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

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Thursday 15 August 2019

Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

Children's Scrutiny Panel

The **Children's Scrutiny Panel** will meet in the **Reception Room - Town Hall, Huddersfield** at **10.30 am** on **Friday 23 August 2019**.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view via the Council's website.

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 Children's Scrutiny Panel members are:-

Member

Councillor Andrew Marchington

(Chair)

Councillor Aafaq Butt

Councillor Paul Davies

Councillor Amanda Pinnock

Councillor Richard Smith

Councillor Paul White

Toni Bromley (Co-Optee)

Dale O'Neill (Co-Optee)

Linda Summers (Co-Optee)

Agenda

Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

Pages

1: Membership of the Committee

This is where Councillors who are attending as substitutes will say for whom they are attending.

2: Minutes of the Previous Meeting

1 - 6

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2019.

3: Interests

7 - 8

The Councillors 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 interests.

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: Number of Children in Care

9 - 14

The Panel will consider the latest data showing the number of children in care.

Contact Officer: Steve Comb, Head of Corporate Parenting.

6: Update on Exploitation Strategy and next steps 15 - 22

The Panel will consider an update report on the Exploitation Strategy, outlining next steps.

Contact Officer: Charlotte Jackson, Head of Service (Children's)
Ophelia Rix, Principal Social Worker

7: Ofsted Report 23 - 36

The Panel will consider the latest report from Ofsted on the findings of the Inspection of the Children's Social Care Services undertaken from 10th June to 21st June 2019.

Contact Officer: Elaine McShane, Service Director (Children and Families)
Steve Comb, Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency)

8: Children's Scrutiny Panel Work Programme and agenda plan for 2019/20 37 - 48

Members of the panel will consider the work programme and agenda plan for the 2019/20 and will consider issues for inclusion.

Contact Officer: Helen Kilroy, Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer.

Contact Officer: Helen Kilroy

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY PANEL

Friday 19th July 2019

Present: Councillor Andrew Marchington (Chair)
Councillor Paul Davies
Councillor Amanda Pinnock
Councillor Richard Smith
Councillor Paul White

Co-optees Toni Bromley
Dale O'Neill
Linda Summers

In attendance: Steve Comb
Elaine McShane
Jo-Anne Sanders
Harkireet Sohel

Observers: Councillor Viv Kendrick

1 Membership of the Committee

No apologies for absence were received.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on the 1st April 2019 be agreed.

3 Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

All items were considered in public session.

5 Public Question Time

No questions from the public were received.

6 Number of Children in Care

The Panel considered the latest data showing the number of children in care presented by Steve Comb, Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency).

Steve Comb highlighted the following key facts:-

- there had been a reduction in the number of children living outside the District from May to June 2019;

Children's Scrutiny Panel - 19 July 2019

- in the last 2 years, Kirklees had also seen a reduction in the number of children living more than 20 miles outside the District;
- some placements outside the District came to a natural end, either due to the fact the young person had left care due to their age or because it was not appropriate to bring them back to Kirklees due to their personal circumstances;
- sometimes children did not want to return to Kirklees as they had settled in another local authority area.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding the position in terms of foster carers and recruitment, Steve Comb advised that progress was starting to be made in this area in Kirklees. Steve Comb advised the Panel that 75% of children in care in Kirklees were in foster care, which was a higher proportion than the Council's statistical neighbours and national average.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding semi-independent homes, Steve Comb advised that this was for children aged between 17 and 18 and was designed to help the young person to learn to live independently. The Panel was informed that the semi-independent homes were monitored by Kirklees rather than Ofsted and Kirklees would manage the contractual arrangements and service provision from those providers.

Elaine McShane advised the Panel that no young people were placed outside of the district without her agreement, which the Panel agreed was reassuring.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding whether special guardians were reducing the number of foster carers, Steve Comb advised the Panel that as a Local Authority if a connected person or mainstream foster carer had a conversation to say a child did not need to be looked after, they could at that point discuss the option of special guardianship. Steve Comb explained that Kirklees did provide financial assistance for special guardians in Kirklees and that there were currently about 300 children in special guardianship arrangements.

In response to a query from the Panel regarding the figures for gender breakdown, Steve Comb agreed to check the accuracy of the figures and report back to the next meeting of the Panel.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding care and support arrangements for children in youth custody, Steve Comb advised that children in custody were treated as a looked after child and would get support and be monitored by the Youth Offending Team (YOT). The Panel was advised that some young people received significant sentences and the YOT Team would keep in constant contact and be involved with that young person whilst they were in custody.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding educational outcomes for looked after children, Jo-Anne Sanders advised the Panel that the Virtual School Head Teacher reported on this matter to the Corporate Parenting Board and that they also considered an Annual report from the Head Teacher. The Panel agreed to consider educational outcomes for looked after children as part of the work programme for 2019/20.

RESOLVED -

- (1) The Panel noted the report on the Number of Children in Care showing the latest data and thanked Steve Comb and Elaine McShane for their contributions.
- (2) That the figures for data for children looked after age and gender breakdown be checked for accuracy and an update be provided at the next meeting of the Panel.
- (3) That the Panel consider educational outcomes and stability for looked after children as part of the work programme for 2019/20.

7 The Educational Landscape in Kirklees

The Panel considered a report providing an overview of the educational landscape in summer 2019 with a focus on attendance, exclusion and an update on the Kirklees Learning Strategy presented by Harkireet Sohel, Head of Service (Outcomes for Children).

Harkireet Sohel highlighted the following key facts:-

- the 2018/19 outcomes report had highlighted that whilst there were strengths in areas such as Key Stage 4 attainment, Key Stage 1 writing and an improving picture in phonics, reading and writing, Kirklees lagged behind the national averages in too many indicators;
- the Kirklees Education and Learning Partnership Board had been instrumental in shaping the development of the strategy;
- 6 out of 8 attainment figures, Kirklees ranked in the bottom quartile (D) with rankings at 120 on average out of 152;
- a closer analysis of the recent Ofsted reports had highlighted the inconsistent performance of school leaders and governors. Harkireet Sohel advised the Panel that recruitment and retention within schools was an issue and formed part of the Strategy which would address what strong leadership would look like;
- since 2013/14 the number of exclusions nationally had been on the rise and an analysis of the situation in Kirklees would be shared with the Panel in the future.

Harkireet Sohel advised that Secondary Head Teachers had come together and formed a view that exclusions were too high and working groups had been set up to look at the current system and practice. The Panel was informed that Head Teacher sub groups would complete the working group task to refine the process for exclusions, establish best practice and suggest an agreed definition of 'persistent disruptive behaviour' for the next Head Teacher's Forum in September 2019. The Panel agreed to consider a future report on the findings of this work.

Harkireet Sohel advised the Panel that the Council was looking at alternative provision and how effective it was, why it was needed and if it was meeting the

Children's Scrutiny Panel - 19 July 2019

needs of children in Kirklees. The Board noted that Kirklees used 4 main providers who engaged with the school system in supporting complex students.

Harkireet Sohel advised the Panel that the Learning Service were looking at schools whose students were performing well in mathematics and would be sharing good practice.

The Panel expressed concerns regarding exclusions for disadvantaged learners and that all children had different needs and accepted that some learners needed more support, however, felt that a line had to be drawn with regard to the level of disruption and impact caused by some pupils to other learners in the classrooms. The Panel wanted to understand what the current practice was within Kirklees and the mechanisms for dealing with exclusions and how better outcomes could be achieved. The Panel agreed to consider a future report which analysed data on attendance and exclusions to assure the Panel that progress on reducing exclusions was significant and best practice was being shared.

Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director for Learning and Early Support, advised the Panel that a new Ofsted Inspection Framework would be coming into place in September 2019 and would include a different approach around governance and leadership. The Panel acknowledged that once embedded, it would be useful to know how the new Ofsted Framework for Education was working for schools and learners in Kirklees.

RESOLVED -

- (1) The Panel noted the report on the educational landscape in Kirklees and thanked Harkireet Sohel and Jo-Anne Sanders for their contributions.
- (2) That Officers plan visits to settings and meetings with senior leaders within schools, so that the work around reducing exclusions is communicated clearly.
- (3) That the Panel consider a future report which analyses data on attendance and exclusions to assure the Panel that progress on reducing exclusions was robust.

8 Children's Scrutiny Panel Work Programme and agenda plan for 2019/20

The Panel considered the work programme and agenda plan for the 2019/20 and will consider issues for inclusion.

The Panel noted that the Ad-Hoc Panel on Elective Home Education would meet shortly to finalise its findings and bring a final report back to the Panel.

The Panel agreed to visit schools and talk to children and staff about the Learning Support Strategy and hear their feedback and perspective.

