

Public Document Pack



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

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Monday 26 February 2024

Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

Corporate Parenting Board

The **Corporate Parenting Board** will meet in the **Council Chamber - Town Hall, Huddersfield** at **10.15 am** on **Tuesday 5 March 2024**.

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', on a light-colored background.

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 Elizabeth Reynolds

Councillor Richard Smith

Councillor John Lawson

Councillor Karen Allison

Gill Addy

Kieran Lord

Stewart Horn

Louise Hallas

Vicky Metheringham

Tom Brailsford

Sara Miles

Jo-Anne Sanders

Keith Fielding

Georgina Ioannue

Keely Lucas

Farrah Munir

Designated Nurse for Looked after Children/Care Leavers
Interim Service Director (Resources, Improvement and Partnerships)

Head of Joint Commissioning, Children & Families

Virtual School Headteacher

Service Director - Child Protection & Family Support

Service Director (Resources, Improvement and Partnerships)

Interim Head of Service (Child Protection & Review Unit)

Service Director for Learning and Early Support

Kirklees Fostering Network

Kirklees Fostering Network

Care Leavers

Care Leavers

Agenda

Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

Pages

1: Membership of the Board/Apologies

To receive apologies for absence from those Members who are unable to attend the meeting.

2: Minutes of Previous Meeting

1 - 10

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on the 23rd January 2024

3: Declaration of Interests

11 - 12

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

4: Admission of the Public

Most agenda items take place in public. This only changes where there is a need to consider exempt information, as contained at Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. You will be informed at this point which items are to be recommended for exclusion and to be resolved by the Board.

5: Deputations/Petitions

The Board will receive any petitions and/or 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 submit a petition at the meeting relating to a matter on which the body has powers and responsibilities.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10, Members of the Public must submit a deputation in writing, at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting and shall subsequently be notified if the deputation shall be heard. A maximum of four

deputations shall be heard at any one meeting.

6: Public Question Time

To receive any public questions.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, the period for the asking and answering of public questions shall not exceed 15 minutes.

Any questions must be submitted in writing at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting

7: Head of Service Update

The Board will consider a verbal update from a Head of Service giving an overview of work and progress in respect of the role of corporate parents.

Contacts:

Joel Hanna, Head of Service, Corporate Parenting and Children's Residential Services

8: One Adoption West Yorkshire - 6 monthly report

13 - 20

The Board will consider the One Adoption West Yorkshire 6 monthly report.

Contact:

Michelle Rawlings, Head of One Adoption West Yorkshire

9: Children's Performance Report

21 - 34

The Board will consider a report giving key highlights from the latest performance monitoring data for the Children's Service.

Contacts:

Joel Hanna, Head of Service, Corporate Parenting and Children's Residential Services

Vicky Metheringham, Service Director, Family Support and Child Protection

Louise Hallas, Virtual School Headteacher

Gill Addy, Designated Nurse for Looked After Children

Ian Mottershaw, Head of Service –Contextual Safeguarding and Y.E.S, Family Support and Child Protection

10: The Voice of Children and Young People and Care Experienced Young People

The Board will consider a verbal update in respect of the representation of the voice of Children and Young People and Care Experienced Young People.

Contact:

Joel Hanna, Head of Service, Corporate Parenting and Children's Residential Services

11: Corporate Parenting Strategy - Initial Update on Review

The Board will consider a verbal update on the Corporate Parenting Strategy – (Initial Update on Review)

Contact:

Joel Hanna, Head of Service, Corporate Parenting and Children's Residential Services

12: Updates from Board Members on interaction with services

The Board will consider verbal updates from Board Members in relation to progress and key issues following interaction with Services and partners to challenge the role of the Corporate Parent.

Contact:

Jodie Harris, Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer

13: Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan

35 - 44

The Board will consider the agenda plan for 2023/24.

Contact:

Jodie Harris, Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

Contact Officer: Jodie Harris

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Tuesday 23rd January 2024

Present: Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)
Councillor Elizabeth Reynolds, Cabinet Member - Learning and Aspiration
Councillor John Lawson, Liberal Democrat - Group Leader
Gill Addy, Designated Nurse for Looked after Children/Care Leavers
Kieran Lord, Interim Service Director: Resources, Improvements & Partnerships
Louise Hallas, Virtual School Headteacher - Children & Young People
Vicky Metheringham, Service Director - Child Protection & Family Support

Co-optees

In attendance: Benjamin Newsome, Contextual Safeguarding Service Manager
Tom Clift, Service Manager - Child Protection and Review Unit
Anna Gledhill, Head of Homes for Children

Observers:

Apologies: Councillor Richard Smith, Conservative - Group Business Manager
Councillor Karen Allison, Green Group - Group Business Manager
Councillor Andrew Cooper, Green Group - Group Leader
Stewart Horn, Head of Children's Integrated Commissioning
Sara Miles, Head of Safeguarding & Quality Assurance
Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director - Learning & Early Support

1 Membership of the Board/Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Richard Smith, Councillor Karen Allison, Councillor Andrew Cooper (ex-officio), Sara Miles, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, Stewart Horn, Head of Children's Integrated Commissioning and Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director Learning and Early Support.

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The Board considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2023.

Gill Addy reported back to the Board in response to (i) that further information around time scales for an ICB decision on prescriptions, dental and optician support

Corporate Parenting Board - 23 January 2024

be provided to the Board, and it was noted that the response would be shared with Board members in writing.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 5th December 2023 be approved as a correct record.

3 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

All Items were held in public session.

5 Deputations/Petitions

There were no deputations or petitions received.

6 Public Question Time

There were no questions received from members of the public.

7 Head Of Service Update

The Board considered a verbal update presented by Joel Hanna, Head of Service, Corporate Parenting and Children's Residential Services. During the update Joel Hanna gave a presentation which set out progress in respect of 3 key areas:

- The Review of the Corporate Parenting Strategy, Governance and Delivery, which in relation to the Corporate Parenting Board would include refreshed Terms of Reference, the expansion of its membership and to agree the current priorities and strategy.
- The Service Planning for the Care Leavers Service, there had been a 2-day review of the service requested by the council and provided by Mark Riddell MBE to inform the services 'Continuous Service Improvement Plan'.
- The Service planning for the Children Looked After Service including the establishing better links between the CICC/CLF and the Head of Service for Corporate Parenting the revised service plan to establish the continuous service improvement plan following a full-service engagement event and work around establishing more stability for children in relation to the number of social worker changes.

In the discussion to follow, questions and comments were invited from Board Members, with the following issues being covered:

- The Board welcomed news of the launch of a new parents and babies care leavers group and very early plans to expand the offer to nurseries noting the importance of a provision which safeguarded and supported parents whilst providing networking opportunities.
- The Board noted the proposals for a 'dashboard' infographic, and it was advised that the purpose of this was to provide key headline information to corporate parents and would be a useful tool for all elected members.

Corporate Parenting Board - 23 January 2024

- The Board were advised that a 'draft' dashboard would be provided to the Board for comment prior to deciding where it would be shared.
- The Board highlighted the importance of ensuring elected members engaged with the dashboard information, highlighting how communication via email may be missed, and it was suggested that this could be sent to Group Business Managers to share during group meetings as well as asking members directly at those meetings how best they would like to receive the information going forwards.
- The Board welcomed the engagement with the CiCC/CLF to develop and roll out Corporate Parenting training and expressed interest in the development of this work.
- In respect of the Corporate Parent training the Board suggested this be delivered in 2 parts focusing on: (i) covering the experience of children who are looked after taking a trauma informed approach, and (ii) practical actions.
- The Board welcomed work undertaken to develop a brand and that the Care leavers Christmas dinner had been provided.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the Head of Service Update, and it was agreed that:

- 1) A 'draft' version of the Dashboard infographic be shared with the Board.
- 2) The Dashboard be shared with Group Business Managers to circulate at group meetings.
- 3) Engagement be held with elected members at Group Business Meetings in respect of communicating the dashboard.
- 4) Consideration be given to delivering corporate parenting training in 2 parts, focusing on: (i) covering the experience of children who are looked after and, (ii) practical actions.

