

Public Document Pack



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

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Monday 4 September 2023

Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

Corporate Parenting Board

The **Corporate Parenting Board** will meet in **Meeting Room 3 - Town Hall, Huddersfield** at **10.15 am** on **Tuesday 12 September 2023**.

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

Ophelia Rix

Christine Carmichael

Colleen Kenworthy

Barry Lockwood

Keith Fielding

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

Head of Service for Children in Care, Care Leavers & Looked after Children

Kirklees Fostering Network

Kirklees Fostering Network

Kirklees Fostering Network

Kirklees Fostering Network

Care Leavers

Care Leavers

Agenda

Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

Pages

1: Membership of the Board/Apologies

To note the Membership of the Board and to receive apologies for absence from those Members who are unable to attend the meeting.

2: Terms of Reference

1 - 4

To agree an amendment to the membership in the Terms of Reference of the Board.

Contact:

Jodie Harris, Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer

3: Minutes of the Previous Meeting

5 - 10

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on the 4th July 2023.

4: 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.

5: 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.

6: 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.

7: 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

8: Children's Performance Highlight Report

13 - 26

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

Contacts:

Ophelia Rix, Head of Service for Children in Care, Care Leavers and Looked After Children

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

9: One Adoption West Yorkshire Annual Report

27 - 68

The Board will receive the One Adoption West Yorkshire Annual Performance Report – Kirklees Highlights. and the One Adoption West Yorkshire Annual Report 2022-2023.

Contact:

Michelle Rawlings, Head of One Adoption West Yorkshire.

10: Children's Rights Team Annual Report

69 - 94

The Board will consider the Annual Report of the Children's Rights Team for 2022-23.

Contact:

Lucy Fearnley, Team Manager for Quality Assurance and Safeguarding
Zoe Prince, Fostering Service Manager

11: Overview of Children's Residential Services

95 - 100

The Board will consider a report providing an overview of, and update on developments within, the children's residential estate.

Contact:

Joel Hanna, Head of Service, Sufficiency for Children and Young People

12: Virtual School Governing Body Update

The Board will receive a verbal update in respect of the Virtual School Governing Body.

Contact:

Janet Tolley, Executive Headteacher of the Virtual School

13: 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

14: Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2023/24

101 -
110

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

Contact:

Jodie Harris, Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer

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Corporate Parenting Board – Terms of Reference Amendment

To agree the Terms of Reference following an amendment to the Membership of the Board (i) That the Principal Social Worker be removed from the Membership.

The new membership to be approved is as follows:

Terms of Reference

The Corporate Parenting Board supports the delivery of a Corporate Parenting Strategy across the Council and is driving the improvements in corporate parenting as identified in the Improvement Action Plan arising from the recommendations made by Ofsted following their Inspection in September 2016.

At the meeting of Council on 24 June 2015, a decision was taken to establish a Corporate Parenting Board and since then the Board has been reconstituted annually and the Terms of Reference updated. This Board is non-decision making and is not subject to access to information rules. This report seeks approval for the Board to be re-constituted for the 2019-2020 Municipal Year on a 1:1:1:1 ratio and based upon the Terms of Reference as set out below;

Purpose: To ensure that the Council fulfills its responsibilities as good corporate parents for all their children in care.

The Corporate Parenting Board is accountable to Full Council through its Cabinet. Initial reporting of concerns will be escalated by the cabinet portfolio holder to appropriate governance bodies including Cabinet.

The Board will meet for a minimum of six times per annum (bi-monthly).

Membership:

Cabinet Portfolio Holder (with responsibility for Children)
Elected Members representing all political parties
Chair of Children's Scrutiny Panel (ex-officio Member) or his/her nominee
Director of Children's Services
Service Director, Family Support and Child Protection
Service Director, Learning and Early Support
Service Director, Resources, Improvement and Partnerships
Chair of Governors
Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency)
Head of Corporate Parenting (Children in Care and Care Leavers)
Virtual School Head Teacher
Virtual School Chair or Vice Chair of Governing Body
Integrated Commissioning Manager
Interim Head of Service (Safeguarding and Quality Assurance - Children)
Designated Nurse for Looked after children
Representatives from Kirklees Fostering Network
Care Leavers Advocate (Family Support and Child Protection)

Social Work Practice Lead (Team Manager for Children's Rights, Compliments and Complaints Unit and Legal Project Officers)

Representatives from a range of services and partner agencies will be invited as appropriate and will receive papers including: Kirklees College, Calderdale and Kirklees Careers, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, Sufficiency Team, Performance Team and Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing

Terms of Reference:

- 1 There is a requirement that all Board Members will make enquiries or visit services and partners to assist in exploring the role of the Council as a Corporate Parent and report back to the Board.
- 2 To consider and recommend ways in which the Council can improve the life chances of all children in care and care leavers.
- 3 To advise the Council's Cabinet and other governance bodies of actions that need to be taken.
- 4 To bring to the attention of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee any areas which may warrant Scrutiny consideration
- 5 To ensure there are good partnerships between council departments and partner agencies and that Council services and partners are held to account for their strategies and operational delivery.
- 6 To provide an opportunity for the voice of our children and young people to inform the considerations and recommendations of the Board.
- 7 To maintain a strategic overview of new developments, initiatives, plans, policies and strategies that impact on services for children and young people in or leaving our care.
- 8 To monitor the performance of the Council by receiving regular progress reports on all performance data relating to Corporate Parenting Services.
- 9 To receive regular reports on the progress and needs of care leavers including employment, further education, training, housing and health.
9. To consider statutory reports from the Adoption and Fostering Services, Independent Reviewing Officers, Residential and Youth Offending Teams and make recommendations.
10. To agree an annual work programme setting out its key priorities and areas for action.
11. To prepare an Annual Report on the areas considered by the Board, including its work programme, for presentation to Council and Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Board.
12. To acknowledge and celebrate in the achievements of children and young people in care and support and participate in annual celebration events.

13. Review on an annual basis the Statements of Purpose of the Kirklees Fostering Service and Kirklees Registered Children's Homes

14. To receive an Annual Report on:-

- One Adoption (West Yorkshire)
- Children who go missing from care
- Health of looked after children
- The educational outcomes for looked after children
- The work of the Leaving Care Service
- Children and young people placed outside the Kirklees boundary
- Youth Offending Team relating to their work with children in care
- Private Fostering Service
- Children's Rights and Advocacy
- Complaints and Compliments
- Membership and Terms of Reference of the Board
- The Sufficiency of Placements for Children in Care

Contact Officer: Jodie Harris

KIRKLEES COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Tuesday 4th July 2023

Present: Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)
Councillor John Lawson
Gill Addy, Designated Nurse for Looked After Children and Care Leavers
Kieran Lord, Interim Service Director: Resources, Improvements & Partnerships
Louise Hallas, Virtual School Head Teacher
Stewart Horn, Head of Joint Commissioning, Children and Families
Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director for Learning and Early Support
Vicky Metheringham, Service Director - Family Support and Child Protection

Apologies: Councillor Karen Allison, Councillor Richard Smith, Councillor Carole Pattison, Councillor Elizabeth Reynolds, Councillor Andrew Cooper (ex-officio), Keith Fielding (Kirklees Fostering Network), Colleen Kenworthy (Kirklees Fostering Network), Ophelia Rix (Head of Service for Children in Care, Care Leavers and Looked After Children)

1 Membership of the Board/Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Karen Allison, Councillor Richard Smith, Councillor Carole Pattison, Councillor Elizabeth Reynolds, Councillor Andrew Cooper (ex-officio), Keith Fielding (Kirklees Fostering Network), Colleen Kenworthy (Kirklees Fostering Network), Ophelia Rix (Head of Service for Children in Care, Care Leavers and Looked After Children)

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 28 March 2023 be approved as a correct record.

3 Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

All items took place in public session.

5 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Children's Performance Highlight Report

The Board considered the latest Children's Performance Highlights Report in respect of the performance monitoring data for Children's Services.

Vicky Metheringham, Service Director - Family Support and Child Protection highlighted the following points in relation to :

- During the 12-month period from Jun 22 to May 23, the number of children looked after peaked at 64.3 (630 children) in Oct 22 and has since decreased to 61.3 (601 children) in May 23. The current 12-month average for Kirklees is 62.4 (612 children), marginally above the 31 March 2022 published rate of 62.0, but below the England 2022 rate of 70.0 and significantly below our Statistical Neighbours 2022 rate of 92.0.
- Of the 68 children placed outside of Kirklees and more than 20 miles from their home address, the large majority are placed in fostering.
- The Heads of Service continue to have oversight of permanency planning through Legal Gateway and Permanence Panel. The panels are held weekly to ensure consistency regarding decision making and care planning for children and young people. The panels also provide a quality assurance framework and opportunity to evidence good practice and areas for development.
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) maintains oversight of children and young people placed in external placement through review panel held monthly and chaired by the Service Director. The purpose of the panel is to ensure better oversight of children who are not placed in Local Authority provision and provides a quality assurance function in that it provides high support and challenge as required to avoid drift and delay in care planning for children and young people.
- The number of social work changes remains a focus to ensure we are minimising the impact on children and young people children as it is important that we maintain and continue to strengthen relationships. This will remain a challenge due to the recruitment of Social Work Practitioners, of which is not just specific to Kirklees Council. We are mindful of the impact this has on our children and young people and to address this we recruited youth engagement and family support practitioners who continue to develop relationships and provide additional support and stability for the children and young people they are working with. In addition, all young people aged 17 now have an allocated personal advisor, to ensure earlier planning to adulthood and independent living. We will also continue to focus on staff retention and consistency in case allocation.
- There had been a slight increase in relation to the number of children who have had 3 or more home moves. This remains a focus to ensure stability is provided to our children and young people. It was reported that work across service is taking place to address this.
- With regard to convictions it was reported that there had been zero in quarters 3 and 4 due largely to the focus and positive work of the sub groups.

Corporate Parenting Board – 28 March 2023

- 17 requests for Initial Review forms were received by the Child Protection and Review unit for Children to become Looked After in May 2023, relating to 30 children in total - an increase on the previous month. 9 of the requests were for sibling groups of 2 or more, which is also higher than usual. 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 of the children and young people becoming Looked After. One child ceased to be Looked After within one week as their parents ended their agreement to Section 20, and the Local Authority agreed with this decision.
- With regard to contact with care leavers there has been a decrease in relation to the number of Care Leavers we were in touch with during this month. This also has to be viewed in the context of this group being aged 18 plus and, in some situations, young people do not wish to keep in contact with their Personal Advisor. The team continue to work innovatively to keep in touch with all young people and we are confident that our post 18 young people all are aware of the support of offer if required.