The Panel noted that there had been an increased level of referrals of primary aged children to the mental health services. The Lead Member, Councillor Marchington, agreed to keep a watching brief on the CAMHS Transformation Plan.

Children's Scrutiny Panel - 19 July 2019

The Panel agreed to a programme of visits by the Panel and that the Panel's work programme be updated accordingly.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the 2019/20 Agenda Plan for the Children's Scrutiny Panel be noted and updated as agreed.
- (2) That the Governance Officer be authorised to liaise with officers on agreed actions.

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KIRKLEES COUNCIL			
COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETC			
DECLARATION OF INTERESTS			
Childrens Scrutiny Panel			
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.

Name of meeting: Childrens Young Peoples Scrutiny
Date: 23 August 2019
Title of report: Number and Age of Children in Care

Purpose of report

To provide information to Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny 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?	N/A
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	N/A
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	N/A
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Elaine McShane (Steve Comb on behalf of Elaine McShane))
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 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

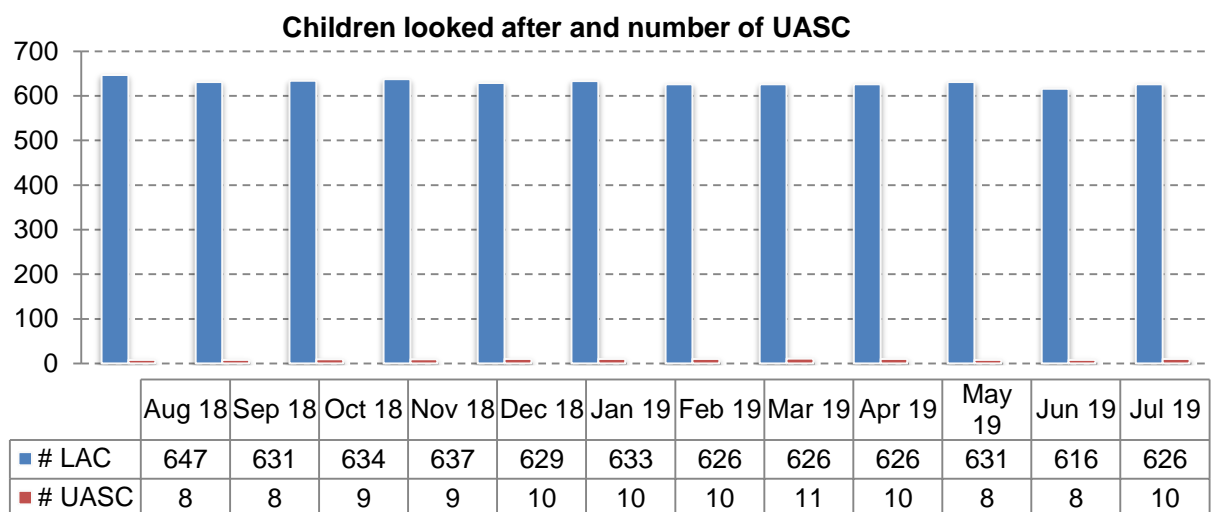
This graph shows the number of looked after children (excluding any looked after children receiving only S20 short term breaks) alongside the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). The graph illustrates an increase of 10 children in care between June and July 2019, the month of June was a low point over the previous twelve months average. The overall trend is one of decline a reduction of 21 children in care between August 2018 and July 2019.

The current number of children in care equates to a rate per 10,000 population aged 0-17 of **62.7** (61.7). 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 (Jul 19) = 62.7

Statistical Neighbours (2018) = 86.1

England (2018) = 64.0

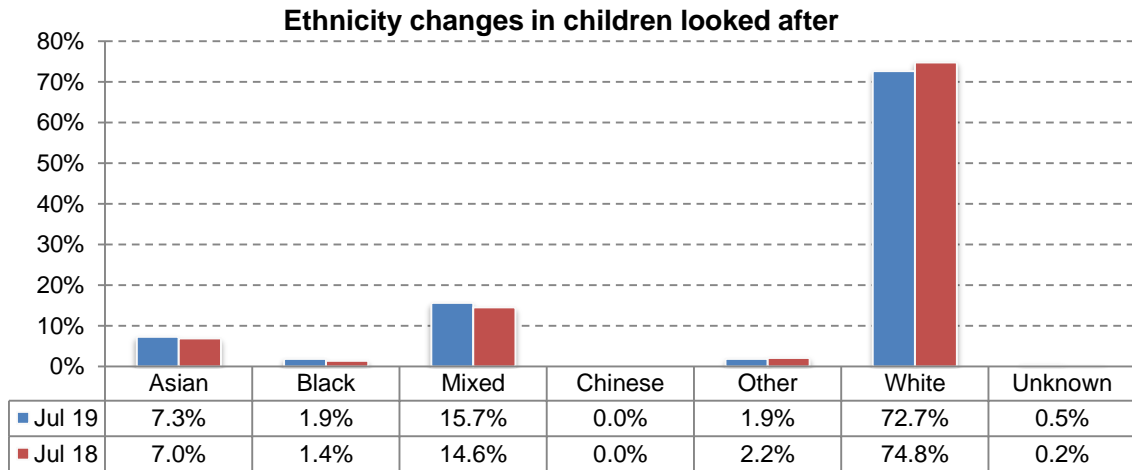


Statistical Neighbours

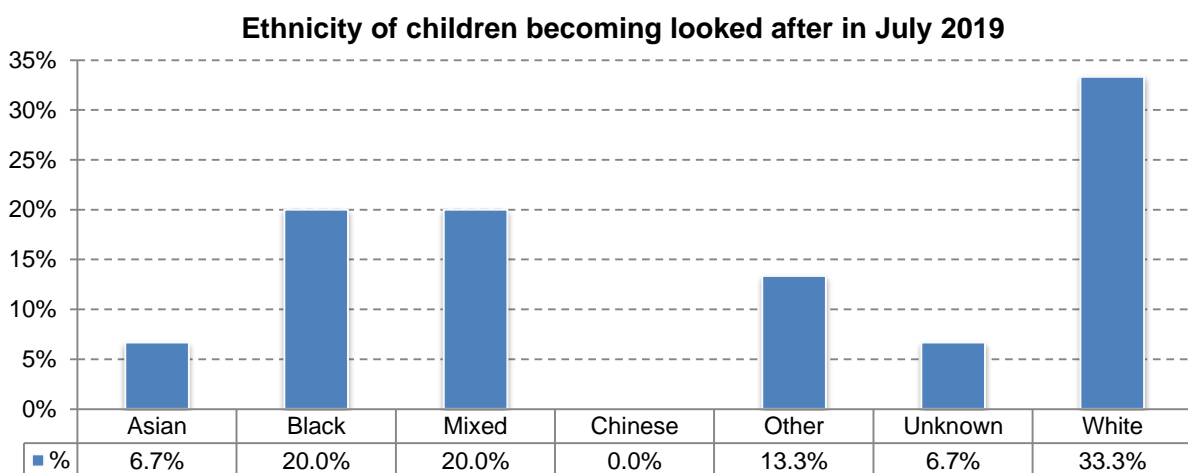
Local Authorities that the Department for Education regard as similar and close socio economically to Kirklees, not measured by population size.

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

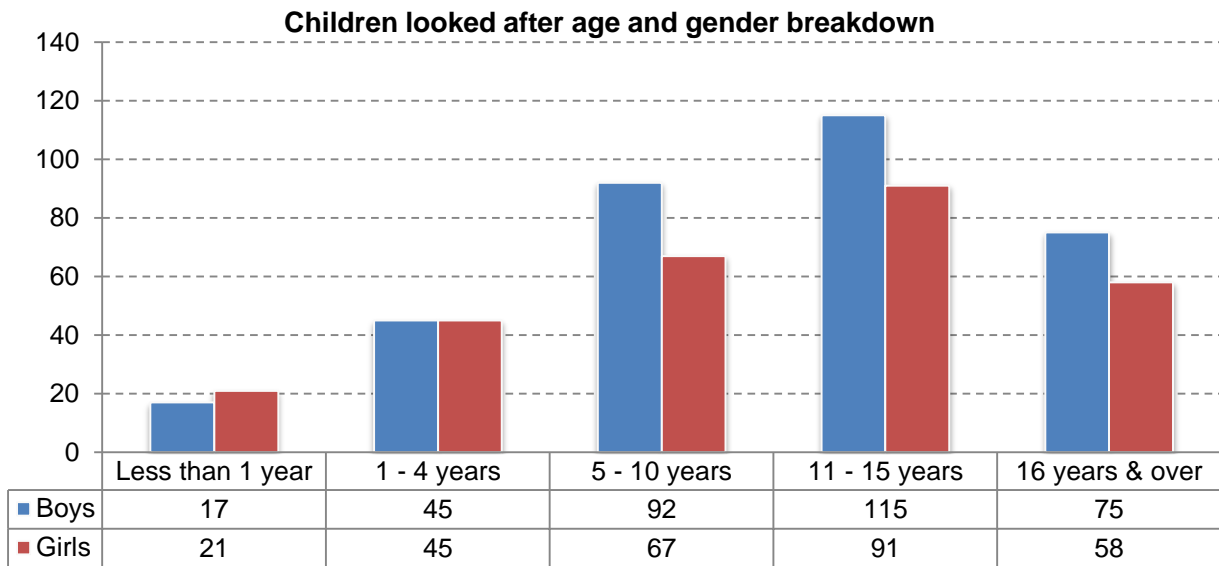
This graph shows the ethnic breakdown of the children looked after population at the end of July 2019 and the same point 12 months ago. This has been relatively stable throughout the period.