8 Children's Performance Report

The Board considered the latest Children's Performance Highlights Report setting out the performance monitoring data for Children's Services which was presented by; Joel Hanna, Head of Service, Corporate Parenting and Children's Residential Services, Louise Hallas- Virtual School Headteacher, Tom Clift – Service Manager, Child Protection and Review Unit, Vicky Metheringham, Service Director - Family Support, Anna Gledhill, Head of Sufficiency and Child Protection and Benjamin Newsome, Contextual Safeguarding Service Manager. The following key points were highlighted:

- To improve the performance indicator for stability there was a focus on early recruitment as well as a recruitment campaign to attract more stability into the team.
- Kirklees were aiming to address the number of homes that a young person was moved to, through several different routes and shortly a new home was due to open to increase internal capacity.
- In relation to Looked after Reviews, Visits and Missing, there had been a decline in the number of recorded missing incidents alongside a decrease in timely completion of independent return interviews.
- Lower numbers did have a greater impact on the percentages, but the decrease in timely returns was predominantly a result of the approach to ensure that return interviews were delivered at the right time, by the right person and in the right way for the young person.

Corporate Parenting Board - 23 January 2024

- In relation to Looked After Review Meetings, it was noted that 12 requests for Initial Review forms were received by the Child Protection and Review Unit (CPRU) for children to become Looked After in November 2023, relating to 19 children in total. 97.5% were achieved within the required timescales.
- Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's) closely monitored Child Looked After Review timescales to ensure that the high percentage was maintained whilst a clear rationale was recorded on a child's file if there were circumstances which resulted in a child's review meeting not being held within statutory timescales.
- IRO's robustly reviewed children's care plans and from June 2023 for children New into Care and undertake New into Care case audits. Findings were shared with the area social work Service Manager for oversight, and social work Team Managers.
- In relation to Children Looked After Education Outcomes, the Virtual School maintained 100% PEPs completion. Improving attendance and the number of children not in full time education were the key areas of focus.
- In relation to Children Looked After Health Outcomes, challenges in relation to the completion of Initial Health Assessments were replicated across regional neighbours and was highlighted on the West Yorkshire risk register.
- There was a significant anticipated upturn in IHA completion and work was being undertaken to improve this. The Business Case to consider additional nurse/doctor resource/alternative CLA Health model, which would support the whole team remained under commissioner consideration.
- It was also advised that older children coming into care commonly had additional support needs and work was being undertaken to explore if more specialist services may be better placed to take on the IHA for this cohort.
- In relation to Children Looked After Convictions, it was noted that the number of Young People who have been looked after continually for 12 months or more aged 10 to 17 who received a substantive outcome had fallen in comparison to previous year, and it was noted that the cohort of young people with convictions was very low.
- The Disposal Panel continued work to understand the circumstances surrounding the young person and their support needs to prevent them reoffending and becoming criminalised.
- In relation to Care leavers, Kirklees had partnered with North Yorkshire as part of the Sector Led Improvement Partnership and had agreed a focus on the quality of Pathway plans.
- The strategy was to increase contact through different range of communication methods including a text system to maximise engagement in activities.
- Work had also been undertaken with partners to develop an events calendar with the aim of producing more attractive events and opportunities.
- In relation to Children in Care and Personal Advisors, work continued with social work teams to ensure young people were allocated Personal Advisor support at 17 and 4 months.
- In relation to Fostering, in November 2023 there were 6 foster carer approvals, 5 were kinship foster carers and 1 was a mainstream (unconnected) approval.

Corporate Parenting Board - 23 January 2024

- Though the priority was to increase the number of carers, the number of children placed in fostering was high in Kirklees, split between agency and internal carers.

In the discussion to follow, questions and comments were invited from Board Members, with the following issues being covered:

- The Board welcomed the explanation of the data, noting that the details presented helped to clarify Kirklees's position.
- In relation to the data around persistent absence it was noted the main cause of persistent absences (PA) were unauthorised absences due to emotionally based school avoidance and lates which contributed to the figures presented. In response it was recommended that a breakdown of the PA data alongside comparison with national data be provided to the Board.
- The Board welcomed the idea of a text system to enable higher levels of engagement in events from young people.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the Childrens' Performance Highlights Report, and it was agreed that a breakdown of the PA data alongside comparison with national data be provided to be Board.

9 **The Voice of Children and Young People and Care Experience Young People**

The Board considered a verbal update in respect of the Voice of Children and Young People and Care Experience Young People presented by Joel Hanna, Head of Service for Children Looked After and Care Leavers. Joel Hanna gave a presentation which outlined the pledge for Corporate Parents and set out the plans for achieving greater representation for the inclusion of the voice of children and young people at the Board. This work included:

- Weekly attendance at the Children in Care Council (CCiC) and Care Leavers Forum (CLF) alternately had been established as an opportunity for the Head of Service to listen to the experience, voice and views of young people with the intention of taking a 'you said we did' approach to issues raised.
- Working with the CCiC and the CLF there were plans to develop and co-deliver Corporate Parenting training for Members and Officers (using the LGA resource pack) as well as working together to inform the current review and revision of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.
- Planning work had been undertaken to identify future opportunities to increase the voice of children and young people in the work of the Corporate Parenting Board (i.e.- takeover board events, attendance/representation at Board meetings and review and feedback from Webcast meetings etc.)
- Work had also begun to increase membership of both groups.
- Discussions with the CiCC and the CLF had highlighted:
 - Examples of inequality in finance polices (i.e.-allowances and financial support) and it had been agreed to add the review of these to the work plan for both the Children in Care and Care Leavers services.
 - Issues with delays in decision making due to 'tiers of approval' had led to a review of approval levels for holiday risk assessments and permissions.

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- The use and the power of language, especially the implications and associations of using words such as 'lack' when referring to children in care and in response discussions had been held around how to change culture around language.

In the discussion to follow, questions and comments were invited from Board Members, with the following issues being covered:

- The Board agreed it was important to reflect on the power of language going forwards, ensuring that words like 'lack' and acronyms were avoided, and that age-appropriate language was used to ensure young people understand the decisions been made around them.
- The Board welcomed work undertaken to improve the timeliness of decisions around holiday permissions and risk assessments.
- The Board highlighted the importance of promoting and integrating the Corporate Parenting Pledge and suggested that consideration be given to printing the pledge on Council on ID cards.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the update 'The Voice of Children and Young People and Care Experience Young People' and it was agreed that:

- 1) Reflection be given to the type and power of the language used when referring to and communicating with children in care and care leavers.
- 2) Consideration be given to the promotion of the Corporate Parenting Pledge including the possibility of this being printed on officer and member ID cards.

10 Sufficiency Update

The Board considered a report providing an update on the progress against the priorities identified in the Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2025 presented by Anna Gledhill, Head of Homes for Children. It was noted that:

- Priorities were delivered through 'Continuous Service Improvement Plans' for Fostering, Residential and Placements services.
- A key priority was to ensure that were possible children live in family homes and 46 Special Guardianship Orders and 5 Child Arrangement Orders were made between April 2023- January 2024.
- The team had been re-structured to ensured that kinship foster carers received consistent support through a supervising social worker.
- To expand the Fostering Service (to deliver more fostering homes) several policies and procedures had been implemented to expand the service including improving relationships with regional colleagues to share best practice.
- Work also continued with Kirklees Fostering Network through regular meetings to support learning.
- To uplift Kirklees's fostering offer, competitive fostering rates were ensured, and the fostering recruitment strategy was being updated as part of a fostering diagnostic delivered by the DfE.