Louise Hallas, the Virtual School Head Teacher provided an update in relation to Children Looked After Educational Outcomes and explained that:

- There had been good performance at Key Stage 4 and low Exclusion rate in comparison to national data.
- 100% of PEPs have been completed within the Spring Term with 98% initial PEPs completed within 10 school days.
- The Virtual School is currently leading on all PEPs which are virtually held meetings.
- Work continues with social care to improve young people's educational experiences.

Gill Addy, the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children and Care Leavers updated the Board in relation to the health data, which provided both twelve-month rolling and monthly figures:

- LA rolling 12-month data showed that 75.8% of initial health assessments were completed in the statutory timescale.
- Locala monthly data for May showed that 92% of initial health assessments were completed in the 20-day timescale. 2 breaches of timescales due to placement of children in another LA delaying arrangements.
- With regard to review health assessments (RHA), Kirklees rolling 12-month data showed that 89.2% & 89% of the 'Developmental' assessments (under 5yrs old) and 'Annual' assessments (over 5 yrs. old) respectively, were completed in statutory timescales.
- Locala monthly data for May shows that 50% & 68% for under and over 5 years olds respectively, were completed in timescales. 16 breaches (7x staff sickness in Locala, 4x difficulty arranging, 1x referred back to specialist team, 2x capacity, 1x unable to engage, 1 unknown)
- The Business Case to consider additional nurse resources remains under commissioner consideration.

Corporate Parenting Board – 28 March 2023

- With regard to dental checks at the point of their RHA, Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that 56.2% of children aged 1+, had attended the dentist. Several factors affecting the recording have been found and are being followed up.
- Locala monthly data for May shows that 100% of children age 18months to under 5 yrs., and 94% 5 years+, had attended the dentist at the point of their RHA.
- Locala data shows 88% & 96% of children age 18m to 4 years and 5 years+ respectively 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 with a dentist.

During discussion of the performance report and data, Board Members raised the following issues and questions:

- Board Members welcomed the 100% PEP rate and enquired about confidence in maintaining this level of performance. In response, Louise Hallas highlighted the strength of the team and explained that strong performance in this area had continued over the previous 2 years.
- In response to a question relating to preventing absenteeism, Louise Hallas explained that work was ongoing to ascertain whether the data was accurate in all cases as often incorrect coding of absences can result in unauthorised absences being recorded wrongly. Where cases of unauthorised absence are highlighted work is done on an individual case basis to improve attendance.
- With regard to the issue of substance misuse, the Chair acknowledged the relatively low numbers and the work that was ongoing with all services.
- The Chair highlighted the importance of Directorates and partner organisations being encouraged to offer opportunities through work, training and apprenticeships
- Board Members acknowledged to good fostering offer in Kirklees in terms of the support given to foster carers. The Chair re-iterated the importance of all Board Members encouraging people to come forward as potential foster carers.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7 **Corporate Parenting Strategy**

The Board considered the Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2022-2024 which set out the approach to improving the lives of all children in care. The strategy set out the Council's vision for corporate parenting to ensure that all of our elected members and officers and everyone else in the Council champion our children in care and care leavers in everything they do and that our children in care and care leavers aspire and achieve, are safe and well, and are prepared for successful independent lives. In addition to the vision the Strategy set out 3 key pledges and associated actions, namely:

We will be a good corporate parent to children in care and care leavers. We will...

a. Listen to the needs of children in care and care leavers and to our health and education partners;

Corporate Parenting Board – 28 March 2023

- b. Encourage elected members and officers from across the Council to advocate and champion children in care and care leavers;
- c. Design services that work with children in care and care leavers to meet their needs, not doing to them.

We will create the conditions for our children in care to thrive in stable placements. We will...

- a. Create the conditions for placements of the right kind, including attracting and retaining more foster carers;
- b. Support all our children to aspire and achieve in education and training and to be as healthy and well as possible;
- c. Work with partners to assess future placement, education, and health.

We will support our care leavers into independence at a pace that suits them.

We will...

- a. Work with our children in care.
- b. We will work with families so they are ready to support them on leaving care, when appropriate;
- c. Create the conditions for positive, lasting relationships.

During discussion of this item, Councillor Lawson welcomed the reference to special guardianship orders and thanked all staff, foster carers and partners for their work in bringing the strategy together. All Board Members were encouraged to widely share the pledges set out in the strategy.

8 Virtual School Governing Body Update

Louise Hallas, the Virtual School Head Teacher provided a verbal update in relation to the Virtual School Governing Body. It was reported that focus had been on part time timetable, attendance and the impact that suspensions could have on attendance. The final headteachers head teacher report was considered at the last meeting in light of the updated DfE data. Work had also been undertaken in respect of children with a social worker, this strategic work and casework had been developed to improve performance in this area. It was reported that DfE data is strong for children in need.

9 Updates from Board Members on Interaction with Services

Board Members commented on interactions since the last meeting and continued to welcome invites to the various events

The Chair reported that she had:

- Attended foster carers awards
- Undertook home visit to a young person
- Attended 3 listening events
- Attended a staff engagement session to say goodbye to the Director of Children's Services, Mel Meggs.

10. Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2022/23

The Board considered the agenda plan for 2023/24.

Resolved –

Corporate Parenting Board – 28 March 2023

That the following items be considered as part of the agenda for the next meeting:

- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire Update
- Health Outcomes for Looked After Children

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.

Date of Board: 12 September 2023

Data is as at 31st July 2023, unless stated otherwise.

*Benchmarking Source: Children's Social Care Benchmarking Tool (BMT) V3.29. Benchmarking data is from March 2022 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	
		Jul 22	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	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	62.9 (617)	61.2 (600)	61.6 (604)	61.6 (604)	92.0	70.0
	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)	13.5% (83/617)	11.3% (68/600)	11.9% (72/604)	10.8% (65/604)	12.0%	16.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↓		
4.05.01 Placement Stability Within Year - CLA with three or more placements	% (number)	9.6% (59)	7.8% (47)	7.9% (48)	8.8% (53)	9.0%	10.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↑		
4.05.04 Social Worker change of CLA in care 12+ Months: Number of Social Worker changes	Number	305	250	225	273	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		
Average number of SW changes	Average	0.63	0.58	0.52	0.65	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- During the 12-month period from Aug 22 to Jul 23, the number of children looked after peaked at 64.2 (629 children) in Oct 22 and has since decreased to 61.6 (604 children) in Jul 23. The current 12-month average for Kirklees is 62.1 (609 children), marginally above our 31 March 2022 published rate of 62.0, but below the England 2022 rate of 70.0 and significantly below our Statistical Neighbours 2022 rate of 92.0.
- Of the 65 children placed outside of Kirklees and more than 20 miles from their home address, the large majority are placed in fostering. The full breakdown is as follows:

Placement Type	Number	%
Fostering	50	76.9%
Residential	6	9.2%
Placed for Adoption	3	4.6%
YOI or Prison	2	3.1%
Hostel/Supported Accommodation (not subject Children's Home regs)	2	3.1%
S1 - Residential School	1	1.5%
Other / unknown	1	1.5%
Total	65	

- The care planning and decision-making processes for children and young people has Senior Manager oversight through Legal Gateway, Permanence and Children Accessing Service Panel. The panels consider the most effective route to securing permanency for a child or young person, oversees the quality and timeliness of care planning and ensures that children and young people receive the right services at the right time.
- The panels provide assurance that management oversight, the performance of practitioners is understood, and clear actions and timescales are in place to address practice of concern and highlight evidence of good practice.
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) maintains oversight of children and young people placed in external placement through review panel held monthly and chaired by the Service Director. The purpose of the panel is to ensure better oversight of children who are not placed in Local Authority provision and provides a quality assurance function in that it provides high support and challenge as required to avoid drift and delay in care planning for children and young people.
- Permanence and timely accessing of early support services has been achieved through Family Group Conference (FGC) service that is a family-led meeting in which the family and friends network come together to make a plan for a child and the promotion of Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) that provide an alternative legal status for children that offers greater security than long term fostering but without the severance from the birth family that stems from an Adoption Order. Since January 2023 we have successfully supported 40 children to remain within their family network subject of Special Guardianship Order.

What do we want to improve:

- The service will continue to work with the Placement Support team and the Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) team to collaboratively support improving placement stability for our children and young people with a focus on integrating strength-based approaches and tools into practice.
- Reduce number of children placed more than 20 miles from their home address. We aim to recruit more local foster carers to provide more local placement options.
- Ongoing work regarding placement stability is being undertaken jointly with practitioners and partners to address the challenges and ensure good homes are available for our children and young people.
- There has been an increase in relation to the number of children who have had 3 or more home moves. This remains a focus to ensure we provide stability to our children and young people to engage the emotional wellbeing team sooner to support the children and carers the issues to mitigate against children having to move.
- We have seen an increase in the number Social Worker changes in Jul 23, due to staff leaving. We have successfully recruited 4 new social workers to commence in September 2023. We will maintain weekly manager oversight, we should see an improvement in this data from October 2023

Children Looked After Reviews, Visits and Missing

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				*Benchmarking	
		Jul 22	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	SN	Eng.
4.06.01: CLA Reviews Within Statutory Timescale	%	97.6%	98.2%	98.0%	98.3%	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↑		
4.07.01: CLA visits within statutory timescale: % of CLA visited in line with Kirklees Practice Standards	%	94.6% (573)	87.9% (524)	89.9% (543)	94.5% (566)	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)	2.3% (14)	2.7% (16)	2.2% (13)	2.8% (17)	8.7%	10%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		
b. No. of CLA that have more than one missing episode in the month (repeat Mispers)	% (number)	42.9% (6)	37.5% (6)	38.5% (5)	41.2% (7)	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)	87.5% (7/8)	44.4% (4/9)	58.3% (7/12)	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- 17 requests for Initial Review forms were received by the Child Protection and Review unit for Children to become Looked After in July 2023, relating to 23 children in total - an increase on the previous month. 3 of the requests were for sibling groups of 2 or more, which was a lower number than usual. 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 of the children and young people becoming Looked After.
- In July 2023 the Child Protection and Review Unit held 149 Looked After Review Meetings for children, of which all but four were held within 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- From June 2023 onwards allocated IRO's for children New into Care have been routinely undertaking a New into Care case audit. Findings are shared with the area social work Service Manager for their oversight and with social work Team Managers. Key themes highlighting best practice and areas for practice and service improvement will be highlighted in monthly CPRU reports for managers and senior Managers across the 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 and Care Leavers Forum, both which meet on a regular basis with managers at all levels attending.