This graph shows the percentage breakdown by ethnicity of children entering care in July 2019. Note that this outcome is based on small numbers. In July 2019 there were 15 young people who were recorded as entering care in the month of whom 5 were White, 3 were Black, 3 were of Mixed ethnicity, 1 was Asian, 3 were of other ethnicities and 1 did not yet have an ethnicity recorded.



This graph shows the breakdown by age and gender of children in care July 2019, the largest age group for boys is 11 - 15 years with **115** (110) children and the largest age group for girls is 11 - 15 years with **91** (94) children.



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

The number of looked after children placed outside Kirklees 20+ miles from their home address is 89 on 1st July 2019. This follows a continuum of decline from a number of 127 in 2017, and a reduction of 18 over the last six months. The majority of our children and young people placed out of area, sixty two 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.

30 Nov 2019		31 Dec 2018		31 Jan 2019		28 Feb 2019		31 Mar 2019		30 Apr 2019		31 May 2019		30 Jun 2019	
Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
103	16.2%	106	16.9%	107	16.9%	104	16.6%	105	16.8%	101	16.1%	103	16.3%	89	14.4%

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
 - 3.6 **Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)** 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 Head of Corporate Parenting (Children in Care and Care Leavers)
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)



Name of meeting: Children's Scrutiny Panel

Date: Friday 23rd August 2019

Title of report: Update on Exploitation Strategy and Next Steps

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the work that has been undertaken in response to improving the quality of practice and to prevent children being at risk and vulnerable to harm and abuse from Exploitation and or from going missing from home or 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?	Yes/ no or “ not applicable” No If yes give the reason why .
Key Decision - Is it in the Council’s Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	Yes/ no or “not applicable” <i>Not applicable</i> If yes also give date it was registered
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes/ no or “ not applicable” Not applicable If no give the reason why not
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?	12/08/19 Mel Meggs Strategic Director For Children’s Services N/A N/A
Cabinet member portfolio	N/A

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: All

Public or private: Public

1. Summary

- 1.1 The report updates members on the progress made regarding the arrangements that have been put in place to safeguard some of the most vulnerable children and young people living in Kirklees.
- 1.2 The world of Safeguarding is becoming increasingly complex. As our knowledge and understanding of the complexities of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) has developed, it is recognised that CSE cannot be seen or responded to in isolation. CSE is often closely linked to peer on peer violence and abuse, modern day slavery, harmful sexual behaviour, gang and group activity, criminal exploitation, and going missing from home or care, creating a set of harmful circumstances and experiences for children, young people, families and communities.
- 1.3 Working Together 2018 reflects the required changes of traditional child safeguarding practice and provides an overview of the need for professionals, agencies and partnerships to adopt a more contextual safeguarding approach.

“As well as threats to the welfare of children from within their families, children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online”.

- 1.4 The Contextual Safeguarding approach developed at the University of Bedfordshire has been adopted by Kirklees Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (KSCP) Exploitation Strategic and Operational groups to develop and inform practice. A Contextual Safeguarding approach provides a framework to advance child protection and safeguarding responses to extra-familial risks that children and young people may encounter. The approach provides an understanding of, and response to, children and young people’s experiences of significant harm beyond their families, including the spaces they frequent, the influence of peers and young people’s safety in their relationships and environments.
- 1.5 Contextual Safeguarding takes account of the impact of public and social contexts on children’s and young people’s lives, the interplay between these different contexts and relationships, and how they can impact on their safety. It recognises that the different relationships that children form with their peers and adults in their communities, schools and online can feature violence and abuse, and that parents and carers may have little influence over these contexts, with the ‘weight of influence’ often being outside of the family. Whilst, experiences of extra-familial abuse can weaken parent/carer-child relationships.
- 1.6 Locally, there have been a number of significant non recent investigations into the criminal and sexual exploitation of children, particularly young girls. In addition we have seen an increase in the affiliation of our children and young people to Urban Street Gangs and as a consequence, involvement in Organised Crime and criminal exploitation, particularly with regards to movement and supply of controlled drugs.
- 1.7 By widening the operational response to child sexual exploitation, children are viewed and responded to in the context of their lived reality and not simply in the context of the presenting risk, vulnerability or harm. In order to do this effectively the strategic

approach to developing practice is committed to children and young people being seen, heard and supported:

- **Seen:** in the context of their lives at home, friendship circles, health, education and public spaces (including social media).
- **Heard:** to effectively protect children and young people, professionals need to take time to hear what children are saying, put themselves in the child or young person's shoes and think about what their life might truly be like.
- **Supported:** by remaining professionally curious and by implementing effective and imaginative solutions that help children and young people.

1.8 Risk and vulnerability of children and young people is now better understood through the lens of Contextual Safeguarding and this approach is outlined in the KSCP Exploitation Strategy 2019 -2021 which is underpinned by the KSCP Exploitation Operational Action Plan. Both documents focus on a 4 P's model of Prevent, Prepare, Protect, and Pursue; outlining the strategic aims to develop multi-agency responses to enhance early identification, and support for children and young people, families and communities, protection of children and young people, early identification of locations of concern where exploitation and abuse is perpetrated, and the disruption, diversion and prosecution of individuals or groups who seek to facilitate and or exploit, abuse and harm children and young people.

1.9 **Prevent:** to prevent children, young people and vulnerable adults experiencing or continuing to experience, exploitation, harm and abuse by ensuring effective awareness-raising and preventative work is in place across the locality, staff benefit from quality learning and development opportunities and that there is an effective response to information and intelligence, that identifies individuals, groups or locations of concern, and highlights patterns or trends.

Prepare: to develop a comprehensive and accurate intelligence picture which will inform local partnership understanding of context, and locations of concern to enable swift coordinated multi-agency responses to safeguard children and prevent, divert or prosecute those who seek to facilitate and /or perpetrate exploitation, abuse and harm.

Protect: to develop effective child centred practice and service provision, to protect children, young people, vulnerable adults, families and communities, and ensure positive outcomes for all, whilst empowering individuals to build resilient communities.

Pursue: use information intelligently to assess and intervene with contexts and groups, to safeguard children and young people and prosecute those who seek to facilitate and /or perpetrate exploitation, abuse and harm; ensuring that a holistic, person centred approach, from intervention, to where necessary prosecution, is adopted and employed.

2. Background

2.1 In Kirklees, a wide range of agencies work in partnership to reduce and respond to Child Exploitation. This has been the case for several years and Child Exploitation remains a priority for Kirklees Council as well as the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Partnership. There is clear leadership and strategic overview of services.

- 2.2 A review of services and the response to Child Sexual Exploitation was undertaken by the Leeds Improvement Partnership and partner agencies in December 2017. The review highlighted child sexual exploitation was strongly linked other factors that place children and young people at significant risk such as, missing from home or care, peer sexual violence, criminal exploitation, and child trafficking. To help effectively respond to the complexities of Child Exploitation the Risk and Vulnerability Team was established to provide, and allow for the advancement of identification, and multi-agency practice. The Risk and Vulnerability Team is working in partnership with key partners in the identification, prevention, disruption and prosecution of child exploitation.
- 2.3 The team is building better links with the local communities and organisations. Together, they are supporting the most vulnerable young people who are at risk from CSE, Missing and Child Criminal Exploitation. This has strengthened partnership working with the police and community safety and has increased the understanding of other services in Kirklees that work with children and young people at risk of, or who are experiencing exploitation. The work of the team is supported by a revised Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) pathway, process and response, which is overseen by a Senior Manager in Children's Social Care. MACE meetings are held monthly to provide multi-agency oversight of Child Exploitation cases and ensure appropriate service response. Alongside the MACE process a Single Point of Contact for all partnership Child Exploitation concerns and referrals is under development.
- 2.4 The new systems and processes are assisting to improve the quality of data held in relation to Child Exploitation. This is supporting improved responses and monitoring whilst helping to identifying trends and inform strategic planning.
- 2.5 The Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care services June 2019 noted that;
- There is... effective collaboration to address the growing emergence of gang-related activity and child exploitation.*
- The work of the multi-agency risk and vulnerability team is starting to embed, and the response to exploitation is better coordinated. There has been demonstrable success in diverting young people away from crime, including working with those involved in gangs and knife crime. The response to child sexual exploitation is well coordinated to mitigate risk. As a result, the circumstances of many of these children are improving*
- 2.6 The development of the Risk and Vulnerability team has been successful in that it has catered for effective multi-agency response to Child Exploitation whilst also recognising the need to respond strategically and in line with legislation and statutory guidance.
- 2.7 To further assist the development of practice, KSCP commissioned a review of the current partnership practice and response to child sexual exploitation. This was undertaken by the National Working Group CSE Response Unit (<https://www.nwqnetwork.org/>) in February /March 2019, the review identified key areas of focus going forward, including;
- Reviewing the current training offer; whilst the review noted that there is a comprehensive training offer in Kirklees which offers multi-agency training including sessions on trauma-informed practice and an understanding of wider

forms of exploitation, it was noted that this could be enhanced by providing training to front line staff who complete CSE risk assessments to provide them with the relevant knowledge and support that they need.