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- To ensure that Residential Children's Homes delivered outstanding care, there had been investment in the residential estate including the full refurbishment of one home in 2023.
- The process to finalise the registration of a new home was ongoing and it was anticipated that the home would open early 2024.
- To ensure that children and young people had access to a spectrum of placement options to best meet their individual needs, work had been undertaken to develop the relationship with the independent sector and the commissioning team,
- As a part of this, 2 residential children's homes provider events took place in 2023, and a White Rose regional provider event was planned for spring 2024.
- Visits by the Commissioning Team and the Placement Team staff to all children's home providers in Kirklees were also taking place.
- All new children's home planning applications in Kirklees were being monitored by the Commissioning Team
- A new 16+ Supported Accommodation Electronic Market Place (approved list of providers) was out to tender, which was in line with the new Ofsted 16+ Supported Accommodation regulations and categories

The Board noted the update and welcomed news of the Fostering Diagnostic visit noting the value and challenges in increasing the number of foster carers.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the Sufficiency Update.

11 **Fostering Report October 2022 to March 2023**

The Board considered the Fostering Report October 2022 to March 2023, which was presented by Anna Gledhill, Head of Homes for Children. It was highlighted that:

- The Fostering Report October 2022 to March 2023 covered a six-month period to realign the reporting period and enable the service to provide comparative data from national and regional service reporting in future reports.
- The Mockingbird Model, which consisted of support networks known as constellations, had been expanded.
- This included a Hub Home Carer, who developed positive relationships with the carers in the constellation and provided support to carers through daily/weekly telephone calls, messages and/or visits.
- Kirklees implemented the first Mockingbird constellation in October 2021.
- A further two Hub Home Carers were appointed in December 2022, with work underway to form the constellations within this reporting period.

The Board noted the update and expressed pride at the number of Special Guardians and Connected Carers. The Board also requested that a further update be provided to the Board in June 2024.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the Fostering Report October 2022 to March 2023, and it was agreed that the next report be provided to the Board in June 2024.

12 **Virtual School Governing Body Update**

Corporate Parenting Board - 23 January 2024

Louise Hallas, Virtual School Headteacher advised that there had not been a meeting of the Virtual School Governing Body

RESOLVED: The Board noted that an update in respect of the Virtual School Governing Body would be provided at the next meeting of the Board.

13 Children's Ambition Board Update

The Board considered a verbal update in relation to the last meeting of the Children's Ambition Board presented by Vicky Metheringham, Service Director, Child Protection and Family Support and Kieran Lord, Interim Service Director - Resources, Improvements and Partnerships. It was noted that at the last meeting of the Children's Ambition Board there had been a focus on the SEND and recent engagement with national bodies related to this.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the Children's Ambition Board Update.

14 Updates from Board Members on Interaction with Services

The Board considered verbal updates from Board Members in relation to progress and key issues following interaction with Services and partners to challenge the role of the Corporate Parent.

The Chair noted attendance at:

- 11th December 2023 - Meeting of the Children's Ambition Board
- 6th December 2023- Chaired the Yorkshire and Humber Children's Improvement Board
- 12th December 2023- Chaired the Yorkshire and Humber Lead Member Network
- The North Yorkshire Peer review set up meeting and an Operational practice progress at Dewsbury Town Hall
- 24th December 2023 – the setup of the Care leavers Christmas lunch
- 5th January 2024 – Attended the Starting Well Board.
- 9th January 2024 - Briefing on short breaks consultation.
- 22nd January 2024 –A Stay and Play Group where parents finding supportive networks through the group.

Councillor Elizabeth Reynolds reported an invite to the new Mockingbird Constellation launch and attendance volunteering at the Care Leavers Christmas dinner highlighting the work of those who made quilts for care leavers (who attended the event), and the presents gifted by partners.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the Updates from Board Members on Interaction with Services.

15 Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan

The Board considered the agenda plan for 2023/24.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the agenda plan for 2023/24 and it was agreed that:

- 1) A report in relation to assurance of children placed outside of Kirklees be added to the agenda plan.

Corporate Parenting Board - 23 January 2024

- 2) The pen pictures of 3 young people most at risk status and action taken be provided to the Board.
- 3) Work be undertaken to review the sequencing of annual reports.

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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.

One Adoption West Yorkshire



One
Adoption
Agency
WEST YORKSHIRE

HALF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT - KIRKLEES HIGHLIGHTS 2023 - 2024



THE CHILDREN - STATS

	Q1&Q2 23/24	Compared to same period 2022/23	
Number of children adopted	8	=	
Number of ADMs	14	↑	+4
Number of POs	7	↓	-1
Number of children placed	10	=	
Number of children whose placement disrupted	2	↑	+2
Percentage of children placed with OAWY approved adopters	70%	↓	-20%
Number of children placed via Early Permanence	0	↓	-1
Percentage of children matched for adoption which were previously in EPPs	11%	↑	+11%
Number of children at half year end with ADM not matched	25	↑	+6



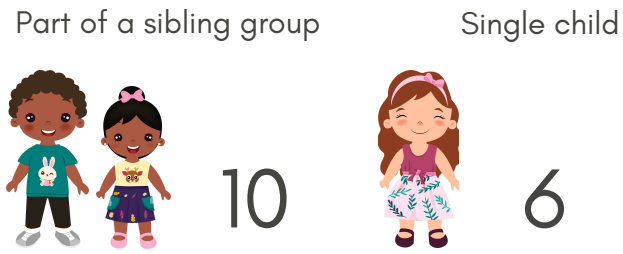
ADMs, Placement Orders and ADM not matched Kirklees

30
20
10
0

	Q2 2022-23	Q3 2022-23	Q4 2022-23	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24
ADM	5	5	1	3	11
Placement Orders	6	4	3	3	4
ADM not yet matched (period end)	19	22	19	19	25

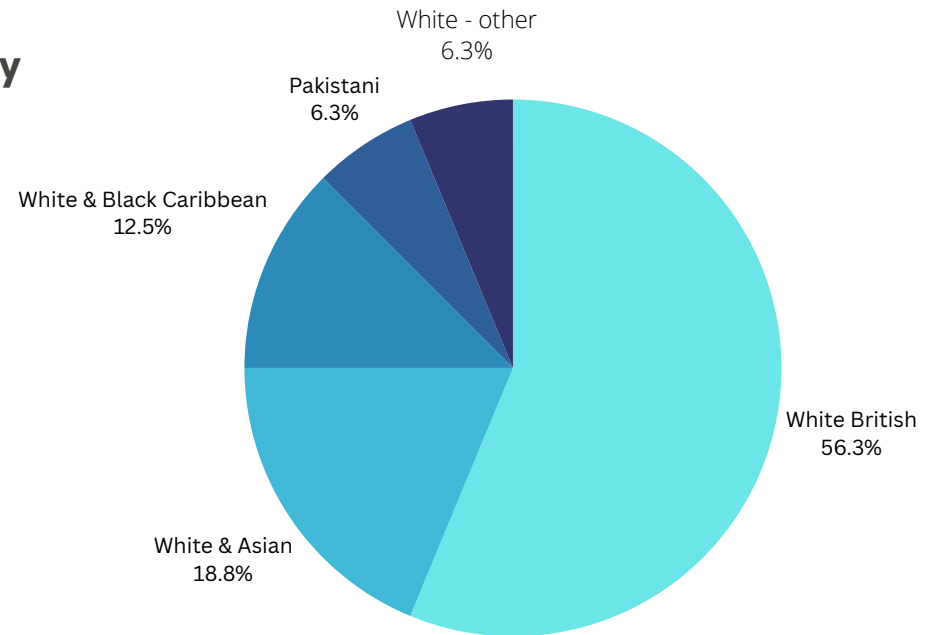
THE CHILDREN - DEMOGRAPHICS

At year end there were **16** children with a placement order but not matched.
Of those:



Ethnicity

White British	9	White & Asian	3
White & Black Caribbean	2	Pakistani	1
White - other	1		



THE CHILDREN - NARRATIVE

Of the **16** children with a placement order awaiting a match, **12** have characteristics which make them more difficult to find families for (aged 5 or over, need a family alongside a brother or sister, are from an ethnically diverse background or have a disability), **six** of whom have more than one characteristic.