- Our children and young people along with care leavers views are also obtained during Time to Talk sessions with senior managers which are scheduled until the end of year. These sessions have recently ascertained the views of young people in respect of celebration events, and 17 young people recently attended a trip to Chester Zoo on 01 August 23.
- There continues to be an emphasis on seeking to recruit Independent Visitors and successfully matched with young people.
- There has been an increase in the percentage of Children in Care who have a recorded statutory visit in line with practice standards. We continue to have weekly oversight and monitoring of the visits as part of our service performance meetings. The meetings focus on timeliness and quality of visits to young people as well as providing evidence of practice in relation key strengths and areas for further development.
- There has been an increase in the percentage of Children in Care who have a recorded statutory visit in line with practice standards. We continue to have weekly oversight and monitoring of the visits as part of our service performance meetings. The meetings focus on timeliness and quality of visits to young people as well as providing evidence of practice in relation key strengths and areas for further development.

Missing CLA:

- The number of Children having at least one missing episode has seen an increase, however the 12 month average of 2.6%, 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 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 was higher than recent previous 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.
- 100% of all Independent Return Home interviews offered and accepted were completed.
- The number of children having multiple missing episodes has seen a rise since last month but predominantly remained stable. The percentage rate of these children 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.
- 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	Summer Term 21/22	Autumn Term 22/23	Spring Term 22/23	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%		
	Direction of Travel	-	-	-		

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Cumulative	SN	Eng.
Initial PEP completed within 10 school days of Virtual School being notified child came into care	%	100% (24/24)				N/A	N/A

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Jul 22	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	SN	Eng.
CLA Persistent Absentees	%	26.8%	23.2%			28.4% (2020/21)	30.4% (2020/21)
	Direction of Travel		↓				
CLA with a mid-year school move	%	1	3			N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓				

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- Good performance at Key Stage 4 and low Exclusion rate in comparison to national data.
- 100% of PEPs have been completed within the Summer Term with 99% initial PEPs completed within 10 school days.
- The Virtual School is currently leading on all PEPs which are virtually held meetings.
- 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 at Key Stage 2
- 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%)
- Increase in overall attendance percentage
- 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	
		Jul 22	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	SN	Eng.
4.11.11 Dental Checks within last 12 months - timeliness	%	60.2%	56.2%	62.5%	64.3%	73.0%	70.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		
4.11.12 Initial health Assessments completed on time - within 20 days	%	79.6%	75.8%	72.5%	67.9%	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	%	89.0%	89.2%	82.1%	89.7%	82.6%	89.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		
b: Over 5s Annual Health Assessments – percentage up to date	%	93.9%	89.0%	88.9%	90.1%	92.2%	91.0%
	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)	1.03% (5)	0.70% (3)	0.70% (3)	0.48% (2)	3.0%	3.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↓		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

Initial health assessments (IHA):

- LA rolling 12-month data shows that **67.9%** were completed in the statutory timescale.

- Locala monthly data for July shows that **31%** were completed in the 20-day timescale. This significant decrease from the usual 90%+ is a result of several factors including continuing increase numbers coming into care incl. unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), increasing complexities of need, increasing requests from OLA to complete on their behalf as placed in Kirklees, capacity of doctor & nurses time. The extra clinics that have been scheduled have a knock-on effect for completion of medical reports.
There were 10 IHA timescale breaches for the Kirklees CLA related to clinic availability & capacity to complete and 1 'was not brought'. There were 3 late requests from other LA's.
- The Business Case to consider additional nurse resource/alternative CLA Health model which would support the whole team remains under commissioner consideration with a resubmission due to the ICB shortly.

Review health assessments (RHA):

- Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that **89.7% & 90.1%** of the 'Developmental' assessments (under 5yrs old) and 'Annual' assessments (over 5 yrs. old) respectively, were completed in statutory timescales.
- Locala monthly data for July shows that **100% & 59%** for under and over 5 years olds respectively, were completed in timescales. 13 breaches were related to capacity to complete by the exact date in the month. In line with the DfE guidance SSDA903, Locala from September will record RHA's as 'in date' if completed in the month they are due. Discussions are underway to look at aligning the LA data processing with this. This will remove unwarranted pressure on health practitioners to complete by an exact date in the month, which is affected by weekends, bank holidays, carer arrangements, sickness, holidays etc.

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

- Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that **64.3%** of children aged 1+, had attended the dentist. Several factors are still affecting the recording, as there are anomalies in the 155 currently showing as 'not attended'. A meeting is planned to look at alternatives to accessing the data without reliance on the RHA and issues with rollback administration for children adopted.
- Locala monthly data for July shows that **75%** of children age 18months to under 5 yrs., and **91%** 5 years+, had attended the dentist at the point of their RHA.

Registered at dentist:

- Locala data shows **82%** of children age 18m to 17yrs 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.

Substance misuse:

- **2** young people (**0.4%**) have admitted or are known to use substances that have a significant impact on their daily life when asked at their last RHA. All have been discussed with the local Substance Misuse Outreach worker, to ensure support has been offered. Those reaching 18 years old are removed from the data.
- If a young person declines their RHA, a check is made with the social worker to ascertain if substance use is an issue. Any young person misusing substances at any level is offered support.

Immunisations:

- **100% & 70%** of under and over 5-year-olds respectively, were up to date with their immunisations. Reasons for a lower uptake in older children can be related to UASC who generally have an unknown history and are on a shortened schedule that can only be achieved over a period of time, some young people may decline, and placement moves or moves to semi-independent living can negatively impact take up.

Children Looked After Convictions

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Quarter				*Benchmarking
		Jul-Sep 22/23 Q2	Oct-Dec 22/23 Q3	Jan-Mar 22/23 Q4	Apr-Jul 23/24 Q1	
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)	%	1.75% (6/343)	0.00% (0/343)	0.00% (0/343)	0.31% (1/326)	(2021/22) Eng.: 2.0% SN's: 4.0% Y&H: 2.0%
	Direction of Travel	↔	↓	↔	↑	

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- For the year April 18 to March 19, 65.8% of Children Looked After successfully completed their interventions but is however a much-improved picture from 2016 when less than 30% of Children Looked After successfully completed their interventions
- For the year April 19 to March 20, 90.9% of Children Looked After successfully completed their interventions which in comparison with last year, 65.8%, is an increase of over 25%.
- For the year April 20 to March 21, 87.7% of Children Looked After successfully completed their interventions. Whilst this performance is slightly worse than the same period of the previous year, it remains in line with that of the general population successfully completing their intervention.
- For the year April 21 to March 22, 64.3% of interventions completed by Children Looked After were completed successfully compared to 72.8% of the general population. This is a reduction in Children Looked After completion from the same period of last year which was 87.7%, whilst the general population remains broadly the same.
- For the year April 22 to March 23, 60.6% of interventions completed by Children Looked After were completed successfully compared to 76.7% of the general population. This is a small reduction in Children Looked After completion from the same period of last year which was 64.3%, whilst the general population remains broadly the same.
- Whilst the numbers of Children Looked After offending remain small in the cohort, we are seeing an increase in the numbers compared to the same period last year. In the year to date we have seen an increase in the percentage of CLA offending from 2.47% (21/22) to 3.50% (22/23). However in the Oct to March 2023 period no Children Looked After have received convictions.

What do we want to improve:

- Continued reduction in the numbers of Children Looked After offending. The overall cohort for the 22/23 year is smaller than the 21/22 year (343 compared to 364), but through continued interventions by the YOT, 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	
		Jul 22	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	SN	Eng.
5.01.04 Children in care aged 17 years and 4 months with a Personal Advisor	%	100.0%	90.9%	93.0%	90.0%	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↓		
5.01.08 Local Authority In Touch with Care Leavers	%	92.7%	93.4%	94.8%	95.0%	95.0%	92.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		
5.01.09 Care Leavers in suitable accommodation	%	88.9%	89.9%	92.1%	92.2%	91.0%	88.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		
5.01.10 Care Leavers Employment, Education and Training (EET)	%	55.4%	57.6%	58.2%	58.7%	50.0%	55.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↑		
5.01.11 Number of Care Leavers with a Pathway Plan that is up to date	%	73.0%	81.5%	78.8%	82.0%	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- *Contact with care leavers* – There is an increase this month in relation to the number of Care Leavers we were in touch. This also has, to be viewed in the context of this group being aged 18 plus and, in some situations, young people do not wish to keep in contact with their Personal Advisor. The team continue to work innovatively to keep in touch with all young people and we are confident that our post 18 young people all are aware of the support of offer if required.
- *Number of young people in suitable accommodation* – There has been a significant impact on the increasing demands for tenancies. However, we continue to work with our housing colleagues who have agreed to prioritise the properties for our young people, and this has helped to improve our performance. We will continue to work with our Housing providers to ensure that suitable accommodation is available, we have also maintained strong links with private housing providers. We have continued to provide virtual and face to face life skills and pre-tenancy training and continue to explore collectively how we can improve independence training for our young people.
- *Children in Care aged 17 years with an allocated Personal Advisors* – Although the performance on this indicator has shown a decrease this month, it includes Qualifying young people who would not have an allocated Personal Advisor, but it is important to note that all the young people under 18 have an allocated Social Worker. Currently all Relevant and Former Relevant young people aged 17 and over have an allocated Personal Advisor.
- *Education Employment Training* – Our performance in relation to Employment, Education and Training (EET) indicator is a focus for improvement. We have a C&K Careers Advisor in the Leaving Care Service. We have a pro-active multi-agency group to improve opportunities in partnership working and there is a real desire to ensure our young people are afforded the best of opportunities in relation to EET.
- *Pathway Plans* – We have seen a slight increase in the numbers of young people who have an up-to-date pathway plan this month. We continue to work with the Social Workers and Personal Advisors to ensure pathway plans are completed in a timely manner to meet targets with a focus going forward on the improvement of the quality of plans, the involvement of young people and ensuring we capture their wishes and feelings. This is monitored at our performance meetings chaired by the service manager. Work is being undertaken to identify and address the issues that are impacting the timeliness of pathway plan reviews being undertaken.

Care Leavers and Adoption – Care Leavers (cont.)

- In order to provide further support and guidance for social workers throughout Children Services and personal advisors training is currently being delivered face to face and on a virtual basis and workers are expected to attend this training. All new starters will be offered this training and will continue to be delivered on a rolling programme.
- The commitment to care leavers has been reviewed with oversight from senior managers this will improve and enhance our offer to all young people. We have produced 5 factsheets for care leavers that explains their rights and entitlements.
- We have weekly drop in sessions that are held at the hubs at No11 and No12.

What do we want to improve:

- *Number of young people with a pathway plan* – The number of young people with a pathway plan to increase. Work is currently ongoing within the service, and it is expected that the measure will improve further. We continue to work with the Social Worker and Personal Advisors to ensure pathway plans are completed in a timely manner to meet targets with a focus going forward on the improvement of the quality of plans, the involvement of young people and ensuring we capture their wishes and feelings.
- To improve the allocation timeliness of Personal Advisors and the timeliness and quality of visits to young people.
- A key priority area for the service continues to be to address and increase the number of our young people who will have access to Education, Employment or Training.
- The embedding of the corporate parenting principles and our role as corporate parents.