- Reviewing the impact of the training delivered to staff regarding consent and referrals.
- Supporting the Contextual Safeguarding approach with a 'Trauma Informed' approach to exploitation.
- Building upon the work with children and young people identified as at low risk of exploitation, and a transition process to adult services, strengthening the response to online exploitation and abuse, and youth engagement and the engagement of families and communities, to ensure that their voices are at the heart of safeguarding practice.

2.8 Areas highlighted by the National working Group review have been progressed. A revised exploitation Risk assessment has been introduced and the KSCP has Contextual Safeguarding Learning and Development opportunities available for practitioners to attend in 2019/20.

2.9 For many children young people and survivors who are traumatised, the behaviours they display, which can be viewed as challenging, are behaviours / ways they have adopted to try and protect themselves. To effectively work with traumatised young people and survivors of child sexual abuse in a trauma informed way, requires a commitment to relationship-based practice, to enable young people and survivors, to recognise how their past experiences can influence how they relate to people, relationships and situations in the present day. Trauma Informed practice also requires the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making, individuals' strengths are recognised, built on, within an individualised approach. Trauma Informed practice therefore needs to provide spaces and relationships where children, young people and survivors can explore their understanding. Developing service responses based on the needs of young people and survivors as identified by them, including peer mentoring and support is crucial to the approach. The approach strengthens the Councils commitment to Restorative Practice

2.10 Children's Social care (CSC) has established a working group, to work with survivors of child sexual exploitation and voluntary sector organisations, to provide a Trauma informed service response, inclusive of group work, and opportunities for peer mentoring. This work is progressing and it is intended that a service response will be in place in 2019. CSC are also currently exploring funding opportunities to enable Trauma Informed practice to be embedded with all children at risk of, vulnerable to exploitation.

2.11 Recognising that the harm and abuse associated with exploitation does not stop when a child approaches adulthood, Children's Social Care in partnership with Adult Social Care and the Adults Safeguarding Board are developing a clear transition pathway and service offer for young people at risk /vulnerable to exploitation, and those who have experienced exploitation, who are approaching their 18th birthday. The aim is to provide a seamless service for young people and adults up to their 25th birthday. Partners from children's services and adult services will work together to consider the needs of young adults and any transitional issues, recognising how childhood trauma can impact on adult behaviours, presentation, and decision making.

3 Implications for the Council

3.1 Not applicable

4. **Consultees and their opinions**

Not applicable

5. **Next steps**

5.1 To introduce a Trauma informed service response, for survivors of child sexual exploitation.

5.2 To develop a clear transition pathway and service offer for young people at risk and vulnerable to exploitation, and those who have experienced exploitation who are approaching their 18th birthday.

5.3 To strengthen the Risk and Vulnerability Team response within the context of a Youth Practice Model, to include:

- Ensuring that robust multi-agency needs led risk management plans are in place that give full consideration to a child's vulnerability and need factors and help practice improve to include a coordinated, effectively actioned strengths-based approach, and where relevant compliment statutory child protection processes.
- Strengthening the response to all children who go missing from home and care, to ensure that all children receive high quality, robust return interviews; maximise opportunities to better understand push and pull trends; manage risk; impact positively on disruption activity and identify themes to inform strategic planning.
- Supporting the wider partnership to continue to develop 'profiles' relating to individuals and or groups who exploit and abuse, to enable the partnership to utilise these to effectively target resources and interventions and help safeguard children.
- Working with partners in the Early Support Service to ensure an effective pathway and escalation process for children assessed as at 'low risk' of exploitation.
- Within the MACE process, work with partners to proactively respond to information and intelligence shared to effectively safeguard children and young people and successful divert, apprehend and prosecute these who seek to exploit.
- Working with partners to strengthen the response to children who are both a victim and perpetrator of exploitation, harm and abuse and ensure those children receive child centred responses, assessments and interventions.
- Coordinating clear pathways to centrally collate feedback received from children and families; to ensure that reality of children's experiences inform and enhance strategic knowledge.

5.4 The focus of the KSCP Annual Conference in November 2019 is Exploitation and Violence. This will provide an opportunity for practitioners across the partnership to build upon their knowledge and understanding when responding to Child Exploitation.

5.5 To further support the development of practice, the theme for the Children's Social Care Celebrating Social Work Conference in September 2019 is "Understanding Risk", this will aid to strengthen Contextual Safeguarding practice across the wider Children's Social work workforce.

5.6 Kirklees Council, with partners, is key to driving forward the improvement, innovation and practice development in relation to our response to children and young people at

risk of, vulnerable to exploitation and those who have or are experiencing harm and abuse through exploitation. To ensure that we deliver on the agreed priorities for improving multi-agency working and effectively safeguard children and young people from exploitation requires continued commitment and support from elected members, and the wider community.

6. **Officer recommendations and reasons**

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

8. **Contact officer**

Ophelia Rix

ophelia.rix@kirklees.gov.uk

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

9.1 Not applicable

10. **Service Director responsible**

Elaine McShane

Service Director

Family Support and Child Protection

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Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council

Inspection of children's social care services

Inspection dates: 10 June 2019 to 21 June 2019

Lead inspector: Lisa Summers
Her Majesty's Inspector

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Requires improvement to be good
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement to be good

Since the last Ofsted inspection in September 2016, when the local authority was judged inadequate overall, strong and resilient senior leadership has underpinned the improvement in practice from a considerably low base. The pace of change was initially slow, impeded by a lack of stable and effective senior management. In June 2017, a formal arrangement was implemented by the Department for Education (DfE), with Leeds City Council taking responsibility for overseeing improvement. Since March 2018, there has been steady progress in strengthening the foundations for sustainable service improvement. As a result, there are no widespread or serious failures that leave children at risk of harm.

Progress has been achieved through increased corporate commitment and investment in services, clear and focused leadership, strengthening of partnerships, for example the duty and advice team, and improved workforce stability and engagement. Children who need help and protection are now recognised, and risk of significant harm is quickly responded to.

Children have their needs met by social workers who know their children well, and through better-coordinated multi-agency planning. Early permanence for children in care is well considered and progressed. There is strong practice in relation to the quality of direct work with children and young people, particularly for those leaving care, and effective collaboration to address the growing emergence of gang-related activity and child exploitation.

However, the local authority is not delivering good help, protection and care for all children, young people and families. Caseloads for some social workers in the assessment and intervention teams are challenging to manage when they are on duty, and this impacts on quality in some cases. This means that not all children receive help at the earliest opportunity. There are still delays in achieving permanence for some children. This includes children with a plan for long-term fostering and those placed with parents on care orders. Management oversight, challenge and supervision are not sufficiently robust. Mechanisms for monitoring permanence have been strengthened, but these improvements are too recent to have had an impact. The quality of return home interviews for children who go missing from home and care is not consistently robust. Senior managers were not aware of the deterioration in services for children who are privately fostered and those at risk from professionals where allegations have been made. As a result of the findings of this inspection, senior managers took action to consider and amend processes for these children. Disabled children are not receiving a service of sufficient and consistent quality. Before this inspection, senior managers identified these concerns, and moved the management of the service to children's social care. The newly revised quality assurance and performance framework is still developing, and does not fully support senior managers' understanding of children's experiences and the quality of social work practice across the service.