Of the **four** children who would not be considered more difficult to find families for:

- One child had only received their Placement Order on 30th August and family finding was ongoing.
- One child had a potential family identified and a linking visit was planned.
- One child's foster carers had expressed an interest in adopting them and exploration/assessment of this was ongoing.
- For the fourth child family finding was ongoing and no links had been identified.

Three of the children considered more difficult to find families for had families identified. In the remaining **nine** children there were four sibling groups of two. For one pair of brothers' family finding was on hold following a disruption.

For another sibling group their foster carers had expressed an interest in being their permanent carers and this was being explored. Family finding was ongoing for the other two sibling groups. For the individual child a sibling was born, and a family member came forward for assessment, therefore family finding was placed on hold while care planning decisions were made.



For the **eight** children adopted in the period:

A10 indicator: *"The time taken between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, adjusted for those adopted by their foster carers"*

405 to 610 days (national target is 426 days)



A2 indicator: *"The time taken from a local authority receiving court authority to place a child for adoption and a match to an adoptive family being agreed"*

220 to 282 (the national target is 121 days)



One child took 1180 days from entering care and moving in with his adoptive family. It took 728 days to match him with a family following the making of a Placement Order. This little boy had several complex needs which significantly reduced the number of adoptive families able to care for him.

A sibling group of two children took 824 days from entering care and moving in with their adoptive family. It took 343 days from the making of a Placement Order to matching them with their family. The initial care plan was to place the children under an SGO with a family member. Sadly, this was not successful. A family was identified, but concerns emerged during the matching process and as a result did not progress to matching panel. Another family was quickly identified, but overall, there was some delay due to the initial match not progressing.

Without these three children, the A10 indicator is 410 days, which is in line with previous timescales and only just above the national indicator. The A2 indicator is 169 days, which is an improvement on previous timescales.



ADOPTION SUPPORT



	Q1&Q2 23/24	Compared to Q1&Q2 22/23
Children and families receiving adoption support	164	↑ +7
Families allocated to Early Advice & Support worker*	34	
File access requests	26	↓ -9
Applications to the Adoption Support Fund approved	51	↑
ASF funding for therapeutic interventions	£189,582	↓ -£59,817
811 letters processed by the Letterbox team	350 incoming	↑ +80
	261 outgoing	↑ +61
Appointments offered to Kirklees families by PAC-UK	65	=

*At half year end. These families are receiving universal support while waiting for another service, such as an adoption support assessment, allocation to a worker or support with maintaining connections.

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Date of Board: 05 March 2024

Data is as at 31st January 2024, unless stated otherwise.

Benchmarking Source: Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT – Nov 23) & Children's Social Care Benchmarking Tool (BMt) v3.41. Benchmarking data is from March 2023 unless stated otherwise. SN = Statistical Neighbours average, Eng. = England average. Where no equivalent published data is available, "N/A" is shown.

Children Entering Care, Children in Care and Placement Stability

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Jan-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	SN	Eng.
4.02.01 Children in care - numbers in care per 10,000 of age 0-17 population.	Per 10,000 population aged 0-17	62.6 (612)	63.2 (618)	63.4 (620)	62.6 (612)	93.0	71.3
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↓		
4.02.04 Children in care by placement within and outside the LA boundary: Total placed outside Kirklees and more than 20 miles from home address	% (number)	12.3% (75/612)	12.1% (75/618)	12.6% (78/620)	13.1% (80/612)	13.0%	17.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↑		
4.05.01 Placement Stability Within Year - CLA with three or more placements	% (number)	8.3% (51)	12.5% (77)	13.9% (86)	14.4% (88)	10.4%	10.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↑		
4.05.04 Social Worker change of CLA in care 12+ Months: Number of Social Worker changes	Number	229	359	345	355	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		
Average number of SW changes	Average	0.50	0.86	0.83	0.86	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- During the 12-month period from Feb 23 to Jan 24, the children looked after rate peaked at 63.4 (620 children) in Dec 23 and is currently 62.6 (612 children) in Jan 24. The current 12-month average for Kirklees is 61.7 (603 children), above our 31 March 2023 published rate of 60.6, and below the England 2023 rate of 71.3 and significantly below our Statistical Neighbours 2023 rate of 93.0.
- Of the 80 children placed outside of Kirklees and more than 20 miles from their home address, the large majority are placed in fostering and residential care. The full breakdown is as follows:

Placement Type	Number	%
Fostering	58	72.5%
Residential	10	12.5%
H5 - Hostel/Sup Res (Unregistered Provider)	3	3.8%
S1 - Residential School	3	3.8%
Placed for Adoption	2	2.5%
Placed with Parents	2	2.5%
YOI or Prison	1	1.3%
Secure Unit	1	1.3%
Total	80	

- The reasons for children and young people living at distance can be varied, such as specialist accommodation not available in our area, children and young people living with extended family, identified safeguarding reasons as well as availability of matched and/or suitable capacity of provision within our area at the point of need.
- The care planning and decision-making processes for children and young people is monitored and reviewed at Legal Gateway, Permanence and Children Accessing Service Panels that are chaired by a Head of Service. The panels consider the most effective route to securing stable and permanent arrangements for caring for our children and people and oversees the quality and timeliness of care planning and ensures that children and young people receive the right services at the right time, and that these are reviewed.
- The panels provide assurance of management oversight, accountability for decision making and can support practice improvement through identifying areas of best practice and areas for development.
- Our Senior Leadership Team (SLT) maintains effective oversight of our children and young people placed in external arrangements through a review panel held fortnightly and chaired by a Service Director. The purpose of the panel is to ensure effective oversight and accountability for our children who are not placed in Local Authority arrangements and provides a quality assurance function with appropriate challenge to ensure that plans for individual children progress.

What do we want to improve:

- Earlier identification where our children and young people's home arrangements may need additional support to intervene early and prevent a disruptive and potentially damaging breakdown in our children's living and care arrangements. Our Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) team, Fostering Service and Emotional Wellbeing teams work closely to support timely identification and earlier planning for children whose plans have the potential for them to return to their family.
- We have begun work to re-launch and promote our work related to reunification with a focus on the additional support that the MST team will provide as it becomes more embedded in the service.
- We are working to establish protected time for Team Managers to complete supervisions giving the increase in staff they are supervising and to remain focussed on the quality of the conversations with staff.
- We have met with the CiCC and are now supporting our social workers to write their personal profiles as agreed. This will support the relationships our social workers have and develop with their children and young people.
- Children and young people are to be provided with books and stickers to record direct work, wishes and feelings and any questions they wish to note for the social worker – this will be an individual offer to all though for those to take up as they wish.
- Improved alignment of our Children Looked After and Care Leaver teams to better support joint work and preparation for living independently and ensure that at this key transitional age of child to adult life we maximise support to protect against disconnection with services and support.

