provided at the request of Corporate Parenting Board to provide information relating to the scheme that Kirklees Council has in place that allows young people to remain in the care of their foster carer post 18.

3.5 Reducing demand of services

Not applicable

3.6 Other (e.g. Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

Not applicable

4. Consultees and their opinions

N/A

5. Next steps

N/A

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

That the report be noted.

7. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

Not applicable

8. Contact officer

Andy Quinlan, Service Manager Fostering

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

N/A.

10. Service Director responsible

Tom Brailsford, Service Director (Resources, Improvement and Partnerships)

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2019/20

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact	Notes
<p align="center">19th June 2019</p> <p>Pre-meeting 9.30 am – 10.00 am Public Meeting 10.00 am – 12 noon Old Court Room, HTH</p> <p align="center">Deadline for reports 7th June 2019</p> <p>Apols: B Lockwood, O Rix</p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Educational attainment and progress – LAC outcomes data 2018 SFR analysis</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>One Adoption WY Annual Report (may be deferred)</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>Summary of educational outcomes for 2018</p> <p>OFSTED and Improvement Board Update (verbal)</p> <p>Overview of number of children in Care (snapshot) including age profile</p> <p>Statement of Purpose for Fostering Service (Annual)</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>Areas for Board Members to Champion and Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2019/20</p>	<p align="center">J Tolley</p> <p align="center">S Comb/J Tolley</p> <p align="center">S Johal (One Adoption)</p> <p align="center">S Comb/J Tolley</p> <p align="center">J Tolley</p> <p align="center">S Comb/J Bragg</p> <p align="center">J Bragg</p> <p align="center">A Quinlan</p> <p align="center">Board members</p> <p align="center">Board Members H Kilroy</p>	
<p align="center">10th September 2019</p> <p>Pre-meeting 9.30 am – 10.00 am Public Meeting 10.00 am – 12 noon</p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p>	<p align="center">S Comb/J Tolley</p>	

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2019/20

<p>Reception Room, HTH</p> <p>Deadline for reports 30th August 2019</p>	<p>Membership of the Board – to verbally propose a change to add Anna Gledhill, Social Work Practice Lead (Family Support and Child Protection)</p> <p>Animation by adopted teenagers (8 mins video)</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>OFSTED and Improvement Board Update (verbal)</p> <p>Overview of number of children in Care (snapshot) including age profile</p> <p>Annual report on the health of looked after children</p> <p>Annual report on Youth Offending Team relating to their work with children in care and comparative data for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19</p> <p>Annual Report on Private Fostering</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2019/20</p>	<p>H Kilroy</p> <p>Suzanne Whiteley (One Adoption)</p> <p>S Comb/J Tolley</p> <p>S Comb</p> <p>J Bragg</p> <p>G Addy</p> <p>R Smith</p> <p>A Quinlan</p> <p>Board Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p>	<p>1st main item on agenda</p> <p>(RS to send a rep to Board as on leave)</p>
<p>24th October 2019</p> <p>Pre-meeting 9.30 am – 10.00 am</p> <p>Public Meeting 10.00 am – 12 noon</p> <p>Mtg Room 1, HTH</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p>Head Teachers Report on educational outcomes of looked after children</p>	<p>S Comb/J Tolley</p> <p>J Tolley</p>	<p>Report received – awaiting Jo’s sign off</p>

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2019/20

<p>Deadline for reports 14th October 2019</p> <p>Apologies: E McShane</p>	<p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Attendance by Rachel Spencer-Henshall on role of Corporate Parent (verbal update)</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>OFSTED and Improvement Board Update (verbal)</p> <p>Annual report on Review of Foster Carer Handbook</p> <p>Annual report on Children’s Rights and Independent Visitors Scheme (1st April 18 to 31 March 19) to include a 6 monthly update (Apr 19 to Sept 19)</p> <p>Overview of number of children in Care (snapshot) including age profile</p> <p>Number of young people in Kirklees aged 16-17 in semi/independent accommodation (inc outside District)</p> <p>Annual report on Complaints and Compliments for Children in Care</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2019/20</p>	<p>R Spencer-Henshall</p> <p>S Comb/J Tolley</p> <p>S Comb</p> <p>A Quinlan</p> <p>M Tiernan/A Gledhill</p> <p>J Bragg</p> <p>S Comb</p> <p>Y Mughal</p> <p>Board Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p>	<p>1ST ON AGENDA (20 mins)</p>
---	--	---	---

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2019/20

<p>18th December 2019</p> <p>Pre-meeting 9.30 am – 10.00 am Public Meeting 10.00 am – 12 noon Mtg Room 1, HTH</p> <p>Deadline for reports 6th December 2019</p> <p>Apols: Cllr K Allison, G Addy, K Fielding, C Bennett, M Tiernan to leave at 11.30 am, S Comb</p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>One Adoption Agency 6 monthly Report (April to Sept)</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report – CIC and Fostering/Children’s Homes</p> <p>OFSTED and Improvement Board Update (verbal)</p> <p>Overview of number and age of children in Care</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>The success of placing sibling groups in placements within Kirklees</p> <p>Update on Voice of the Child Development Plan</p> <p>‘Staying Put’ Scheme</p> <p>Supported lodgings</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2019/20</p>	<p>J Tolley/J Bragg/S Comb</p> <p>Suzanne Whiteley (One Adoption)</p> <p>J Bragg/S Comb/J Tolley</p> <p>S Comb/J Bragg</p> <p>J Bragg</p> <p>Board Members</p> <p>J Bragg</p> <p>A Gledhill</p> <p>Andy Quinlan</p> <p>Andy Quinlan</p> <p>Helen Kilroy</p>	
<p>10th February 2020</p> <p>Pre-meeting 9.30 am – 10.00 am Public Meeting 10.00 am – 12 noon</p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p>	<p>S Comb/J Tolley</p>	