Adoption

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				*Benchmarking	
		Jul 22	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	SN	Eng.
5.02.01 Number of children adopted as a percentage of children leaving care (12 month rolling period)	% (number)	11.9% (23)	9.5% (22)	9.9% (23)	9.3% (22)	13.0%	10.0%
	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	442.0	532.3	561.9	572.8	396.7 (17-20)	367.0 (17-20)
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↑		
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	205.1	182.4	209.4	212.7	180.0 (17-20)	175.0 (17-20)
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- We continue to prioritise brothers and sisters growing up together.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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:

- To increase the numbers of children placed through Early Permanence through early identification of children and increasing the number of EP adopters.
- To improve timeliness in agreeing transitional payments for foster carers adopting the child in their care to reduce delay and a process has been implemented to achieve this.
- 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.
- A VFM study has been commissioned. Outcome of the exercise will inform future funding streams and planning to ensure resources are appropriately funded.
- Introduce some challenge to the budget for inter-agency placements and assess whether this should form part of the outcomes-based formula used to calculate partner contributions.
- Introduce some contract (agreement) management to review all outcomes to the objectives of the agreement.

- 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	
		Jul 22	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	SN	Eng.
6.02.07 Total New Carer Approvals in Month:	Number	7	5	1	8	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		
In-house Fostering approvals in the month	Number	4	5	0	7	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		
In-house Fostering De-registrations in the month	Number	2	12	0	5	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		
6.02.09 Placements split: a. In-house foster placements	Number	171	149	150	148	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↓		
b. Family and friend placements	Number	118	117	121	117	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↓		
c. Independent Fostering Agency Placements	Number	178	170	175	176	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- In July 2023 there were 8 foster carer approvals, 7 were kinship foster carers and 1 foster carer.
- There were 5 de-registrations in July 2023, all of which were in relation to kinship carers. 4 of these were in relation to connected carers no longer requiring Foster Carer approval status (SGO granted) and 1 in relation to children reunified into parents' care.
- The number of children placed with Kirklees foster carers stood at 148 in July 2023, just below the 12-month average of 165
- The number of Family and Friends Placements stood at 117 in July 2023, inclusive of Reg 24 Placements. The 12-month average is 125
- The May 2023 there were 176 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. We are focussed on recruiting internal foster carers who can help us to meet our sufficiency needs around placements for older children, children with complex needs, offering short and long-term placements, and short notice / emergency placements. In addition, work is being undertaken in respect of utilising current foster carers expertise to offer support, respite, and holiday placements.

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 implementing our modernisation plan for the Fostering Service. This has included a number of policies and procedures to ensure consistency and transparency across the service and with our carers. This service improvement plan will include further integration with the Placement Support Service, this work will be overseen by the Homes For Children Board.

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

One Adoption West Yorkshire











One
Adoption
Agency
WEST YORKSHIRE

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT - KIRKLEES HIGHLIGHTS 2022 - 2023



THE CHILDREN - STATS

Number of children adopted in year	23	 -9
Number of ADMs in year	16	 -1
Number of POs in year	15	 -13
Number of children placed in year	15	 -5
Percentage of children placed with OAWY approved adopters	87%	 +2%
Number of children placed via Early Permanence	4	 +3
Percentage of children matched for adoption which were previously in EPPs	13%	 +4%
Number of children at year end with ADM not matched	21	 +3



THE CHILDREN - DEMOGRAPHICS

At year end there were 17 children with a placement order but not matched. Of those:



Male
11



Female
6



Under 2
11



2 to 5
4



5+ years
2

Part of a sibling group



9

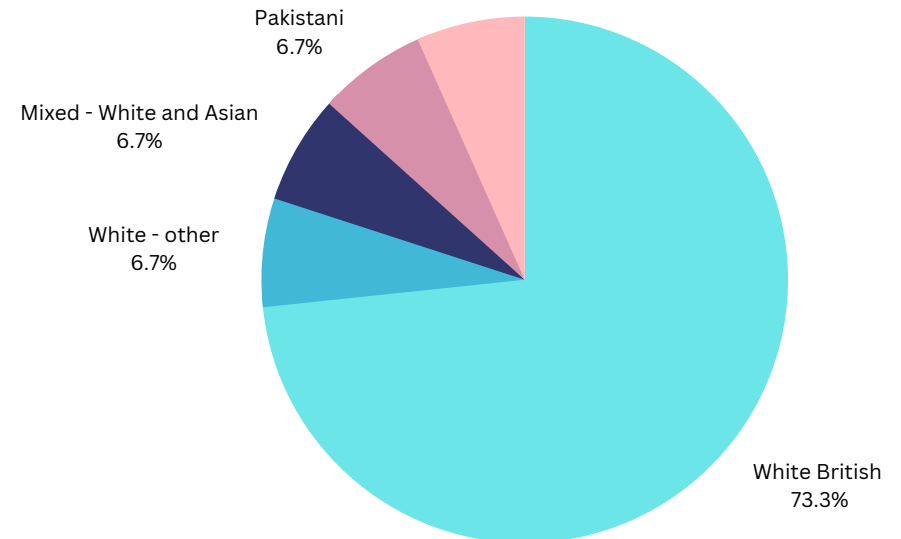
Single child



8

Ethnicity

White & Black Caribbean	1	Pakistani	1
White British	11	Mixed white and Asian	3
Any other white background	1		



THE CHILDREN - NARRATIVE

Of the **17** children, **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), **two** of whom have more than one characteristic.

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

- The adoptive family of **one** child's sibling came forward following the making of the Placement Order asking to be considered, having previously felt unable to proceed. An assessment took place to fully explore whether the siblings could grow up together; the assessment concluded in March 2023 and the decision was made to seek an alternative family.
- For **two** children their foster carer expressed an interest in adopting them and assessment is ongoing.
- For **one** child DNA testing was agreed following the making of the Placement Order to ascertain their heritage to inform family finding. The results were awaited at the year end.
- **One** child had a link identified and matching panel booked for June.



For the 23 children adopted in the year:

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"

497 to 459 days (national target is 426 days) ↓

One child took 1335 days from entering care and being placed with their adoptive family. This child was looked after for 29 months before having an adoption plan; it then took a further 12 months to match them to a family able to meet their needs. Without this child the average number of days from entering care and being placed with an adoptive family is 417 days, within the national target.

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"

205 to 188 (the national target is 121 days) ↓

One child took 679 from having an adoption plan to being matched with an adoptive family. This child was adopted by their foster carer and did not experience a change in carer. Without this child the average time reduced further to 164 days, with 7 of the 23 children adopted being matched within 121 days.



ADOPTION SUPPORT



	2022/23	compared to 2021/22
Children and families receiving adoption support	148	↑ +7
Families allocated to Early Advice & Support worker*	40	
File access requests	58	↑ +1
Applications to the Adoption Support Fund approved	110	↑ +26
ASF funding for therapeutic interventions	£435,541	↑ +£115,168
929 letters processed by the Letterbox team	530 incoming	↑ +20
	399 outgoing	↑ +41
Appointments offered to Kirklees families by PAC-UK	101	

*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.

One Adoption West Yorkshire



One
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WEST YORKSHIRE

**ANNUAL REPORT
2022 - 2023**



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1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Annual Report of One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY), which is the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) providing adoption services to children and families on behalf of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, and Wakefield. This report details the work of OAWY from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. The purpose of the Annual Report is to inform the public, elected members, partners and staff of the progress and developments of the adoption service during this period in line with our **vision:**

"To be a flagship adoption agency that develops and promotes best practice, improving adoption standards nationally."

The agency's objectives are:

- Children to move in with their adoptive family without unnecessary delay
- Families get help and support at every stage of the adoption journey
- Children have good quality care, a good understanding of their identity, a sense of belonging and stability within their adoptive family
- Children, adoptive and birth parents and adopted adults feel they have a voice and influence



2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

181 children were adopted in 2022/23, the highest number since the agency formed in 2017.

This year has seen a decrease of children placed with adoptive parents, reducing from 171 in the previous year to **161** this year. There has been variation within the five West Yorkshire Local Authorities with four seeing an increase in children with an adoption plan, while 1 has seen a decrease. At the year-end **242** children had an adoption plan and were not yet matched with an adoptive family, an increase of 72 from the previous year.

The timeliness of children moving in with adoptive families after entering care for the **181** children adopted has increased from 441 days to **491** days.

The timeliness of finding a family and matching with adoptive parents following the making of a Placement Order for the 181 children has increased from 219 days to **232** days. There is an improving picture for children placed during the year, with a reduction to **217** days.

OAWY have approved **101** households to adopt, a decrease of 11 households from the previous year.

The agency is facing sufficiency challenges moving into 2023/24 as the number of children with an adoption plan in West Yorkshire has increased over recent months as the number of prospective adopters has decreased.



3. ADOPTER RECRUITMENT

One Adoption West Yorkshire has approved 101 adoptive families over the course of this year and matched 89 families with children, all but one of these with children from the West Yorkshire region. On 31st March there were 119 households in the process pre-approval.

Within the 101 households approved in 22/23, there were 191 individuals. Of these, 40 (21%) are from Black and ethnically diverse backgrounds (last year this was 10%). There were 19 households approved for sibling groups this year and 26 households approved were open to an Early Permanence Placement, an increase on last year's 19. This has exceeded the demand for these placements over the year. 11 households could consider children over 5.

Fewer people attend information events this year but the agency received more formal Registrations of Interest (ROI) following a visit than in 21/22. The time between receiving and accepting the ROIs this year, has been halved compared to last year.

This year saw significantly higher numbers of families in stage one of the process, peaking in September 2022 at 96 households. The stage one team of advisors has managed this well, although timeliness in arranging initial visits has been impacted, taking an additional nine days compared to last year. Families have spent longer on average in stage one than last year. There are a number of factors impacting on this timescale, including families asking to go on hold due to changes in their circumstances, GPs being unable to prioritise medical appointments and reports, and the complexity of families' circumstances, meaning further exploration and additional visits needing to be completed before they progress to stage two. At the end of the year, there was a small number of families awaiting allocation for assessment due to capacity pressures.



The agency has continued to use sessional assessors to ensure families are assessed and approved in a timely manner. A focus this year has been increasing the capacity of social workers to assess families. Social workers no longer remain allocated to families for 12 months post adoption order. There is an extensive universal support offer which families can engage with, and those that need additional support are linked in with the Early Advice & Support or Adoption Support teams at this stage. The average time spent in stage two has been similar to 21/22 (seven days longer). More families have asked to take a break in stage two and increasing numbers have required additional preparation and support to be ready to meet the needs of children. 104 families adopted their children in 22/23 an increase on the previous four years.