What needs to improve

- The quality of recording, assessments and child protection investigations so that children receive help at the earliest opportunity.
- The quality of written child in need, child protection and care plans, so that they are timebound, with clear and meaningful contingency plans.
- The response to disabled children, children in private fostering arrangements, and children at risk from professionals where allegations have been made.
- The response to children who go missing from home and care, so that all children are offered return home interviews that are of good quality, in order to better understand why children go missing and to inform care planning and strategic priorities.
- The timely permanence for children with plans for long-term fostering and children placed with parents.

- The completion of life-story work for children in care.
- Care leavers' understanding of their health histories.
- The quality of foster carer reviews.
- Management oversight across the service through improved performance and quality assurance.
- Regular supervision of social workers that is reflective, directive and, alongside the work of independent reviewing officers (IROs), challenges poorer practice.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection requires improvement to be good

1. There has been steady and continuous progress to improve the initial response to children in need of help and protection since the last Ofsted inspection in 2016. The multi-agency duty and advice team has been strengthened, and children now receive a timely and appropriate initial response when they are referred for a children's social care service. Screening of contacts is effective and is informed by the child's history and appropriate information from partner agencies. Children's voices are routinely considered and sought through discussions with referrers and other professionals known to the child. Consent is consistently secured or appropriately dispensed with where there are risks of significant harm.
2. Kirklees' early help strategy has recently been refreshed, but is not fully embedded. There are examples of good and impactful work with families through community hubs, and appropriate signposting to services. However, the local authority is not evaluating the impact of early help provision, limiting its understanding of what is effective and why. The new multi-systemic therapy service provides edge-of-care provision. The service is still in its infancy and it is too soon to evaluate its effectiveness.
3. When significant harm is identified, the majority of children benefit from swift, well-coordinated strategy meetings. Key partners do not always attend strategy meetings, limiting the richness of discussions, decision-making and planning of investigations. Most strategy meetings identify clear actions to be taken to safeguard children. However, not all set out timescales for their completion.
4. For children who have experienced domestic abuse, there is a solid, well-coordinated multi-agency response. The daily risk assessment multi-agency meeting effectively screens domestic abuse referrals and coordinates the right help and support for victims and children.

5. Most assessments and some child protection enquiries are not good enough. While presenting risks are responded to, wider needs are not always identified. Too many assessments lack depth and do not demonstrate an understanding of children's experiences. Children's history and information from partners are not effectively considered to inform social workers' analysis. As a result, some children's needs had not been identified and met at the earliest opportunity, and some children have been subject to repeat assessments. A high proportion of both assessments and child protection enquiries do not result in any action from children's social care.
6. Resultant written plans for children in need and those subject to child protection plans focus appropriately on the presenting issues identified from assessments. However, many lack timescales to help focus families and professionals on goals that need to be achieved and clear contingency arrangements to help parents to understand what would happen if the outcomes were not met.
7. Children benefit from recently improved practices in planning, with social workers able to drive the work, supported through effective multi-agency arrangements. This is helping children to be safer and have their needs well met. Positively, planning becomes more focused on meeting children's broader needs as social workers get to know children and their families. Social workers use a restorative approach to positively engage with families. This enables meaningful relationships to be secured, so that families can shape and influence their plan. Social workers speak knowledgeably about children and families. This is helping children and their families to progress their plans.
8. Some groups of vulnerable children receive effective support. The work of the multi-agency risk and vulnerability team is starting to embed, and the response to exploitation is better coordinated. There has been demonstrable success in diverting young people away from crime, including working with those involved in gangs and knife crime. The response to child sexual exploitation is well-coordinated to mitigate risk. As a result, the circumstances of many of these children are improving.
9. Young people aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless are well supported. Pathways and joint working with housing are well established, which means that their immediate accommodation needs are assessed and met. Young people are informed of their right to come into care.
10. The recently formed education safeguarding team is working increasingly well with a range of partners to track and monitor children missing from education. Stronger actions are currently being taken to respond to the significant growth in the number of pupils receiving elective home education.
11. Senior managers have recognised that the disabled children's service did not provide sufficiently child-centred social work, and moved the management of

this team to children's services. Social workers working in the children's service have not had the appropriate training or access to tools to enable them to communicate effectively with their children. Some basic social work tasks, such as plans and assessments, are not being consistently completed.

12. Senior managers were unaware that the arrangements to support children who are privately fostered had deteriorated since the last inspection and are poor. Children's needs and the suitability of the arrangements have not been assessed and appropriate checks are not being undertaken.
13. The response to allegations against professionals is not consistently robust, and allegations are not always fully explored to inform the action that needs to be taken. Oversight and management arrangements are not effective in the designated officers' absence. This potentially leaves children exposed to risky situations.
14. Not all children who go missing are offered a return home interview. When these are completed, the quality is inconsistent and does not give a good enough understanding as to why children go missing in order to inform care planning or disruption activity to reduce further missing episodes.

The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers requires improvement to be good

15. Senior managers have improved services for children in care and care leavers in Kirklees since the last inspection. However, services are not consistently good for all children and young people. Shortfalls in the quality of care planning and a lack of manager and IRO challenge and oversight mean permanence for some children is delayed.
16. Inspectors saw appropriate use of the public law outline (PLO). Improved monitoring of timescales through the PLO tracker is leading to decisive action being taken to safeguard children when changes are not made. Managers are aware of the need to further improve letters to families before proceedings, to ensure that parents are clear on the changes that are required to safeguard children from further harm.
17. Staff from a range of services, including the multi-systemic team, family group conferencing and the risk and vulnerabilities team, work effectively to support children to remain in the care of their families, and as part of plans for reunification where appropriate. When it is not possible for children to remain in the care of their families, appropriate action is taken for the majority of children to enter care in a timely manner.
18. For children coming into care more recently, the development of a permanence panel and associated trackers is resulting in more effective early permanence planning. Robust sibling assessments provide a clear rationale

for whether children should be placed with or apart from their brothers or sisters. For children with a plan for adoption, even those traditionally regarded as hard to place, the identification of adoptive families is swift, and the placement achieves permanence in a timely manner. Children enjoy stability through well-embedded post-adoption support and good use of the adoption support fund. The overall timeliness of adoptions is improving.

19. Senior managers have been too slow to address poor practice identified at the last inspection in relation to children placed with their parents on care orders for significant periods. Senior managers have reviewed all children in these arrangements and are now monitoring them through the permanence panel. Although a number of these children have achieved permanence as a result, there are still too many children waiting for permanence to be secured.
20. Some children experience delays in family finding. There are also delays in ensuring permanence matches for children in long-term foster care and for a small number of children waiting to be adopted. Delays are due to several issues, including changes in social workers and/or IROs, and lead to a loss of continuity in delivering care plans, and a lack of long-term foster carers and adopters, meaning that some children wait too long for a match. Recommendations from some reviews were unclear as to what actions needed to be taken to secure permanence. The tracking of these children is very recent, and at the time of the inspection, senior managers were unclear about how many children were still waiting to be matched with their long-term foster families.
21. The majority of children benefit from living in a range of placements that meet their individual needs. Most children live with carers who provide activities and opportunities that enable them to enjoy life, improve their progress and promote a rounded childhood. A dedicated connected carers' team offers a high level of support to children who live with friends and family, which is effective in reinforcing and sustaining permanence. This means that these arrangements seldom break down.
22. Senior managers are working to increase the number of local placements, through an ambitious fostering recruitment strategy and working closely with external providers. Foster carers spoke positively about improvements to induction, regular training and carer support groups. However, reviews of foster carers are not sufficiently robust. Although timely, they lack reflection of children's views, and there is not enough exploration of significant incidents or information about mandatory training completed. Senior managers have recently recruited an IRO to undertake this work. Mechanisms to routinely evaluate the overall performance of the team are not in place, so managers are unable to assure themselves that standards in compliance and mandatory training are met.

23. When children are placed at some distance from their home, effective notification takes place to ensure that host local authorities are informed. However, social workers do not routinely consult with host local authorities before children are placed to ensure that they receive timely services to meet their needs.
24. Children's placement stability is monitored by senior managers. Performance figures are currently going through a manual data cleanse following integration from a previous electronic recording system. For most of the children, supportive action is taken promptly when concerns are identified. Bespoke support is delivered by the placement support service to enable children to remain in their placements when appropriate. When placements end in an unplanned way, disruption meetings are not routinely held to help workers understand why this happened or to inform future placement decisions. This hinders future matching.
25. Children in Kirklees increasingly benefit from good support from advocates and independent visitors. This allows children to share their views and opinions at a range of regular reviews and meetings.
26. Social workers and personal advisers have a good understanding of the children and young people they work with, although this is not always consistently evidenced in case recording. There are examples of sensitive direct work, including life-story work to help children to understand their individual circumstances. This is not consistent for children living in long-term foster placements. Managers are aware of the need to develop this further.
27. The children in care council has been developed since the last inspection. It offers a wide variety of activities to children to participate in and give their views, and celebrates the achievements of children in care and care leavers through an annual celebration event. The number of members of the children in care council is very low, and managers are aware of the need to increase this so that children have a meaningful influence on service developments and training.
28. Children in care are given good support to become physically and emotionally healthier. They are routinely taken for dental and optician appointments and their health needs are met. Workers consider and assess individual needs effectively, and specialist provision is sought where necessary. A multidisciplinary emotional well-being clinic provides timely and accessible emotional support for children and carers, and clinical expertise and advice are embedded throughout the service. Although records indicate that young people receive their health histories, these are not recorded on their case records and care leavers say that they have not received information about them.