Children Looked After Reviews, Visits and Missing

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Jan-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	SN	Eng.
4.06.01: CLA Reviews Within Statutory Timescale	%	98.3%	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↔	↔		
4.07.01: CLA visits within statutory timescale: % of CLA visited in line with Kirklees Practice Standards	%	92.3% (567)	89.9% (549)	90.4% (545)	89.7% (547)	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↓		
4.09.02: Missing children: a. No. of CLA having at least one Missing episode per month	% (number)	2.5% (15)	1.6% (10)	1.0% (6)	1.1% (7)	11.3%	11.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↑		
b. No. of CLA that have more than one missing episode in the month (repeat Mispers)	% (number)	73.3% (11)	50.0% (5)	66.7% (4)	57.1% (4)	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↓		
4.09.03: Independent Return Interviews for CLA offered within 72 hours of the child being located	% (number)	77.8% (7/9)	23.1% (3/13)	50.0% (3/6)	50.0% (3/6)	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↔		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- 11 requests for Initial Review forms were received by the Child Protection and Review Unit (CPRU) for children to become Looked After in January 2024, relating to 18 children in total. 3 of these requests were for sibling groups, with largest sibling group of 5 children.
- 27% of the requests referred were for children who were already subject to Child Protection Plans at point of becoming Looked After, which was reduction from previous month but reflects our average monthly percentage. For all the referrals received, children and young people were allocated an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) within 24 hours and Initial Child Looked After Reviews were arranged within 4 weeks.
- In January 2024, 132 Review Meetings were held for Children looked After. 97.5% of these Review Meetings took place within required timescales. Independent Reviewing Officers closely monitor Child Looked After Review timescales to ensure that this high percentage is maintained whilst a clear rationale is recorded on a child's file if there are circumstances which result in a child's Review meeting not being held within statutory timescales.
- Children's Looked After Review meetings are well attended by a range of partner agencies, who commit to taking actions to improve children's experiences and outcomes.
- Independent Reviewing Officers robustly review children's care plans. They provide time-bound actions, which are followed up in between Review meetings to ensure that plans for children progress, and where drift and delay is identified this is raised via informal and formal resolution processes.
- From July 2023 allocated Independent Reviewing Officers have been required to undertake New into Care case audits. Findings are shared with the area social work Service Manager for oversight, and social work Team Managers. Key themes highlighting best practice and areas for practice and service improvement are captured in Child Protection and Review reports for senior managers in Children's Services.
- The Children's Rights team continue to provide advocacy for children and young people, along with supporting young people at their Looked After Review meetings and working with the Children in Care Council (CiCC) and Care Leavers Forum, both which meet on a regular basis.

- Team Managers for children in care meet with the Children in Care Council young people to obtain their wishes and feelings and consult with them in relation to areas of development and proposed changes to key documents. The CiCC and Care Leavers forum also meets with senior leaders. The new Head of Service for Children in Care meets with the groups regularly to consult with them.
- Currently there are 22 Independent Visitors matched with children and young people, and 20 young people previously referred are on a waiting list to be matched with an Independent Visitor. This continues to be reviewed to ensure that this remains an accurate reflection of demand on the service. A significant number of children on the waiting list have additional needs/ are out of area which impacts on matching. Of the 22 volunteers 2 are ready to be matched to young people with their previous IV relationships are due to end.
- The children in care service management team meet with the Children in Care Council young people to obtain their wishes and feeling along with consulting with them in relation to areas of development and proposed changes to key documents.
- There continues to be an emphasis on seeking to recruit Independent Visitors and successfully match with young people. We have recently received 2 applications to become an Independent Visitor following a recruitment drive.
- Management oversight and monitoring of statutory visits to our children and young people who are looked after ensures that we can quickly identify where visits are out of time or risk being so. Through this process we identify any trends or patterns of gaps in visits quickly and focus on areas for improvement such as the timely recording of visits. Our approach, together with management quality assurance activities enables us to consider timeliness, quality, and purposefulness of visits to children and young people as well as providing evidence of practice in relation key strengths and areas for improvement.

Missing CLA:

- The number of Children having at least one missing episode has seen a decrease an overall decrease in last 12 month (albeit at 0.1% increase was noted from previous month) average of 2.2%, remains considerably below the national average and statistical neighbours. The numbers used to calculate percentages are relatively low making shifts in percentage scales potentially volatile.
-
- The number of children looked after who have missing episodes has been low for a considerable period and remains low. (This is currently more than 50% lower than Jan 2023).
- The principles of 'Right Support, Right Person, at the Right Time' are consistently adopted when approaching an Independent Return Interview. Utilising familiarity and identifying the right person for the circumstances and placing the Young Person at the centre of the decision is the consistent approach undertaken. With very specific exceptions all Children and Young people are offered an independent return home interview (100%).
- The percentage of Children receiving an IRI within 72 hours has remained static over last two months and in line with the wider cohort of missing children. The principal of right person meant that although not always within 72 hours the best possible person undertook the task and ensured 100% of all accepted interviews were completed.
- Those completed within 72 hours of their return was 50%, however under those principles of utilising the right person 100% of all Independent Return Home interviews offered and accepted were completed.
- The number of children having multiple missing episodes has remained static in actual numbers, although the percentage rate has slightly decreased. This is determined from a very low overall number in the cohort of missing children. The slight fluctuation in the overall number of Children therefore creates a significant shift in the percentage and as such presents a volatile range.

- As per previous reports, all children's homes are being encouraged to review missing reporting strategies with the placing Local Authorities to ensure they are fit for purpose and have a clear expectation on the home to try all avenues to locate the child before reporting them missing.
- Daily Risk Exploitation and Missing Meetings (DREAMM) occur with partners to discuss, intelligence, missing episodes, and individual circumstances to ensure actions, and allocations are in keeping with the core principles placing the child at the centre.
- The Philomena Protocol is a Police initiative to help locate and safely return a young person as quickly as possible when they are missing. The basis of the scheme is for vital information about the young person to be recorded on a form so that this can be used to help locate them safely and quickly. The Philomena Protocol documents continue to be used by all children's homes and semi-independent providers in Kirklees (introduced in July 2020). A number of meetings have been held with providers recently to consider the protocol, the information within it and expectations that all providers use it. Feedback showed that children's homes and semi-independent providers like the protocol and that the information held means that children are located more quickly and that it aids the Police to do this. It was recognised by the police that more work needs to take place with the police call operators who receive the information as they are not all familiar with the protocol.
- West Yorkshire Police are undertaking a revised approach in accordance with an agreed national pilot. Though recently changed the lower numbers of missing episodes could be a reflection of the three steps undertaken when reporting a missing person. Levels of Intervention, No Immediate Intervention Required. Parental or Carer Intervention and Police Intervention. This approach may more accurately identify missing episodes and not unnecessarily create missing episodes that do not reflect the circumstances.

What do we want to improve:

- The Service Managers to continue to provide oversight of statutory visit compliance through the weekly performance meetings that are held within the service. Additionally there are fortnightly practitioner focused performance meeting chaired by the team manager to ensure all relevant support and development is in place for all staff.
- The report identifies the number of independent Return Home Interviews offered and accepted. Securing more IRI's remains a priority and together with securing those IRI's comes the requirement to ensure quality and value is maximised.
- The Youth Engagement has seen an increase in conversation from offer of IRI to Acceptance. This remains an ambition to constantly improve and harvest information that supports the young person and develops knowledge to reduce future missing episodes.

Children Looked After Education Outcomes

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Spring Term 22/23	Summer Term 22/23	Autumn Term 23/24	Benchmarking	
					SN	Eng.
4.10.02 Personal Education Plans (PEP) up to date (current school age CLA with PEP in the last term)	%	100%	100%	100%	N/A	N/A

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Cumulative	SN	Eng.
Initial PEP completed within 10 school days of Virtual School being notified child came into care	%	100% (11/11)	94.0% (16/17)	100% (15/15)	96% (101/105)	N/A	N/A

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Jan-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	SN	Eng.
CLA Persistent Absentees	%	22.6%	22.8%	24.0%	23.4%	17.3% (2021/22)	19.1% (2021/22)
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↓		
CLA with a mid-year school move	Number	14	12	5	4	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↓		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- 100% of PEPs were completed within the Autumn Term.
- Every young person is allocated to a member of our experienced Virtual School Team; therefore we know our young people well and their attendance, progress and attainment are reviewed so that we are able to challenge and support in a timely manner and relevant interventions can be put in place.
- We continue to work closely with social care to improve young people's educational experiences.