"I really appreciate all of the support you've given us throughout both of our adoptions - you've helped us to find our two amazing children and we feel very prepared to be able to support them to understand their life stories"



Marketing campaigns

Throughout the year the agency delivered a digital-first marketing strategy, which has been found to be the most cost-effective way to reach target audiences. Digital advertising amounted to much of the paid-for recruitment marketing activity, taking the form of pay-per-click and social media advertising, in addition to delivering some organic and owned content.

Social media marketing campaigns focussed on priority areas of need, including siblings, older children, ethnically diverse children, children with health and development needs and Early Permanence.

The OAWY Google ad campaign is 'always on' and achieved 117,158 impressions and the ads were clicked on a total of 15,781 times. There were 974 conversions (when someone takes an action on the website after clicking on an ad) which is a conversion rate of 6.2%.

Regular adverts for information events and priority campaign topics, were delivered through Facebook and Instagram, which over the year resulted in a 470,450-page reach on Facebook and 31,307 on Instagram.

The agency's Instagram following has significantly increased this year and now have over 900 followers from 300 in the previous year.

Twitter is used for organic posting regarding the support offer, as this audience mainly consists of existing adopters and adoptees. Posts regarding recruitment and campaign messaging do not do as well on this platform and can attract negative comments.

In addition to online activity, OAWY also carried out a number of offline activities including a targeted outdoor advertising campaign which ran during October 2022, to reach ethnically diverse potential adopters. Adverts featured on 21 bus shelters (with a total weekly reach of 34,460) in neighbourhoods throughout the region in which there is a high footfall of people who meet the target audience. This ran simultaneously with an online campaign with complementary messages. To reach the LGBTQ+ audience OAWY staff attended Pride events across the region, highlighting that OAWY is an LGBTQ+ friendly agency, and supported the New Family Social Adoption and Fostering Week.

The agency also supported the YouCanAdopt and National Adoption Week campaigns organised by the National Adoption Steering Group.



Preparation, Training and Support for Prospective Adopters

All training is now featured on and accessible through our website. Adopters can learn more about what is offered and book directly onto training through web forms.

We have reviewed and updated our **information events** this year. These continue to be delivered online and always include an experienced adopter who shares their experience and answers questions. There are daytime, evening and weekend sessions and applicants can book directly onto a session that suits them.

"Lots of useful information and real experiences shared which was great. I feel much better informed now and excited to start the process."

The **three-day preparation groups** have been delivered face-to-face since April 2022. The agency has also continued to deliver specific one day training for experienced adopters and foster carers. There has been an increased focus on early permanence in the preparation stage. In 23/24 all applicants will watch a mandatory Early Permanence webinar as part of their preparation and will have the opportunity to attend a one-day classroom training focused on Early Permanence.

"I found the session, the trainers, and fellow trainees to be open, honest, and incredibly supportive of each other, as personal journeys, thoughts, hopes, and fears were shared, supported and encouraged."

"The sessions were thought provoking and made me keen to understand more and take on personal development in areas such as therapeutic parenting, understanding more about EPP, birth parent contact, and the impacts of trauma."

The 'Connected by Adoption' training was attended by 140 supporters to learn more about the needs of adopted children and their families and think about how they can best support their friends/family on their adoption journey.

"It helped me to understand and focus on the intricacies of the process and the profound needs of the child and what might be the needs of the adopting couple. The piece on therapeutic parenting was extremely helpful, we will definitely be doing more reading on this subject."



The **Birth Parent Information Session** has now been made a required part of the stage two process which has meant an increase in numbers of those attending.

“To hear the birth mums, talk of their children, their obvious continued love and care for them and how it’s the little snippets of information that mean so much to them as birth parents ... not only to hear what they’re doing, but also how tall they’ve grown, what their favourite colour is, etc. I am keen to explore more options when it comes to contact with birth family when I become an adoptive parent.”

Following approval adopters are invited to attend **Pre-Matching Training** which helps prepare adopters for transitions and early placement.

‘The whole training was very helpful’

Most prospective adopters attend **Brain Based Parenting, Therapeutic Parenting and FASD** webinars to learn more about the particular needs of the children waiting for adoption.

“Really informative, interesting and the therapeutic parenting tips were especially helpful. Excellent overview of the neuroscience behind distressed behaviours of us all!”

“Brain Based Parenting and Therapeutic Parenting courses were invaluable to look at the effects of trauma on little ones as they grow and develop and how successful parenting of these little ones can look different to “traditional parenting”.

Recently matched families are offered the opportunity to attend **“Six months in”**. This is a four-day therapeutic parenting program run over two weeks, led by an experienced adopter. It is aimed at the first year of adoptive parenting and supports parents to understand the needs of their child/ren.

All prospective adopters can access independent support through Adoption UK. 113 families were supported this year through the **Peer Mentoring** service and 46 households accessed the **Adoption Passport**, providing access to online learning modules, message boards and support groups.



4. CHILDREN WITH AN ADOPTION PLAN

The number of children with a decision that they should be placed for adoption has increased over the year and is at its highest since the agency was formed in 2017. At the end of the year 242 children had an adoption plan but were not matched, a significant increase of 72 children from the end of 2021/22. Of the 242, 143 have a Placement Order and are not yet matched, of those 50 have a potential family identified and family finding is ongoing for 93 children.

2022/23 saw the conclusion of a contract with Voluntary Adoption Agencies to provide 90 placements over three years for One Adoption West Yorkshire children. A review of the contract resulted in a move to a partnership agreement for the next three years with a focus of continuing to place more children who are likely to wait longer for adoption within or close to West Yorkshire.

Three **online profiling events** took place, featuring 60 children from across One Adoption West Yorkshire. From these events matches were found for 11 children and there is ongoing exploration of a further three links. 587 adopters and 111 social workers registered for the three events. A total of 211 expressions of interest were made in the children being featured at the event, often the same children have multiple interests.

"These are an excellent addition to UK wide family finding, thank you for offering this service !"

OAWY has hosted three pan-regional, nationally-funded, **fun days** in West Yorkshire this year. These events featured children from One Adoption West Yorkshire, One Adoption South Yorkshire, One Adoption North and Humber and Adopt North East along with adopters from the same agencies and Voluntary Adoption Agencies. Overall, 66 children and 86 adoptive families have attended the fun days resulting in 39 expressions of interest in 32 children and 17 links progressing.

"Wonderful organisation and a very productive day ending in a brilliant positive result for us."

Given the success of the fun days hosted by One Adoption West Yorkshire, the agency has secured national funding for two further events in July and November 2023.

Children who are likely to wait longer for adoption have continued to be a key priority. The agency has commenced two nationally funded projects which focus on finding families for these children:

- The **Child Focused Family Building** model (CFFB) is a nationally funded project which started in September 2022 and will run for two years. The project aims to find families for children who are identified as having the most complex needs and for whom finding adoptive families will be incredibly difficult. For this small cohort of children often conventional methods of family finding do not result in a suitable family being found. To identify children for this project an assessment tool designed by Adoption Matters called the Family Linking and Assessment Guide (FLAG) is being piloted. Once children are identified discussions will take place with the Local Authority regarding using the CFFB approach. Leeds Beckett University have been commissioned to evaluate the project, which will inform future family finding practice on a local and national level.
- OAWY is also working in partnership with the local Voluntary Agency Alliance (VAA) on a nationally funded project to recruit, assess, prepare, and support adopters to provide **Early Permanence** placements for children aged two years and over and sibling groups across Yorkshire and the Humber. The availability of Early Permanence placements locally for this cohort of children needs to be increased to ensure that placements are available where this is an appropriate plan for a child. This project commenced in Autumn 2022 and will run for two years.

OAWY staff have attended two nationally- funded **exchange days** this year in Leeds and Manchester where we have featured children who wait longer for adoption. Unfortunately, no matches have been made from these events, however attending helped raise awareness of the agency on a national scale and develop relationships with partner agencies.



Early Permanence

There has been a focus throughout the year on increasing the use of Early Permanence across the region for children likely to have an adoption plan. A Project Lead was appointed in May 2022 to develop Early Permanence practice across Yorkshire and Humberside through a nationally funded project. Following the success of the project in raising the profile of Early Permanence additional funding has been secured to extend the Project Lead role until May 2024. Within One Adoption West Yorkshire Early Permanence Champions have been established to drive the use of Early Permanence and support the Project Lead in developing practice through the implementation of the Early Permanence Strategy.

The number of children identified for Early Permanence in the year increased from 14 to 38. The number of children successfully placed in Early Permanence Placements increased by 10 and the percentage of children matched following an Early Permanence Placement increased by 1%, evidencing the positive impact of the work. The number of prospective adopters open to Early Permanence has also increased from 22% to 26%.

Independent information and support for Early Permanence carers in West Yorkshire is provided by Adoption UK and this year 30 families accessed this service.

Disruptions

There were six adoption disruptions across One Adoption West Yorkshire for four single children and one sibling group of two children, this is down from eight the previous year. Only one of the disruptions was with a OAWY family, all the other children were placed with families approved by other agencies.



5. ADOPTION PANEL

81 panels took place during 2022/23. There were 99 approvals, 135 matches, two relinquished children and three disruption reports considered by panel in this period. There was one rescind of approval.

There have been increased and successful efforts to recruit more panel members which has increased the diversity of membership. OAWY has produced a new pack for new panel members which has proved particularly useful in clarifying expectations and ensuring consistency across all the panels. All serving members of panel including chairs are having their reviews on a rolling basis. The annual panel members training day took place in December 2022. This was a virtual event, featuring a number of workshops covering subjects such as Brain Based Parenting, life story work, and considering the learning from the Child Practice Review into the death of LJ. The support to panels provided by the business support team continues to be excellent despite significant changes in personnel during this period.

There were 31 feedback responses from applicants and adopters who attended panel for the period that the report covers. 29 found the experience very good, and two found the experience to be good.

“On the day we were both very nervous, the chair however put us at ease. She was polite, informative, caring and extremely likeable. Panel members were polite, and it was lovely to see such a diverse range of individuals.” (Applicant)

“Everything was explained well on the day and before. The panel covered a wide range of backgrounds, and our social worker is brilliant!” (Applicant)

“The panel process has continued to run well over this 12-month period and is now fully settled and established in a virtual format The four panel chairs are providing a consistent approach and benefitting from excellent communication between themselves and the agency.” (Panel Chair)



6. ADOPTION SUPPORT

At the end of March 2023 there were 851 children/young people receiving a service from a worker across the four Adoption Support Teams. There were 674 applications to the Adoption Support Fund approved across the year equating to £2,531,949 of funding for therapeutic interventions.