29. The majority of children's care plans are updated and monitored regularly by IROs at timely reviews. Plans do not always clearly identify how permanence will be achieved, and many lack timescales to minimise drift. Child-friendly care plans are of better quality and are routinely used to help children understand their plans. There is clear evidence of IROs' oversight. However, IROs do not routinely challenge and escalate concerns about drift and delay.
30. The effective virtual school has high aspirations for the progress and well-being of children in its care. The virtual school has developed increasingly purposeful links with schools and colleagues in social care to check pupils' progress and provide additional support. Personal education plans are thorough and clearly capture the views of children, young people and carers on the support they receive. The virtual headteacher has supported the creative use of additional funding to improve attendance, provide extra tuition and promote children's involvement in wider experiences. As a result, children in care have achieved outcomes that are largely in line with children in care nationally. Additional support for young people over the age of 16 is encouraging increasing numbers to remain in education, employment or training.
31. Care leavers increasingly receive an improving service, key to which is the allocation of skilled personal advisers who have manageable workloads, enabling them to get to know their young people very well. Quality pathway plans, in which young people's voices clearly shine through, appropriately identify the tasks and timescales needed for them to achieve independence. However, senior leaders are aware that more work is required to ensure that this is consistent for disabled children and young people.
32. The local authority is in touch with the vast majority of its care leavers. The No. 11 service provides a high-quality resource for care leavers to use as a drop-in when they need advice and support. There is an appropriate focus on helping young people to prepare for independence through the provision of support and training, and to build resilience, for example through budgeting.
33. A dedicated careers officer adds significant value to the service by offering young people the opportunity to enter the world of work at their own pace and according to their own preferences. This means that many care leavers are in education, employment or training.
34. The vast majority of care leavers live in suitable accommodation and benefit from good support to maintain their living arrangements. 'Staying-put' arrangements, for care leavers to remain living with their former foster carers beyond the age of 18, are readily available, across both local authority and independent fostering agency placements. At the time of the inspection, 27 young people were living in such arrangements. Care leavers living within the borough are exempt from paying council tax, an initiative that was developed to support them to live independently. Solid partnerships with local housing

providers mean most young people are found suitable places to stay near where they lived in residential and foster care or near family. This enables their support networks to be suitably maintained.

The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families requires improvement to be good

35. Senior leaders have taken a systematic approach to improve the quality of services since the last Ofsted inspection in 2016, which judged the service to be inadequate. Initially, the pace of improvement was slow, impeded by instability in staffing and a lack of consistent and effective leadership. This included four changes of director of children's services in a short period of time. Latterly, the pace of improvement has accelerated as a result of the DfE's formal arrangement for Leeds City Council to take responsibility for overseeing improvement. This arrangement secured strong foundations for the recently appointed permanent DCS to build on when taking up her post in December 2018. There is a renewed energy and determination to continue improvements for children and families in Kirklees. However, there is more to do to ensure that all children who need help and protection and those in care receive a good service that improves their experiences.
36. Children's social care has been well supported across the council, both financially and culturally, in order to achieve the improvements needed. Elected members, leaders and senior managers have made significant improvements in corporate parenting. They are now clear about their responsibilities and are proactive, highly ambitious and aspirational for children in care and care leavers, and they are taking pride in their achievements.
37. Leaders are creating the right conditions for social work practice to flourish. Managers have targeted areas of great impact for children through a whole-service reform to support and sustain the improvements needed. Senior managers have re-established relationships with partners and have built stronger services, such as the improved multi-agency duty and advice team, while stabilising the workforce and repairing fractured relationships between social workers and senior managers.
38. Leaders have reviewed and restructured services for children in need of help and protection and children in care. As a result, most children now receive an appropriate response to protect them, and experiences of children in care are improving. Now that this has been achieved, and services have been secured, senior managers are in a positive position to look more broadly across the wider service.
39. Senior managers understand the needs of children and their families well. They have worked hard to rebuild trusting relationships and there are shared

priorities with partner agencies. This is enabling them to respond appropriately and effectively to new demands. For example, the creation of the multi-agency risk and vulnerability team is effectively addressing the growing emergence of gang-related activity and growing numbers of children vulnerable to exploitation. The response to children who go missing from home and care needs a stronger focus to ensure that all children receive a consistent service; maximise opportunities to understand push and pull trends; better manage risk; and identify themes to inform strategic planning.

40. Leaders and senior managers have an improving understanding of the quality of frontline practice through recent peer reviews, Ofsted monitoring visits and the use of sector specialists to improve their services. Senior managers and leaders have regular contact and discussions with children and young people to better understand their priorities and improve services. For example, the lead member has been instrumental in securing free transport passes and free driving lessons for young people leaving care. The improvement board routinely scrutinises areas of practice through its 'spotlight on practice', inviting children and young people, social workers and managers to share their experiences of services and identify areas for improvement. Feedback is well used to inform service developments, for example the creation of No. 11, the care leavers service.
41. The newly revised quality assurance and performance framework is still developing. Currently, it does not enable senior managers to fully understand children's experiences and the quality of social work practice across the service. Some areas of performance are not routinely monitored or evaluated to inform a sufficiently comprehensive understanding of practice. For example, the local authority does not routinely monitor its adoption performance, relying on the regional adoption agency to provide this. The low conversion rates from child protection enquiries to initial child protection conferences and children assessed as not requiring a social care service have not been interrogated to understand what this means for children. Frontline managers now receive weekly reports, enabling them to better manage workflows and compliance.
42. Changes in the electronic recording system and inconsistencies in recording practices are impacting on data integrity. As a result, great time and effort are focused on data cleansing and some managers are creating and maintaining additional methods of overseeing performance. Although this is necessary, the process is inefficient.
43. Monitoring of some key areas of practice that significantly impact on children has been too slow to develop. For example, tracking of permanence for children with plans for long-term fostering, adoption and those placed with parents is very new and has been implemented following a peer review commissioned by the new DCS. This was an area of improvement identified at the last inspection. Although managers have reviewed permanence for those

children placed with parents, managers have not systematically prioritised those children most at risk of drift and delay with plans for long-term fostering. As a result, too many children have experienced delay in achieving longer-term permanence, and for some, this is still not secured.

44. Senior managers were not aware of the deterioration in the response to children who are privately fostered and those at risk from professionals where allegations have been made. These had been areas of practice identified as stronger in the last inspection. In response to the concerns raised by inspectors, senior managers took action to amend processes for children who are privately fostered.
45. Auditing has been strengthened since the last inspection. However, there is insufficient focus on children's experiences, and this leads to inflated judgements about the quality of social work practice across the service. Some audit findings lack the level of clarity needed to sufficiently target and inform improvement. The DCS recognises that not all managers share a common understanding of what good practice looks like and senior managers are addressing this through recent auditor training. When audits have been more focused, this has supported an effective response to identified shortfalls, such as a drift in child protection and child in need planning. Themes identified from monitoring visits have been used well to shape core training in recording, assessment and planning. At the time of this inspection, only training in recording had been completed.
46. Staff stability and confidence in core social work practice have significantly improved since the last inspection. A key strength is the quality of direct work and relationships between social workers, personal advisers and their children, underpinned by the local authority's restorative practice model. This is not the case for disabled children, where social workers have not received training or do not have access to basic tools to enable them to communicate with children in line with their diverse needs.
47. Senior managers have successfully recruited and retained social workers, resulting in a significant reduction in the dependency of agency staff, despite the recruitment challenges regionally and nationally. This had been a significant issue at the last inspection. This improving stability, alongside the decision not to use agency staff, has reduced the number of changes in social worker that children experience. This is helping social workers build durable relationships with children and their families. Kirklees Council nurtures and develops its new social work staff. Newly appointed social workers spoke highly of their protected four-week induction, which provides clarity of expectation and practice standards through core training and shadowing. The newly introduced advanced practitioner posts provide specialist knowledge, advice and support through co-working, as well as creating career development opportunities.