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2019/20

<p>Mtg Room 1, HTH</p> <p>Deadline for reports 30th January 2020</p> <p>Apols: B Lockwood</p>	<p>Attendance by Karl Battersby on role of Corporate Parent (verbal update)</p> <p>Attendance by Richard Parry on role of Corporate Parent (verbal update)</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report (to include a breakdown of persistent absentees by foster carers, Connected and Kinship Carer placements)</p> <p>OFSTED and Improvement Board Update (verbal)</p> <p>Overview of number of children in Care (snapshot) including age profile</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2019/20</p>	<p>K Battersby</p> <p>R Parry</p> <p>S Comb/J Tolley</p> <p>S Comb/J Bragg</p> <p>J Bragg</p> <p>Board Members</p> <p>H Kilroy</p>	
<p>4th March 2020</p> <p>Pre-meeting 9.30 am – 10.00 am Public Meeting 10.00 am – 12 noon Mtg Room 1, HTH</p> <p>Deadline for reports 19th February 2020</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Items:</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>OFSTED and Improvement Board Update (verbal)</p> <p>Overview of number and age of children in Care</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p>	<p>S Comb/J Tolley</p> <p>S Comb/J Tolley</p> <p>S Comb/J Bragg</p> <p>J Bragg</p> <p>Board Members</p>	

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2019/20

	Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2019/20	H Kilroy	
<p align="center">9th April 2020</p> <p>Pre-meeting 9.30 am – 10.00 am Public Meeting 10.00 am – 12 noon Mtg Room 3, HTH</p> <p>Deadline for reports 30th March 2020</p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Educational attainment and progress – LAC outcomes data and SFR analysis</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>NO QUESTION TIME (pre-election period)</p> <p>Review of Membership and Terms of Reference of the Board (prior to Council AGM)</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>OFSTED and Improvement Board Update (verbal)</p> <p>Statement of Purpose for Registered Children’s Homes (Annual)</p> <p>Statement of Purpose for Fostering Service (Annual)</p> <p>Overview of number and age of children in Care</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board work programme and Agenda Plan for 2020/21</p>	<p align="center">J Tolley</p> <p align="center">S Comb/J Tolley/J Bragg</p> <p align="center">H Kilroy</p> <p align="center">S Comb/J Tolley/J Bragg</p> <p align="center">S Comb/J Bragg</p> <p align="center">L Counce</p> <p align="center">A Quinlan</p> <p align="center">J Bragg</p> <p align="center">H Kilroy</p>	

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2019/20

Standard reports (as on Agenda Plan)

Future reports (dates yet to be agreed):

- Future shape of service and relationship with partners (E McShane/S Comb) – date tbc
- Action Plan on the Fostering and Placement services in Kirklees (A Quinlan) – date tbc
- Early Help and edge of care (M Meggs/J Saunders) – date tbc
- Update on pilot to mentor and provide role modelling for young people in placements and children’s homes around school attendance (J Tolley) – date tbc
- Kirklees Fostering Network (achievements, current priorities and future aspirations)
- Progress updates from the Residential Managers of the Children’s Homes on the improvements and actions being taken following Ofsted reports (L Counce/C Morgan)
- Children’s Homes – plans for the future (J Bragg)
- Commitment to Care Leavers (J Bragg)
- Grandparents Plus to attend future meeting of Board (date to be confirmed)
- Impact of the Staying Put Scheme on Foster Carers (A Quinlan) – date to be confirmed
- Educational Employment and Training and what was being done with local businesses (Julie Bragg) – date to be confirmed
- Sufficiency of foster placements living outside the area to include subset data showing the residual number of children on placement living outside the area (Steve Comb) – to be confirmed
- Number of secondary school and placement moves for looked after children, and an update on action being taken to reduce number of moves that take place (J Bragg/J Tolley) – to be confirmed
- Consideration of the web version of the Foster Carer Handbook (prior to go live date) (CPB 24.10.19) (A Quinlan)
- Saturday Job Scheme’ for looked after children (CPB 24.10.19) (RSH)
- Outcome of the pilot scheme on the job scheme for care leavers (CPB 24.10.19) (RSH)

Annual reports:-

- 6 monthly report on Children’s Rights (Oct to March) (M Tiernan/A Gledhill) – June 2020 (same month every year)
- 6 monthly report on Independent Visitors Scheme (Oct to March) (M Tiernan/A Gledhill) – June 2020 (same month every year)
- Annual Report on Children’s Rights and Independent Visitors Scheme (April 19 to March 20) – (M Tiernan/A Gledhill) – June 2020 (same month every year)
- Private Fostering Annual Report (A Quinlan) – Sept 2019 (same month every year)
- Annual report on Complaints and Compliments for Children in Care (Y Mughal) – October 2019 (same month every year)

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2019/20

- Annual report on children who go missing from care (Lead Officer tbc) – date tbc
- Annual report on the work of the leaving care service (J Bragg) – date tbc
- Annual report on children and young people placed outside the Kirklees boundary (S Comb) – date tbc
- Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report (S Comb) – date tbc
- Annual Health Report (G Addy) – September 2019 (same month every year)
- Annual Report on Private Fostering (A Quinlan) – September 2019 (same month every year)
- Annual review of the Foster Caring Handbook (A Quinlan) – July 2020

Quarterly reports:

- Fostering Agency Report (April to June) (A Quinlan) – date to be confirmed
- Fostering Agency Report (July to Sept) (A Quinlan) – date to be confirmed
- Fostering Agency Report (Oct to Dec) (A Quinlan) – date to be confirmed
- Fostering Agency Report (Jan to March) (A Quinlan) – date to be confirmed