In January 2023, the Adoption Support service was reconfigured to deliver services differently to families. This was in response to the growing number of families who were waiting for a service. One Adoption West Yorkshire's support model was reorganised into three incremental tiers with the service reshaped to respond at each tier:

- **Tier 1 or Universal/Core Offer** – these are various aspects of support that can be accessed without an assessment of support needs or via an adoption worker. This now includes the Adoption Advice Line which is staffed by four workers who make up the newly formed Early Advice and Support (EAS) team. The team provide an initial response service, ensure consistency for callers and a personal service from the first point of contact.
- **Tier 2 or Targeted Work** – this work sits within the wider Adoption Support teams and will include working with families where there is only a single action on the adoption support plan (typically an ASF-funded intervention) which then requires a review and potentially further application to the ASF (Adoption Support Fund). The Advance Practitioner in the team along with the Team Manager act as the first point of contact for families and will maintain oversight of pending tasks, which will then be allocated to any worker within the team to complete.
- **Tier 3 or Co-ordinated Approach** – these are families who have a more complex support plan which may include several multi-disciplinary professionals. These families have a named allocated worker who will continue to support them in achieving their identified support goals.

Although early days, positive feedback has already been received regarding the Advice Line service provided by EAS, from families and professionals. Feedback has been received from families receiving targeted support that not having a named worker has not proved detrimental to the service received. A review of the new model will take place in January 2024.

Additionally, there have been developments in 'Supporting Connections,' the umbrella service that relates to all aspects of birth family connections and identity. A strategy has been devised which includes plans for a support offer for young adults, a protocol for response times for file access requests and embracing various methods of maintaining connections - be that via letterbox, digital means, or face to face. In July 2022 an Adoption Support Worker post specifically for supporting connections work was appointed, and whilst the role is continuing to be developed and the caseload is variable, at end March 2023 there were 27 cases allocated from across the region, with a waiting list of a further 10, evidencing the necessity of this post.

The letterbox service has processed 3438 pieces of mail coming in and sent out a further 2578 exchanges. This has been alongside the agency taking part in a pilot of a digital platform with a small number of adoptive and birth families.

File Access has received 360 requests to look at records. These requests are from PAC-UK (on behalf of adult adoptees or a birth relative), other professionals (including other adoption support agencies, therapists, safeguarding social workers, police) and adult adoptees. The team developed a protocol for responding to requests for records in a more timely way, with the aim of providing the records within a calendar month or if that cannot be met, by agreeing a timeframe with the local authority where the records are archived and the person requesting them.

PAC-UK has continued to provide a commissioned service to adults as well as the Adopteens service. There were 467 calls to the PAC-UK advice line and the team worked with 151 service users across the year offering 647 appointments; the overwhelming majority to adult



adoptees, but there is also an increase in birth relatives seeking information about their relative who was adopted.

West Yorkshire is very well represented in Adopteens with 75/134 young people being from the region. Adopteens continue to run activity days, both in person and online, and a member of OAWY staff attends regularly to provide some support to the project.



7. MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM (MDT)

There have been significant changes within MDT in the last year. A clear clinical model has been implemented which focuses on embedding the team within OAWY and providing an accessible service for Social Workers and families. The referral process has been streamlined to allow easy access to MDT for Social Workers, through a clear referral and MDT triage process. Relationships between OAWY and MDT have been built by link MDT workers attending OAWY team meetings as key points of contact as well as access to MDT via informal conversations, drop in consultations, formal consultations, the education helpline, and our new life story help line for social workers.

The clinical model focusses on early intervention and providing the team around the child with the skills and support necessary to support children who have experienced developmental trauma and loss through adoption. To support social workers the MDT this year has developed and delivered a robust support offer to social workers, including DDP (Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy) and Theraplay[®] supervision groups, one-to-one clinical supervision and co-working cases and groups, as well as bespoke training in life story work and outcome measures.

A key area of development this year has been supporting the OAWY core offer that focuses on supporting adoptive parents in developing attuned relationships with their children. This offer includes a robust annual plan of groups supported by MDT, including Foundations for Attachment, BUSS (Building Underdeveloped Sensorimotor Systems) group and the therapeutic play group. The MDT have also developed and are delivering further training for Social Workers and families, including Speech and language difficulties, Closer in Play, Life Story, outcome measures training and introduction to therapeutic parenting.



The MDT has this year reviewed the offer of support and has identified gaps in services. It was highlighted that there is limited support for school-aged children. The Occupational Therapists (OT) within MDT now offer one-to-one BUSS interventions and OT specialist interventions for older children. The MDT are also supporting Social Workers to offer one-to-one Theraplay[®], which offers a cost effective, high-quality in-house provision for families, where children are too old to attend the therapeutic play group.

In 2023-24, the MDT will continue to develop and grow the team. There are plans to offer a Theraplay-informed group for school-aged children. The team is looking forward to developing this therapeutic play group for school-aged children, alongside OAWY social workers, which is to be launched in September. The MDT is also planning to expand the social work training offer and is developing Theraplay-informed and Foundation for Attachment training for social workers, to enable social workers to support their families with DDP informed therapeutic parenting.

The MDT this year has commenced its own internal evaluation, using routine pre and post outcome measures and a selection of tailored post-intervention surveys. This data will help improve the service; however, the team is also delighted to be offered an opportunity to be evaluated by Oxford Brookes University which will commence the summer of 2023.



8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

OAWY has several mechanisms in place to ensure its quality of the work:

- An independent Panel Advisor quality assures all panel paperwork prior to the panel meetings
- All paperwork presented to Adoption Panel (the Prospective Adopters Report, the Adoption Placement Report and the Adoption Support Plan) is quality assured and signed by Team Managers
- Adoption panels provide feedback to social workers following panel and to the agency via quarterly meetings with panel chairs and bi-annual reports regarding the quality of the approval and matching work carried out
- Prospective adopters are asked to provide feedback regarding their experience at adoption panel
- Advance Practitioners quality assure Child Permanence Reports prior to Agency Decisions in relation to adoption plans for children and provide feedback
- Adoption Support Assessments are quality assured and signed by Team Managers
- The MDT utilises clinical outcome measures at the start and end of interventions to evaluate impact
- In 2022/23 a new interactive audit tool was developed, piloted, and launched to quality assure the work undertaken by the agency
- Four Thematic Audits have taken place of 893 case files
- 13 Joint Audits have been carried out with three Local Authority Partners
- Surveys are sent out to attendees following all training, webinars, and workshops
- Families and children are asked to provide feedback regarding the service they are provided from OAWY
- Staff have received an annual survey to provide feedback on the agency and a specific survey regarding working arrangements
- All staff have twice yearly appraisals to review performance and development



9. GOVERNANCE

The OAWY Management Board has met four times during 2022/23 to review the work of the agency. The Management Board is made up of senior representatives from each of the five West Yorkshire local authorities, along with adoptive parents and health partners.

OAWY has met with the Joint Committee on two occasions, presenting the annual and half-year reports. The Joint Committee is attended by the children's lead councillor from each of the five West Yorkshire areas.

The Multidisciplinary Team board, which includes adoptive parents, local authority and health representatives, has met on three occasions to consider the work of the MDT.

OAWY has attended Corporate Parenting and Scrutiny Panels in the West Yorkshire local authorities to share the work of the agency in relation to adopter recruitment, placing children for adoption, and support for families.

OAWY provides quarterly reports to each local authority outlining the work undertaken in each area in relation to adopter recruitment, progressing adoption care plans for children, and supporting children and adults impacted by adoption.



10. STAFFING

There were no social work vacancies at the year-end, with all posts successfully recruited to during the year. Interim Head of Service and Service Delivery Manager posts have been permanently appointed to. There are currently two Team Manager posts being covered in an interim basis; permanent recruitment is underway. There are two business support vacancies which are also in the process of being recruited to.

Staff absence due to sickness equates to 0.28 days per full time staff member. Staff absence is largely due to stress and mental health; wellbeing remains a focus in all staff supervision discussions. Sickness within OAWY remains lower than the wider social care workforce.

During 2022/23 the following training has been undertaken by staff:

- Theraplay Level 2, delivered to 11 staff
- DDP Level 1, delivered to 45 staff
- DDP Level 2, delivered to 24 staff



11. FINANCE

At the end of the financial year OAWY had an underspend of £5,000. The largest in-year expenditure related to staff costs (£6,445,000) and Interagency Fees for adoptive placements outside of OAWY (£1,661,291).

12. KEY PRIORITIES 2023/24

- Safeguarding refresher training for all staff
- Developing family finding practice for children who wait longer
- Increase the number of adopters able to meet the needs of children waiting for adoption in West Yorkshire
- Increase the number of children placed through Early Permanence
- Improve the help and support for adopted teenagers and young adults who are moving towards independence
- Improve participation and voice and influence in service development and delivery

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - Annual Performance Report
- Appendix 2 - Equality, Diversity, Cohesion, and Integration Impact Assessment
- Appendix 3 - Marketing Strategy
- Appendix 4 - Voice and Influence



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One Adoption West Yorkshire











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ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT
2022 - 2023



THE CHILDREN

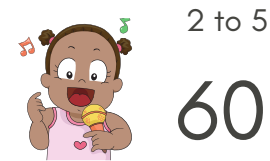
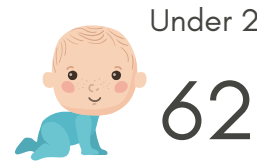
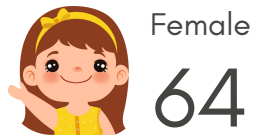
Number of children adopted in year	181	 +14
Number of ADMs in year	244	 +47
Number of POs in year	172	 -5
Number of children placed in year	161	 -10
Percentage of children placed with OAWY approved adopters	73%	 0
Number of children placed via Early Permanence	23	 +10
Percentage of children matched for adoption which were previously in EPPs	11%	 1%
Number of children at year end with ADM not matched	242	 +72

The number of children adopted and the number of children with an adoption plan are at their highest since the agency formed in 2017. Although Placement Orders and placements fell slightly, it is anticipated that these will increase early in 2023/24 following 89 new ADM decisions in Quarter 4; Placement Orders for these children will likely be made in Quarters 1 and 2. Of the 242 children with an adoption plan not matched, 143 have a Placement Order allowing them to be placed for adoption, the others remain within Care Proceedings. Of the 143 not yet matched, 50 have a potential adoptive family identified, leaving 93 children who are ready to be placed for adoption and for who active family finding is ongoing.