48. Although caseloads have reduced, some social workers in the assessment and intervention teams reported that there is a sharp increase in work allocated to them when they undertake duty. They reported that this impacts on the quality of their work and their ability to complete specific recording tasks. Some of these challenges are mitigated through co-working some cases with highly skilled advanced practitioners, who bring specialist guidance and oversight. Senior managers regularly review caseloads and recognise increases in demand for social care services. For example, as a result of the growing emergence of gang-related activity and a recent complex joint police investigation, they have appropriately recruited an additional team. Social workers in this team are due to take up their posts in September.
49. Morale across the service has significantly improved. Social workers feel safe and supported by trusted senior and frontline managers. However, supervision is not consistently regular and the rationale behind key decisions affecting children's lives is not always recorded. Supervision lacks case reflection and clear management direction, and poorer practice is not routinely challenged by frontline managers or IROs. Senior managers recognise that this requires further improvement, and plans are in place to deliver bespoke management training across the service.



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CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY PANEL – WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

MEMBERS: Cllr Andrew Marchington (Chair), Cllr Paul White, Cllr Amanda Pinnock, Cllr Aafaq Butt, Cllr Richard Smith, Cllr Paul Davies, Linda Summers (Education Co-Optee), Dale O'Neill (Co-Optee), Toni Bromley (Co-Optee)

SUPPORT: Helen Kilroy, Principal Governance & Democratic Engagement Officer

FULL PANEL DISCUSSION		
ISSUE	APPROACH/AREAS OF FOCUS	OUTCOMES
1. Special Educational Needs	<p>Monitor the progress of the recommendations from the Panel made to Cabinet following an investigation by the Panel into how SENDACT interacted and worked with parents and carers. The report contained the response of the Cabinet Portfolio Holders to the investigation findings which was approved by Cabinet in March 2019.</p> <p>The Panel agreed to consider progress updates during the 2019/20 municipal year.</p>	<p>That the Panel are confident that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children with SEND are receiving the appropriate support. • That SENDACT are fully prepared for the Ofsted Inspection. • That SENDACT is a service that is regarded as 'good', with partners working alongside to ensure there is no delay for children. <p><u>Panel Meeting on 23 September 2019</u> The Panel will receive a report giving progress on the Recommendations within the report.</p>
2. Exploitation Strategy	<p>The Panel considered a joint presentation by West Yorkshire Police and Senior Officers from Kirklees on CSE, Safeguarding and Licensing in March 2019 and agreed to be kept informed and to be able to contribute to the future work on the Exploitation Strategy and consider the findings of the Dr Peel Review in the new 2019/20 municipal year.</p> <p>Future reports should provide an update on sexual harm prevention orders and what has been learned from the historic cases.</p>	<p>That the Panel is assured that lessons had been learned from previous cases of CSE.</p> <p>That the Panel is convinced that the best practices identified following the review by Dr Peel are being implemented in Kirklees, and ensure good outcomes for vulnerable children.</p> <p>That as many takeaways and accommodation providers as possible receive exploitation safeguarding training. That these providers begin to feel more comfortable and better informed as to how and when to report potential safeguarding issues.</p> <p><u>Panel Meeting 23rd August 2019</u> The Panel will receive an update report on the next steps for the Exploitation Strategy.</p>

FULL PANEL DISCUSSION

ISSUE	APPROACH/AREAS OF FOCUS	OUTCOMES
		<p><u>Panel Meeting 17th January 2020</u> The Panel will consider a follow up report on Dr Peel's practice findings and an update on the Exploitation Strategy.</p>
<p>3. Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board (KSCB)</p>	<p>Review the improvements of the KSCB.</p> <p>The Panel will consider an update report on KSCB at a future meeting of the Panel in the 2019/20 municipal year.</p> <p>Future reports to the Panel should advise how Kirklees will implement the new national strategies on children's safeguarding.</p> <p>The Panel will consider the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board Business Plan.</p>	<p>That the Board is considered as 'good' and that the Panel is satisfied that it is effective and accountable.</p> <p>That the Panel is convinced that the best practices identified following the review by Dr Peel are being implemented in Kirklees, and ensure good outcomes for vulnerable children.</p> <p><u>Panel Meeting 23 September 2019</u> The Panel will consider:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a future report outlining how Kirklees will implement the new arrangements for Children's Safeguarding and the Business Plan; and - the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board Business Plan
<p>4. Early Support Partnership (Edge of Care)</p>	<p>To maintain an overview of the work done to improve the Edge of Care in Kirklees.</p> <p>In April 2019, the Panel considered an update on the development on the three programmes funded through the Department for Education (DFE) Innovation Funding and agreed to consider an update in the 2019/20 municipal year giving data and statistics on the Early Support Partnership following development of the practices.</p>	<p>The Panel is assured that the Early Support Strategy in Kirklees is clarified and enhanced, and should include consideration of whether good practice from other areas might be effectively adapted for use in Kirklees.</p> <p>That as part of clarifying the Early Support approach, the role of Schools is considered and schools have the opportunity to be part of the approach.</p> <p>The Panel will consider arranging a visit to the Early Support Teams to gain a better understanding of the work that was being undertaken and the impact it was having and that this be considered as part the Panel's work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year.</p> <p><u>Panel Meeting 8th November 2019</u> The Panel will consider an update on the Early Support Partnership in October/November to consider data and statistics on the Early Support Partnership following development of the practices.</p>

FULL PANEL DISCUSSION

ISSUE	APPROACH/AREAS OF FOCUS	OUTCOMES
5. Elective Home Education	<p>The next steps from the Ad-Hoc Panel will be to gather further evidence which will be sought from:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A leading elective home education expert • Other local authorities in the area, to consider their offer for elective home educators • Parents of those local authorities mentioned above to explore their experiences • Head Teachers forums (primary, secondary and special schools) 	<p>The Panel is assured that that children who are home educated receive the best offer from Kirklees council.</p> <p>That the Panel is content that any new Elective Home Educating policy is updated and fit for purpose.</p> <p>The EHE Ad-Hoc Panel will commence its work and produce a final report on its findings early in the 2019/20 municipal year.</p>
6. Ofsted Inspection (Children's Services)	<p>The Panel will consider the Ofsted report following the inspection of Children's Services in June 2019.</p>	<p>That the Panel is confident Children's Services is continuing to improve and protect the vulnerable children and young people of Kirklees.</p> <p><u>Panel meeting on 23rd August 2019</u></p> <p>The Panel will consider the outcomes from the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services.</p>
7. Learning Outcomes and the Learning Support Strategy	<p>The Panel agreed to consider –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Draft Learning Support Strategy early in the 2019/20 municipal year; • what alternative provisions were available for children with different needs and abilities who are not able to attend mainstream education; • how isolations within secondary schools were being managed and what the planned approach was for the future; • a progress update on the educational challenges ahead, attendance and exclusions – July 2019. 	<p><u>Panel Meeting on 19th July 2019</u></p> <p>The Panel considered a report outlining the educational landscape in Kirklees and agreed:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That further information on exclusions be considered by the Panel to include particular focus on early intervention, monitoring, the practice in Kirklees and temporary exclusions. 2. That the Panel consider a future report outlining how the new Ofsted framework for Education was working for schools and learners within Kirklees. <p>The Panel agreed as part of their work programme for 2019/20 to visit schools to talk to children, young people and staff about the Learning Support Strategy.</p>

FULL PANEL DISCUSSION

ISSUE	APPROACH/AREAS OF FOCUS	OUTCOMES
8. CAMHS Transformation Plan	To maintain an overview of the work of CAMHS in Kirklees, particularly to update on the autism assessment waiting list.	<p>That the Panel is satisfied that CAMHS continue to improve the service offer, and that the waiting lists for autism assessments continue to reduce.</p> <p>The Panel will consider an update report in the 2019/20 municipal year giving a summary of the CAMHS Local Transformation Plan and outlining what is available digitally when making a request for an assessment and an outline of what support and help was available for families whilst awaiting an assessment – date to be confirmed.</p> <p>The Panel would also like to receive a summarised version of the CAMHS Transformation Plan as soon as it is available.</p>
9. Number of children in care	<p>A standing item for each meeting containing details of how many children are in care, and particularly how many are placed out of area.</p> <p>The Panel agreed to consider a more detailed report on children in care living outside Kirklees with some case studies showing the case history, challenges involved including financial demand on Kirklees and different types of placements. The report should also include the number of children who cannot be placed in Kirklees and the reasons why.</p>	<p>The Panel is satisfied that the Early Help initiatives are having an impact on the number of children in care.</p> <p>That children are placed in foster care as near to home as possible, unless they are placed with family connected persons which may be a further distance.</p> <p>The latest reports showing number of children in care will be considered by the Panel as a standing item.</p> <p><u>Panel Meeting on 19th July 2019</u> The Panel agreed:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the figures for data for children looked after age and gender breakdown be checked for accuracy and an update be provided at the next meeting of the Panel in August 2019. 2. That the Panel consider educational outcomes and stability for looked after children as part of the work programme for 2019/20.
10. Future Options for Almondbury Community School	The Children's Scrutiny Panel on the 7 th August 2019 considered a Call-in request in respect of the decision made by Cabinet on the 16 th July 2019 on Future Options for Almondbury Community	The Panel recommended that Cabinet consider the following learning points:-