What do we want to improve:

- Improving attainment and progress for all young people
- Reducing the number of unauthorised absences in both frequency and duration
- Reduction in the number of young people who are classed as PA (Persistent Absenteeism 90%)
- Reducing the time young people are not in full time provision.
- Stabilising school placements for young people

Children Looked After Health

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Jan-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	SN	Eng.
4.11.11 Dental Checks within last 12 months - timeliness	%	60.9%	63.4%	63.9%	66.7%	76.7%	76.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		
4.11.12 Initial health Assessments completed on time - within 20 days	%	78.5%	32.6%	29.1%	22.3%	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↓		
4.11.13 Annual health assessments: a: Under 5's 6 month Developmental Assessments - percentage up to date	%	88.5%	85.4%	82.5%	85.2%	97.0%	88.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		
b: Over 5s Annual Health Assessments – percentage up to date	%	91.1%	85.1%	84.8%	83.5%	90.4%	89.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↓		
4.11.16 No. of CLA in care more than 12 month and identified as having a substance misuse problem during the last year	% (number)	0.87% (4)	0.96% (4)	0.96% (4)	0.97% (4)	2.86%	3.00%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

Initial health assessments (IHA):

- LA rolling 12-month data shows that **22.3%** were completed in the statutory timescale. This is in line with Locala monthly data (**21%**) for January.
- All younger children have a virtual assessment quickly with all concerned in attendance on the call. Health needs are identified, and a plan written for social care and the carer to action. Older children prefer a face to face only assessment. These are planned and form part of the waiting list alongside the younger ones waiting for their hybrid face to face with the paediatrician. The current waiting list is filled until the end April. The challenges are replicated across regional neighbours and is highlighted on the WY risk register. Prior to May 23 an average of 95% were in timescales with no waiting list.
- Several contributing factors e.g., continuing numbers coming into care incl. sibling groups, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and some older individuals who we are unable to engage in the process and require alternative options needing extra resource.
- There were 16 IHA timescale breaches for the Kirklees CLA related to; clinic availability, movement out of area to arrange, communication arrangements with SW & team capacity.
- The Business Case to consider additional nurse/doctor resource has been considered with agreements related to the nurse provision now being actioned. The doctor resource remains under commissioner consideration.

Review health assessments (RHA):

- Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that **85.2% & 83.5%** of the under and over 5-year-olds respectively, were completed in statutory timescales.
- Locala monthly data for January shows **100% & 97%** for under and over 5-year-olds respectively were completed in statutory timescales in the month they were due.

Dental Checks (attended) within last 12 months: at the point of their RHA.

- Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that **66.7%** of children aged 1+, had attended the dentist. Several factors are negatively affecting the recording. A working group has been established to look at aligning the data with Locala and using other collection methods avoiding a total reliance on once or twice-yearly recording at the RHA.

Children in Care – Children Looked After Health (cont.)

- Other factors affecting collection are an inability to record on LL when a child is 'in date' if they attended prior to becoming 'looked after', adoption rollback issue, at age 1 year +1-day children flagged as out of date automatically on LL.
- Locala monthly data for Jan shows that **100%** of children aged 5 years+ had attended the dentist at the point of their RHA.

Registered at dentist:

- Locala data shows **100%** of children aged 18m to 5 years & **80%** 5 years+ at the point of their RHA, were registered with a dentist.
- The use of the 'Flexible Commissioning Project' has supported CLA and care leavers to register. Children placed out of Kirklees, especially sibling groups may struggle to register, and some older young people may choose not to register.

Substance misuse:

- 4 (**0.97%**) young people are currently recorded as being significantly affected by substance misuse in their daily lives as recorded at their RHA. An alternative method of collecting this data is under consideration.

Immunisations: Locala

- 100% & 89% of under and over 5-year-olds respectively, were up to date with their immunisations at their RHA. Reasons for a lower uptake in older children can be related to the shortened schedule offered to UASC who generally have an unknown history, some young people may decline, and placement moves or moves to semi-independent living can impact.

Children Looked After Convictions

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Quarter				Benchmarking
		Jan-Mar 22/23 Q4	Apr-Jun 23/24 Q1	Jul-Sep 23/24 Q2	Oct-Dec 23/24 Q3	
4.12.01 Number of young people who have been looked after continually for 12 months or more aged between 10 and 17 who have offended and received a substantive outcome (Youth Caution/ Conditional Caution or a Court Order)	%	0.00% (0/343)	0.61% (2/326)	0.61% (2/326)	0.0% (0/326)	Kirk: 3.0% Eng.: 2.0% SN's: 3.3% Y&H: 2.0%
	Direction of Travel	↔	↑	↔	↓	

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- The number of Young People who have been looked after continually for 12 months or more aged 10 to 17 who have received a substantive outcome has fallen in comparison to previous year. It should be noted the cohort is very small in real terms.
- The Out of Court Disposal Panel is well attended with good representation. This enables greater insight into the Young Person's life journey and creates a confidence to use outcomes such as community resolution or outcome 22 (no further action).
- A substantive offence is a Youth Caution / Conditional Caution or Above.

What do we want to improve:

- Continued reduction in the numbers of Children Looked After offending. The overall cohort for the 23/24 year is smaller than the 22/23 year (326 compared to 343), but through continued interventions by the YJS, restorative processes, liaison with Children's Homes and creative out of court disposals it is hoped the offending rate will remain low.

- There is a focus around Looked After Children in our subgroups – specifically Subgroup 2 – Reducing offending and reoffending.

Care Leavers

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Jan-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	SN	Eng.
5.01.04 Children in care aged 17 years and 4 months with a Personal Advisor	%	91.4%	100.0%	100.0%	98.4%	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↔	↔	↓		
5.01.08 Local Authority In Touch with Care Leavers	%	94.2%	95.2%	92.8%	92.2%	95.0%	92.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↓		
5.01.09 Care Leavers in suitable accommodation	%	90.9%	91.6%	89.3%	87.9%	89.3%	88.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↓		
5.01.10 Care Leavers Employment, Education and Training (EET)	%	56.8%	57.2%	55.3%	54.7%	51.4%	56.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↓		
5.01.11 Number of Care Leavers with a Pathway Plan that is up to date	%	83.1%	93.9%	93.1%	94.1%	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- We are continuing to work with North Yorkshire as our partners in practice to support our Continuous improvement plan.
- Care Leaver experience has been accepted by Kirklees council as a protected characteristic which is significant move by the council and will support our efforts to protect care leavers from stigma and discrimination and support better outcomes for all care leavers.
- The Service is planning for an ‘ambassadors/champions’ event on the 7th of March to bring together prospective partners to support our care leavers across the authority.
- We are working with C&K Careers and wider partners to develop the range of opportunities to support care leavers access education, training, and employment opportunities across the spectrum of need.

What do we want to improve:

- Following our work with North Yorkshire we are now working with our Data and Insight team to establish better quality reporting of key areas of services delivery along with developing a refreshed approach to pathway planning based on best practice. This will also support our timeliness and quality of all key performance indicators including narrative behind low data sets as well as understanding what the barrier to recording in a timely manner is.
- We are Increasing young people’s engagement in the designed and activities based in the HUBS – this is beginning with increasing sessions being held as well as developing multi-agency attendance at drop ins and widening the support available. We have agreement of REAL employment to attend fortnightly sessions.

Care Leavers (cont.)

- We recognise that our Care Leaver's offer can be enhanced significantly through developing and extending our partnership arrangements to include businesses, and local charities and organisations within our area. We have engaged Huddersfield Town Foundation Trust and agreed that we will co-develop and deliver our new 'skills for independent living' programme with them to support care leavers succeeding in new tenancies and have the confidence and system to access support where needed.