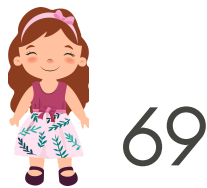
THE CHILDREN - DEMOGRAPHICS

At year end there were 143 children with a placement order but not matched. Of those:



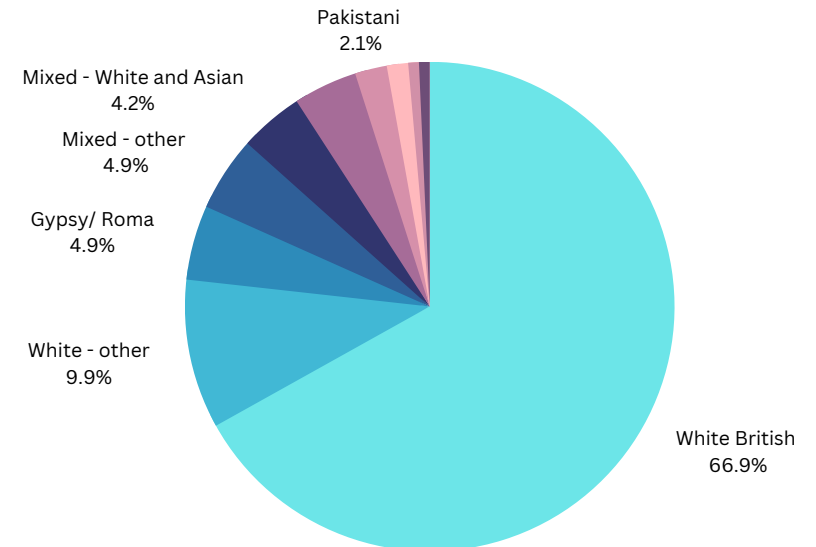
Part of a sibling group

Single child



Ethnicity

White British	95	Mixed white and Asian	6
White -other	14	Pakistani	3
Gypsy/ Roma	7	Any other ethnic background	2
Mixed - other	7	Black African	1
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	6	White Irish	1



+ 1 not obtained

THE CHILDREN - TIMESCALES

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"



441 to 491 days (national target: 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"



219 to 232 days (national target: 121 days)

The increase in timescales has been impacted by a number of factors, including the falling number of adopters coming through for matching and the number of brothers and sisters needing to grow up in families together; there are fewer adopters able to consider more than one child. Staff turnover and vacancies in local authorities has also impacted on the progression of children's plans to adoption. Despite the challenges, the A2 indicator remains lower than in 2021, 2020 and 2019.

FAMILY FINDING ONLINE PROFILING EVENTS

Date of Profile Event	Registrations	No of Profiles	Expressions of Interest	Matches booked to panel
Apr-22	148	12	74	3
Sep-22	222	16	62	3
Feb-23	220	13	75	1



"These are an excellent addition to UK wide family finding, thank you for offering this service!"
"The event was well run and organised."

"Really helpful to see videos and listen to foster carers sharing their experiences."
"The videos were wonderful and a great insight into the child/children."

FAMILY FINDING FUN DAYS

Date of Profile Event	Registrations	No of children	Expressions of Interest	Matches booked to panel/EPP placement
May-22	21	17	13	1
Oct-22	63	23	18	1
Mar-23	65	30	6	1







*"It was great to be able to see children 'in real life' and get to interact with them and play with them."
"It was a valuable and unique experience."*

*"The people running the event were lovely and did an amazing job."
"It was our first experience of a day like this. We were very impressed."*

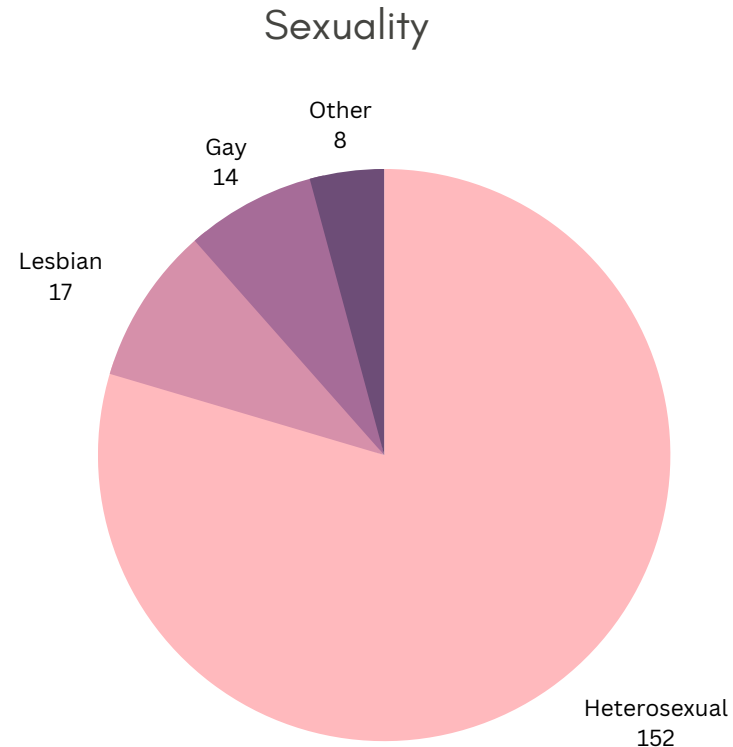
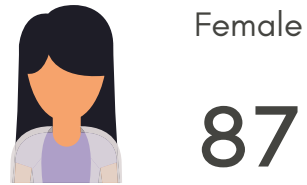
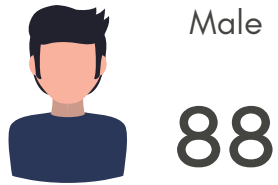


ADOPTERS



		Compared to previous year	
Number of Applications (ROI)	151		+16
Number of adopters matched	89		-17
Number of adopters approved in year	101		-11
Number of adopters in stage one at year end	72		+7
Number of adopters in stage two at year end	33		-5
Number of adopters approved not matched at year end (of these 17 have a matching panel booked)	58		+4