FULL PANEL DISCUSSION

ISSUE	APPROACH/AREAS OF FOCUS	OUTCOMES
	School.	<p>Capacity The Panel was satisfied that all relevant factors were taken into account including the Local Plan, however, this was not explained as clearly as it could have been in the Cabinet reports or the Consultation documentation.</p> <p>Whilst the Panel was reassured that there was sufficient capacity in the system, but acknowledged that if Almondbury Community School closes there would be limited choice at local schools from September 2020. It was not clear about where pupils would be allocated places in September 2020.</p> <p>Openness It appears that all relevant financial information had been taken into account, but the Panel felt that this could have been more clearly stated in the Cabinet report. It appeared that an assumption was made at the outset that the school was not viable and would fail a due diligence test for academisation. Whilst that might be right, the rationale for making that assumption was not fully explained in the Cabinet reports, for example, the fact of the school operating a £500k deficit budget only became apparent at the July Cabinet meeting. In future the Panel would like Cabinet to ensure that there was better explained within reports.</p> <p>The Panel agreed to consider regular updates on Almondbury Community School – date to Panel to be confirmed.</p>
11. Performance Information (Children's Services)	The Panel will continue to monitor the performance of the Learning Early Support Service and Child Protection & Family Support.	The latest performance reports will be considered informally by the Panel as a standing item.
12. Visit to Copthorne Children's Home	Members of the Panel will visit Copthorne House. The date has yet to be confirmed.	Visit to Copthorne House to be arranged in the 2019/20 municipal year – date to be determined.

FULL PANEL DISCUSSION

ISSUE	APPROACH/AREAS OF FOCUS	OUTCOMES
13. Visit to Fostering Team	Members of the Panel will visit the Fostering Team and the different elements of the service.	<p>That the Panel Members learn about and understand the different elements of foster caring.</p> <p>The Panel agreed to visit the Fostering Team early in the 2019/20 municipal year.</p>
14. Visit to Duty & Advice	The Panel will visit staff at Duty & Advice to seek feedback on service changes and working arrangements	<p>The Panel is assured that staff are well supported to do their job and that retention rates improve to those seen in other 'good' Local Authority areas.</p> <p>The Panel is clear that staff have been trained on the chosen Social Work Model and the newly implemented IT system.</p> <p>Visit to Duty and Advice Team to be arranged in 2019/20 municipal year.</p>
CAMHS Transformation Plan	The Panel agreed on the 19 th July 2019 that the Lead Member would keep a watching briefing on the CAMHS Transformation Plan	
Educational outcomes for Looked after children	<p>The Panel on the 19th July 2019 agreed to consider educational outcomes for looked after children.</p> <p>The Corporate Parenting Board is looking at the issue of educational outcomes for looked after children and specifically the number of placement moves taking place which impact on the educational outcomes for looked after children.</p>	The Lead Member for Children's Scrutiny Panel will keep a watching briefing on this matter and ask the Corporate Parenting Board to report back to the Panel with their findings.

Children's Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Plan 2019/20

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
<p>19 July 2019</p> <p>9am -10am Informal meeting</p> <p>10-12 noon Public meeting</p> <p>Meeting Room 1, HTH</p> <p>Report deadline 9.7.19</p> <p>Apologies: Mel Meggs</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Informal items:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Improvement Board Minutes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Performance report</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Items:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Educational Challenges ahead and progress update and action plan for attendance and exclusions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Number of Children in Care (to include an update on future plans for CIC outside the district)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">H Kilroy</p> <p style="text-align: center;">J Sanders/ E McShane to present</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(H Sohel/M Cameron)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">S Comb</p>
<p>23 August 2019</p> <p>10-10.30 am Informal meeting</p> <p>10.30-12.30 pm Public meeting</p> <p>Reception Room, HTH</p> <p>Apologies: Cllr R Smith, P Brayford, T Bromley,</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Informal items:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Performance report</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Items:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Number of Children in Care</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Update on Exploitation Strategy and next steps</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ofsted report (Children's Services)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">J Sanders/E McShane to present</p> <p style="text-align: center;">S Comb</p> <p style="text-align: center;">C Jackson/O Rix</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E McShane/S Comb</p>

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
Cllr Kendrick, J Sanders, Cllr Pattison Report deadline 13.8.19		
23 September 2019 10.30-11 am Informal meeting 11am-1pm Public meeting Council Chamber, HTH Report deadline 11.9.19	Informal Items Improvement Board Minutes Performance report Public Items: Number of Children in Care SEND progress on recommendations New arrangements for Children's Safeguarding and the KSCB Business Plan	H Kilroy J Sanders/E McShane to present Steve Comb Mandy Cameron/Victoria Bruce Sheila Lock, KSCB
11 October 2019 10-10.30 am Informal meeting 10.30-12.30 pm Public meeting Meeting Rm 1, HTH Report deadline 1.10.19	Informal Items Improvement Board Minutes Performance report Public Items: Number of Children in Care	H Kilroy J Sanders/E McShane to present Steve Comb
8 November 2019	Informal Items	

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
<p>10-10.30 am Informal meeting</p> <p>10.30-12.30 pm Public meeting</p> <p>Council Chamber, HTH</p> <p>Report deadline 28.10.19</p>	<p>Improvement Board Minutes</p> <p>Performance report</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Update on Early Support Partnership</p> <p>Number of Children in Care</p>	<p>H Kilroy</p> <p>J Sanders/E McShane to present</p> <p>M Wheatcroft</p> <p>Steve Comb</p>
<p>16 December 2019</p> <p>10.30-11 am Informal meeting</p> <p>11am-1pm Public meeting</p> <p>Council Chamber, HTH</p> <p>Report deadline 4.12.19</p>	<p>Informal Items</p> <p>Improvement Board Minutes</p> <p>Performance report</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Number of Children in Care</p>	<p>H Kilroy</p> <p>J Sanders/E McShane to present</p> <p>Steve Comb</p>
<p>17 January 2019</p> <p>10-10.30 am Informal meeting</p> <p>10.30-12.30 pm Public meeting</p> <p>Meeting Rm 1, HTH</p> <p>Report deadline 17.1.20</p>	<p>Informal Items</p> <p>Improvement Board Minutes</p> <p>Performance report</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Number of Children in Care</p>	<p>H Kilroy</p> <p>J Sanders/E McShane to present</p> <p>Steve Comb</p>

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
	Exploitation Strategy – follow up and findings to Dr Peels Review (to be confirmed)	M Meggs/E McShane
<p>14 February 2019</p> <p>10-10.30 am Informal meeting</p> <p>10.30-12.30 pm Public meeting</p> <p>Conference Rm, 1st Floor North, Cv3</p> <p>Report deadline 4.2.20</p>	<p>Informal Items</p> <p>Improvement Board Minutes</p> <p>Performance report</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Number of Children in Care</p>	<p>H Kilroy</p> <p>J Sanders/E McShane to present</p> <p>Steve Comb</p>
<p>13 March 2019</p> <p>10-10.30 am Informal meeting</p> <p>10.30-12.30 pm Public meeting</p> <p>Council Chamber, HTH</p> <p>Report deadline 3.3.20</p>	<p>Informal Items</p> <p>Improvement Board Minutes</p> <p>Performance report</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Number of Children in Care</p>	<p>H Kilroy</p> <p>J Sanders/E McShane to present</p> <p>Steve Comb</p>
<p>17 April 2019</p> <p>10-10.30 am Informal meeting</p>	<p>Informal Items</p> <p>Improvement Board Minutes</p>	<p>H Kilroy</p>

Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
<p>10.30-12.30 pm Public meeting</p> <p>Meeting Rm 1, HTH</p> <p>Report deadline 7.4.20</p>	<p>Performance report</p> <p>Public Items:</p> <p>Number of Children in Care</p>	<p>J Sanders/E McShane to present</p> <p>Steve Comb</p>

Future items

- Update reports on Almondbury Community School (J Sanders/M Wilby)
- Exclusions to include particular focus on early intervention, monitoring, the practice in Kirklees and temporary exclusions (H Sohel)
- Future report outlining how the new Ofsted framework for Education was working for schools and learners within Kirklees (H Sohel)
- Visits to schools to talk to children, young people and staff about the Learning Support Strategy (H Sohel)

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