Adoption

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Jan-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	SN	Eng.
5.02.01 Number of children adopted as a percentage of children leaving care (12 month rolling period)	% (number)	10.0% (21)	9.2% (23)	9.0% (23)	7.7% (19)	12.7%	9.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↓		
A10 Average timescale (days) between the child coming into care and being placed with the adopter adjusted for foster carer adoptions (12 month rolling period)	Number	448.4	575.2	575.2	593.9	501.0	480.0
	Direction of Travel		↑	↔	↑	(ASGLB Q1-Q4 2022/23)	(ASGLB Q1-Q4 2022/23)
A2 Average timescale (days) between receiving court authority to place a child and the council deciding to match the child with an adoptive family (12 month rolling period)	Number	204.7	248.9	248.9	253.3	193.0	197.0
	Direction of Travel		↑	↔	↑	(ASGLB Q1-Q4 2022/23)	(ASGLB Q1-Q4 2022/23)

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- We continue to prioritise brothers and sisters growing up together and where possible Early Permanence Placements are made, **which has led to performance being below statistical and national average performance. We do have a small number of children who are either part of sibling group, harder to place due to age, ethnicity or additional needs however ensuring children who have a plan for adoption are given the best opportunity for this to be secured remains our priority. Children who are waiting longer than we would want to be matched are reviewed by the Agency Decision Maker to ensure adoption remains the right plan.**
- Performance relating to % of children leaving care because of adoption is below our statistical and national England average against % percentage of children leaving care. Kirklees prides itself on the emphasis of children where it is not possible to return to birth family are able to remain within the extended family through other legal orders including Child Arrangement Orders and Special Guardianship Orders.
- We have good working relationships between Kirklees and One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY), to address challenges at the earliest point.
- Monitoring of the adoption cases and outcomes continues to take place through monthly tracking of adoption cases by Kirklees and OAWY Service Delivery Managers. This is embedded into our day-to-day arrangements with OAWY.

Adoption (cont.)

- Training from OAWY has been and will continue to be provided to Kirklees staff, to ensure understanding of the complexities of the adoption process and awareness raising from research/practice.
- Continued support from OAWY to practitioners to Kirklees staff in relation to adoption practice.
- Timely identification of harder to place children and provision of appropriate resources to progress linking and matching outside of One Adoption where needed.
- OAWY attend Legal Gateway with a view to being able to provide support and assistance for any adoption cases including consideration of Early Permanence.
- The Early Permanence Meetings, which are held fortnightly to discuss all children and their plans for adoption, is having a positive impact on ensuring at the earliest point decisions are made to secure permanency should reunification to birth parents ruled out.
- Agreed escalation processes where drift is identified from tracking and monitoring processes.
- Data integrity assurance has identified some practitioners are not triggering the correct pathway following ADM approval which potentially has impacted on the actual data performance reported negatively. Service Manager following becoming aware of the issue is meeting with other SMs to ensure appropriate pathways are rectified within Assessment and Intervention service areas.
- OAWY have secured national funding to support family finding for children who wait the longest for adoption and local provision of Early Permanence for older children/sibling groups. Kirklees children will be eligible for and benefit from these resources as the projects progress.

What do we want to improve:

- Appropriate adoption recording pathways triggered at point of ADM decision to ensure correct data collection on adoption pathways
- To increase the numbers of children placed through Early Permanence through early identification of children and increasing the number of EP adopters. This remains a key area for improvement.
- To ensure all children considered 'harder to place' are identified early for OAWY to commence family finding. For OAWY to continue taking an innovative approach to family finding for these children, ensuring that all avenues are proactively explored.
- To increase staff understanding of adoption, including Early Permanence, through training.
- Continue to jointly review cases where adoptions disrupt or breakdown to understand contributing factors to inform future practice.
- Finance staff and Service managers should review all available data at the time of formula reset to ensure all parties are clear what the apportionments are based on. This should commence swiftly to ensure it concludes in time for the 2024/25 refresh.

Fostering

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Jan-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	SN	Eng.
6.02.07 Total new Mainstream In-house Fostering approvals in the month	Number	1	1	1	1	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↔	↔		
Total new Connected Person Fostering approvals in the month	Number	0	4	2	0	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↔	↓	↓		
In-house Mainstream Fostering De-registrations in the month	Number	2	2	4	1	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↓		
In-house Connected Person Fostering De-registrations in the month	Number	2	2	2	0	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↔	↓		
6.02.09 Placements split: a. In-house foster placements	Number	170	168	156	158	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		
b. Family and friend placements (inc. Reg 24)	Number	138	102	108	112	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		
c. Independent Fostering Agency Placements	Number	165	168	171	169	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↓		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- In January 2024 there was 1 foster carer approval.
- There was 1 de-registration in January 2024, this was a foster carer who had retired after 23 years of fostering.
- The number of children placed with Kirklees foster carers stood at 158 in January 2024, above the 12-month average of 156.
- The number of Family and Friends Placements stood at 112 in January 2024, inclusive of Reg 24 Placements. The 12-month average is 116.
- The January 2024 there were 169 Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements. The 12-month average is 169.

What do we want to improve:

- Recruitment and retention of foster carers continues to be a priority. In February 2024 we are due to participate in a Foster Link diagnostic in conjunction with Department for Education. It is envisaged that the findings from this diagnostic visit will assist us in meeting our sufficiency needs around placements for children over the age of 10 years, children with complex needs, short notice / emergency placements and placements for sibling groups.
- In addition, work is being undertaken in respect of utilising current foster carers expertise to offer support, respite, and holiday placements. In we are completing quality assurance of all mainstream carers who have left the service in March 2024 to best understand how to support and retain foster carers.

Sufficiency – Foster Carers (cont.)

- We want to ensure that new foster carers receive the right level of support particularly in their first year of fostering; induction, training and support from a Supervising Social Worker are all essential aspects of supporting and retaining new foster carers. We are introducing a first year in fostering to support new foster carers.
- We continue to develop and implement policies and procedures for the Fostering Service on a monthly basis. This service improvement plan is regularly reviewed.

Appendix – Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
A&I	Assessment & Intervention (part of Family Support & Child Protection)
ADCS	Association of Directors of Children's Services
ASYE	Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (for a newly qualified Social Worker)
BSM	Business Support Manager
BSO	Business Support Officer
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation
CIC	Child(ren) in Care (see also CLA and LAC)
CIN	Child(ren) in Need
CLA	Child(ren) Looked After (also see CIC and LAC)
CPP	Child Protection Plan
CPRU	Child Protection & Review Unit
CSC	Children's Social Care
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CWD	Children with a Disability
D&A	Duty & Advice (part of Family Support & Child Protection)
DCS	Disabled Children's Service / Director of Children's Services
EET	Education, Employment or Training
EHC	Education, Health and Care (Plan)
EITS	Early Intervention and Targeted Support
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
Form F	Assessment form for approval of Foster Carers
HMIP	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons
HOS	Head of Service
ICPC	Initial Child Protection Conference
IFA	Independent Fostering Agency
IHA	Initial Health Assessment (for a Looked After Child)
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer
KNH	Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked After Child(ren) (also see CIC and CLA)
LAIT	Local Authority Interactive Tool (DfE tool for access to nationally published data)
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NQSW	Newly Qualified Social Worker
PA	Personal Advisor (to Care Leavers)
PEP	Personal Education Plan (for a Looked After Child)
PLO	Public Law Outline
QSW	Qualified Social Worker
RCPC	Review Child Protection Conference
RHA	Review Health Assessment (for a Looked After Child)
S17	Section 17 of the Children Act – Relates to Children in Need
S20	Section 20 of the Children Act – Relates to a child accommodated by the LA
S47	Section 47 of the Children Act – Relates to Child Protection
SDQ	Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SM	Service Manager
SN	Statistical Neighbours (closest match Local Authorities for benchmarking)
SW	Social Worker
TM	Team Manager
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child
Y&H	Yorkshire and the Humber
YOT	Youth Offending Team

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Date of Meeting	Issues for Consideration	Officer Contact
<p align="center">Tuesday 4th July 2023</p> <p align="center"><i>Report Deadline: Thursday 22nd June 2023</i></p> <p align="center"><i>Agenda Publish: Monday 26th June 2023</i></p>	<p align="center"><u>Pre-meeting (private)</u></p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p>Care leavers/ Children Looked After Overview Report</p> <p>Briefing note on Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children & Post-16 Education</p> <p align="center"><u>Public Items:</u></p> <p>Membership of the Board</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Strategy</p> <p>Virtual School Governing Body Update (verbal)</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan</p>	<p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metherringham /G Addy O Rix</p> <p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metherringham /G Addy</p> <p align="center">Board Members</p> <p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metherringham /G Addy V Metherringham/O Rix</p> <p align="center">Cllr Pattison /L Hallas</p> <p align="center">Board members</p> <p align="center">J Harris</p>

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<p>12th September 2023</p> <p><i>Report Deadline: Thursday 31st August 2023</i></p> <p><i>Agenda Publish: Monday 4th September 2023</i></p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p>Overview reports (Children Looked after and Care Leavers)</p> <p>Voice of Children and Young People (name TBC)</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Membership of the Board</p> <p>Terms of Reference</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>One Adoption West Yorkshire (Annual Report)</p> <p>Children’s Rights Team Annual report</p> <p>Overview of Children’s Residential Services</p> <p>Virtual School Governing Body Update (verbal)</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p>	<p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p>O Rix</p> <p>O Rix</p> <p align="center">Board Members</p> <p>J Harris</p> <p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p>M Rawlings</p> <p>A Gledhill /S Miles</p> <p>J Hanna</p> <p>Cllr Pattison/J Tolley</p> <p align="center">Board Members</p>
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	Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan	J Harris
<p>Tuesday 24th October 2023</p> <p><i>Report Deadline: Thursday 12th October 2023</i></p> <p><i>Agenda Publish: Monday 16th October 2023</i></p>	Pre-meeting (Informal)	
	Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)	O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metherringham /G Addy
	Overview Reports	O Rix
	Residential Update (verbal)	K Lord
	Virtual School Draft Headteachers Report	L Hallas
	Public Items:	
	Children’s Performance Highlight Report	O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metherringham /G Addy
	Virtual School Draft Headteachers Report	L Hallas
	Virtual School Governing Body Update (verbal)	Cllr Reynolds / L Hallas
	Children’s Ambition Board Update (verbal)	K Lord / V Metherringham
Updates from Board Members on interaction with services	Board Members	
Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan	J Harris	

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<p>Tuesday 5th December 2023</p> <p><i>Report Deadline: Thursday 23rd November 2023</i></p> <p><i>Agenda Publish: Monday 27th November 2023</i></p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Service acknowledgements and awards (verbal)</p> <p>Service Updates</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>Annual Health Report – Looked After Children Health Outcomes</p> <p>Annual report on Complaints and Compliments for Children in Care</p> <p>Update on Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SQD’s)</p> <p>Virtual School Governing Body Update (verbal)</p> <p>Childrens Ambition Board Update</p>	<p align="center">J Hanna / L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p align="center">J Hanna</p> <p align="center">V Metheringham / J Hanna</p> <p align="center">J Hanna / L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p align="center">G Addy</p> <p align="center">Nick Libell/ H Sanderson</p> <p align="center">N Mostowfi/ J Hanna</p> <p align="center">Cllr Reynolds / L Hallas</p> <p align="center">K Lord /V Metheringham</p>

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	<p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Next Steps (verbal)</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan</p>	<p align="center">Board Members</p> <p align="center">J Hanna/ V Metheringham</p> <p align="center">J Harris</p>
<p>Tuesday 23rd January 2024</p> <p><i>Report Deadline: Thursday 11th January 2024</i></p> <p><i>Agenda Publish: Monday 15th January 2024</i></p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p>Residential Update</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Head of Service Update</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>The Voice of Children and Young People and Care Experienced Young People</p> <p>Sufficiency Strategy</p>	<p align="center">J Hanna / L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p align="center">J Hanna</p> <p align="center">J Hanna / L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p align="center">J Hanna</p> <p align="center">Anna Gledhill</p>

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	<p>Fostering Annual Report</p> <p>Virtual School Governing Body Update (verbal)</p> <p>Children’s Ambition Board Update (verbal)</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan</p>	<p align="center">Anna Gledhill</p> <p align="center">K Lord / V Metheringham</p> <p align="center">Cllr Reynolds / L Hallas</p> <p align="center">V Metheringham/ K Lord</p> <p align="center">Board Members J Harris</p>
<p align="center">Tuesday 5th March 2024</p> <p align="center"><i>Report Deadline: Thursday 22nd February 2024</i></p> <p align="center"><i>Agenda Publish: Monday 26th February 2024</i></p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p>Youth Engagement Service – Our Looked After Children</p> <p>Children’s Residential Homes – Overview</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Head of Service Update</p>	<p align="center">J Hanna / L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy/I Mottershaw</p> <p align="center">I Mottershaw</p> <p align="center">J Hanna</p> <p align="center">J Hanna</p>

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	<p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>The Voice of Children and Young People and Care Experienced Young People</p> <p>Statement of Purpose for Residential Care (TBC)</p> <p>Virtual School Governing Body Update (verbal)</p> <p>Children’s Ambition Board Update (verbal)</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Agenda</p>	<p align="center">J Hanna / L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p align="center">J Hanna</p> <p align="center">K Lord</p> <p align="center">Cllr Reynolds /L Hallas</p> <p align="center">V Metheringham/ K Lord</p> <p align="center">Board Members</p> <p align="center">J Harris</p>
<p>Tuesday 23rd April 2024</p> <p><i>Report Deadline: Thursday 11th April 2024</i></p> <p><i>Agenda Publish: Monday 15th April 2024</i></p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p>Children’s Residential Homes – Overview</p>	<p align="center">J Hanna / L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p align="center">J Hanna</p> <p align="center">J Hanna</p>

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	<p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Head of Service Update</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>The Voice of Children and Young People and Care Experienced Young People</p> <p>Virtual School Governing Body Update (verbal)</p> <p>Children’s Ambition Board Update (verbal)</p> <p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Agenda</p>	<p>J Hanna / L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p>J Hanna</p> <p>Cllr Reynolds /L Hallas V Metheringham/ K lord</p> <p>Board Members</p> <p>J Harris</p>
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Standing Items (as on Agenda Plan)

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Attendance by Strategic Director Update on the Role of Corporate Parent

- (SD Growth and Regeneration) Last seen March 2022
- (SD Environment and Climate Change – Last seen March 2022
- (SD CCG’s Chief Officer – Last seen February 2022)
- (SD Children’s Services – September 2022

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- (SD Adults and health – January TBC)
- (SD Corporate Strategy/Public Health – tbc)
- (Police Colleague (TBC)

Children's Performance Highlight Report CIC and Fostering/Children's Homes

Virtual School Governing Body Update (verbal)

Children's Ambition Board Update (verbal)

Updates from Board Members on interaction with services

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Items for consideration /to schedule :

Statement of Purpose for Fostering

Statement of Purpose for Residential Care

Report on Accommodation

Fostering Annual Report

Pathway planning report

Missing report

The Sufficiency Strategy Update

Supported Lodgings Scheme

Supported Lodgings / Post 18 Provision

Report of Adoption – to consult with OAWY new municipal year

A report from the virtual School re Post 16 attainment.

Ethnicity of LAC and foster carers.

Annual / 6 monthly reports:-

- 6 monthly report on Children's Rights (Oct to March) (June)
- Annual Report on work of the Children's Rights) April onwards
- 6 monthly report on Independent Visitors Scheme (Oct to March)

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- Annual report on Complaints and Compliments for Children in Care (January)
- Annual report on children who go missing from care
- Annual report on children and young people placed outside the Kirklees boundary
- Annual Health Report (report on health of looked after children) December
- Annual Report on Kirklees Fostering Service January
- OAWY – Annual (highlights report on Kirklees performance data)
- OAWY – 6 monthly report (June/July)