DEMOGRAPHIC OF ADOPTERS APPROVED



1 in 6 adopters approved are LGBTQ+





PANELS

88 panels

99 approvals

135 matches

PANEL MEMBER DEMOGRAPHICS



Female

16

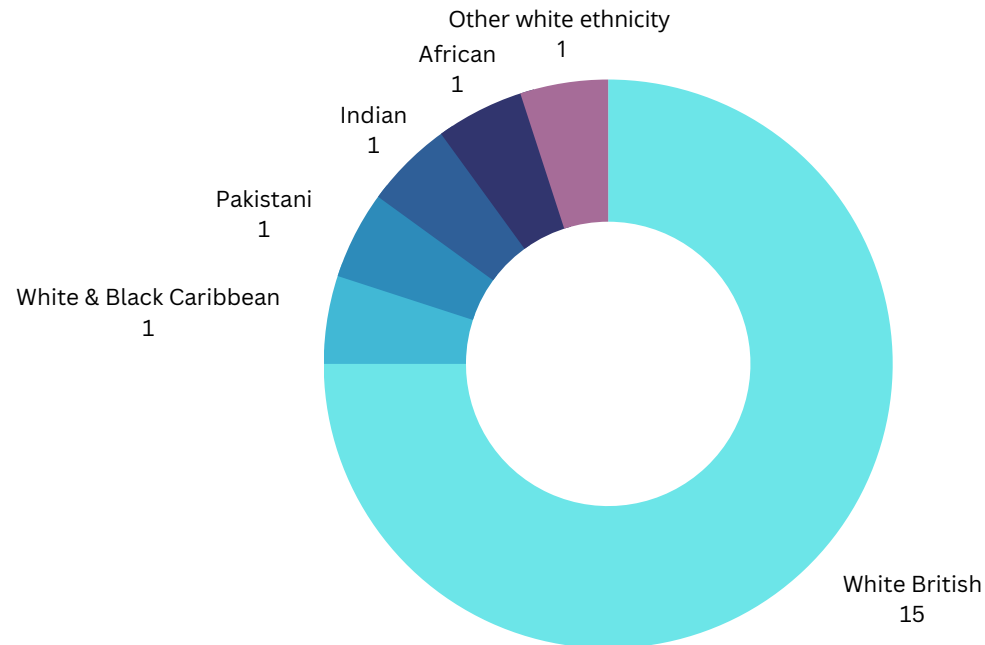


Male

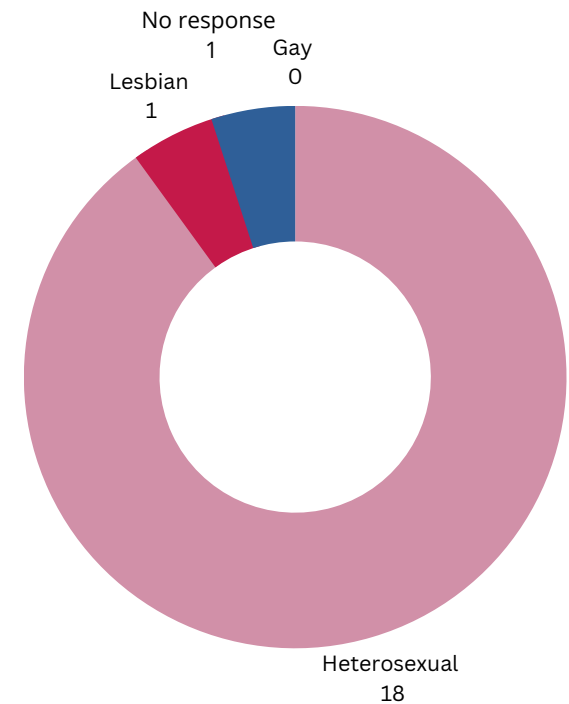
3

+1 no response

Ethnicity



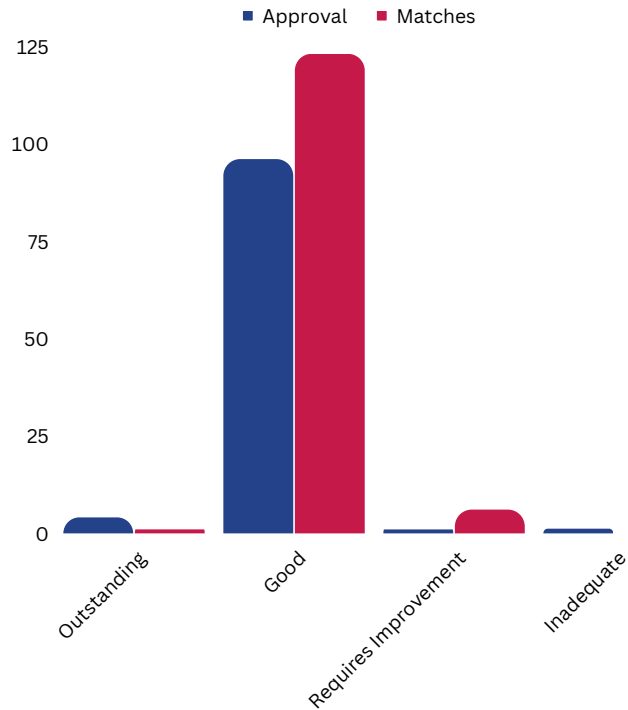
Sexuality



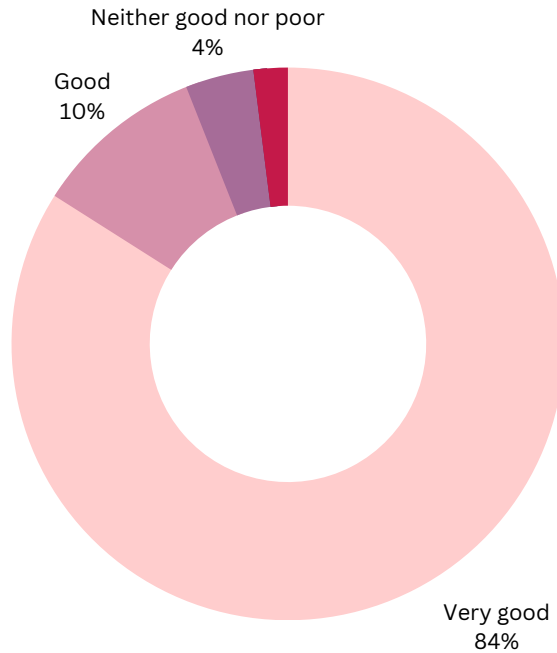


PANEL - FEEDBACK

Panel member feedback on quality of paperwork



Panel attendee experience rating



"I felt that the panel itself was conducted really well with a friendly and professional approach. It was helpful to have the questions in advance of the meeting. I liked how there were people with a range of backgrounds who were members of the panel."

"The panel were all friendly and welcoming. The panel chairman put me at ease very quickly."

"Everything was explained well on the day & before. The panel covered a wide range of backgrounds & our social worker is brilliant!"

"The panel put us at ease and were clearly interested in listening to our answers and we felt they were genuinely interested in us and in considering whether we would be the best match for our child."

ADOPTION SUPPORT



	2022/23	2021/22
Children and families receiving adoption support	851	↑ +11
File access requests	360	↑ +41
Applications to the Adoption Support Fund approved	674	↑ +50
ASF funding for therapeutic interventions	£2,531,949	↓ -£12,755
6016 letters processed by the Letterbox team	3438 incoming 2578 outgoing	↑ +13% ↑ +17%
People accessed independent support from PAC-UK	151	

Quarterly contract monitoring meetings take place with PAC-UK regarding the support they provide to Adult Adoptees, Birth and First Families.

SUPPORT OFFER INCLUDES

In person groups

Stay & Plays
Teens group
Tweens groups
Single adopters meet ups
Welly Walk/Walk in the Woods
Adopters Together

Online groups

Adopter Chat
All Dads
Single Adopters
TRECS

Webinars/Workshops

Life Story work
Contact & Identity
Education-related
Brain Based Parenting
FASD

Parenting Programmes

NVR
Foundations for Attachment
BUSS group
Therapeutic Parenting
Closer in Play
6 months in
Talking Teens
Persevering Parents'



MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM



	2022/23
Referrals received	208
Formal consultations	87
Drop-in consultations	86
Informal conversations with social workers	75
Education helpline calls	116
Life story work helpline calls	13
Interventions offered by MDT, which include: Social Work support, assessments, supervisions, and therapeutic interventions.	476

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Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board

Date: 12th September 2023

Title of report: Children’s Rights Team Annual Report

Purpose of report: To inform the Board of services delivered by the Children’s Rights Team during the period of 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 (Annual report).

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £500k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards? Decisions having a particularly significant effect on a single ward may also be treated as if they were key decisions.	Not Applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council’s Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	Not applicable
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not applicable
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance? Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	24-08-2023 Vicky Metheringham No No
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Kendrick

Electoral wards affected: N/A

Ward councillors consulted: N/A

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Summary

The Kirklees Children Looked After Independent Service (Children's Rights team) offers advocacy support to, and shares the views and opinions of, children Looked After to ensure that the voice and experiences of children Looked After is heard and influences policy and service delivery development and design.

The Children's Rights team also works with children and young people to support them to use the Children's Services complaints process, to be active participants in the recruitment of professionals, i.e., Social Workers, Independent Reviewing Officers, and operational and strategic managers, and to deliver their own training session to professionals (Total Respect Training). This training helps professionals to consider what the barriers are to the participation of children and young people and why it is important to listen to what children and young people say.

Children and young people who are new into care (or when they reach the age of 10 if already Looked After) receive information about the service, or as required a visit from an Advocate. This is undertaken with consideration to the child's individual needs and circumstances. The purpose of this is to share information about what support that they can receive, and what participation opportunities they can become involved in.

The Independent Visitor's scheme sits within the Children's Rights team; this scheme matches children Looked After with volunteers, who offer support and guidance and opportunities to engage in positive activities. A separate annual report is produced for the scheme which is included within the Children's Rights Annual Report at Appendix 2.

2. Information required to take a decision

For information only, no decision required.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

The Service works with children and young people, families, and carers, and across the council and wider partnership. Adult volunteers in the Independent Visitors provide a valuable service to children and young people Looked After by the local authority.

3.2 Working with Partners

The Service works with partners to deliver outcomes for children and young people Looked After, by Kirklees Council.

3.3 Place Based Working

Not applicable.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Not applicable.

3.5 Improving outcomes for children

The Children's Rights team enable children and young people who are Looked After by the local authority to ensure that their voice is heard in relation to decisions that are made which affect their lives, and that service delivery and provision is influenced by the voice and experiences of children and young people.

It is important that children and young people feel that they are included in decisions which affect them and that their views are listened to. This can help lead to stability in their lives, overall health and wellbeing, higher educational attainment and long-term positive outcomes for children and young people.

Through advocacy children and young people often achieve a positive outcome. If it is not possible for a child or young person to achieve the outcome they sought, Advocates support children and young people to understand the reasons why. There are a wide variety of issues that young people have sought advocacy support for, including for their children Looked After Reviews, family time, and issues relating to finance, education, and placements.

3.6 Financial Implications for the people living or working in Kirklees

Not applicable

3.7 Other (eg Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)/Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions

Not applicable

4 Consultation

Not applicable

5 Engagement

Not applicable

6 Next steps and timelines

Key priorities for 2023/2024 include:

- To develop further the recording of advocacy work by exploring electronic recording of work with Liquid Logic Developers, with the view of establishing Tableau dashboards.
- Continue to develop and enhance involvement in Practice Learning Days across Children's Services, to further capture children's voices, experiences, and help support participation to inform service developments and practice improvements.
- Review the Service against revised Advocacy Standards when published.
- To complete a review of the current service capacity and offer, with a view to exploring:
 - Developing a consistent and achievable Child Protection Advocacy offer.
 - Expanding the current Advocacy offer to include an offer to children subject to Child in Need Planning and Children with a Disability.
- In collaboration with the Looked After Children's service, develop a children's consultation forum to ascertain the view of children and young people Looked After in respect of how they wish to celebrate their achievements.

7 Officer recommendations and reasons

That the report be noted.

8 Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

Not applicable

9 Contact officer

Lucy Fearnley, Team Manager for Quality Assurance and Safeguarding – 01484 221000 (ext 79136) lucy.fearnley@kirklees.gov.uk

Zoe Prince, Fostering Service Manager – 01484 221000
zoe.prince@kirklees.gov.uk

10 Background Papers and History of Decisions

Not applicable

11 Service Director responsible

Kiran Lord, Service Director, Resources, Improvements and Partnerships



Annual Report
Children's Rights Team
April 2022 to March 2023

Krissy Podgorski	Manager - Kirklees Children Looked After Independent Service (Children's Rights Team)
Zoe Prince	Service Manager, Quality Assurance, Children and Young People Service
Dated	April 2023

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2. The Aim of the Children's Rights Team.
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7. Child Protection Advocacy.
8. Three-year Comparison.
9. Participation Opportunities.
10. Quality Assurance.
11. Young People's Voice.
12. Conclusion.
13. Key Areas of Development from Previous Year.
14. Key Areas of Development for the Next 12 Months.
15. Appendix 1 – Children in Care Council & Care Leavers Forum Report.
16. Appendix 2 – Independent Visitors Scheme Report.

Mission Statement

'The Children's Rights Team strives to empower children and young people to have their voice heard in decisions affecting them, raise aspirations and create positive change'.

1. Introduction

The Kirklees Children Looked After Independent Service (Children's Rights Team) offer advocacy, advice and representation to children and young people who are Looked After by Kirklees Local Authority.

Empowerment of children and young people should be central in advocacy. This underlies the values of the work of an Advocate, including supporting children, being child or young person led, sharing knowledge and information, being empathetic to individual experiences, and listening to the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people.

In 2002, the Department of Health released national standards for all advocacy providers and those providers involved in all decision-making processes for children. The Children's Rights Team works in line with these standards:

- Advocacy is led by the views and wishes of children and young people.
- Advocacy champions the rights and needs of children and young people.
- All advocacy services have clear policies to promote equalities issues and monitor services that ensure no young person is being discriminated against due to age, gender, race, culture, religion, language, disability, or sexual orientation.
- Advocacy is well-publicised, accessible, and easy to use.
- Advocacy gives help and advice quickly when they are requested.
- Advocacy works exclusively for children and young people.
- Advocacy services are confidential.
- Advocates to listen to the views and ideas of young people to improve the service provided.
- Advocacy services must have an effective and easy to use complaints procedure.
- Advocacy services must be well managed and good value for money.

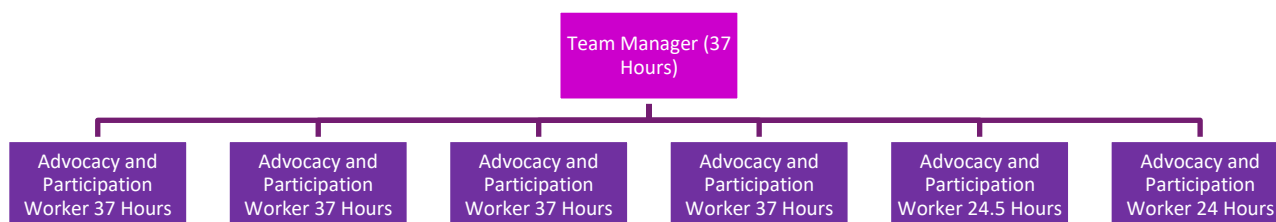
In May 2022, the Independent Review of Children's Social Care was published. This included plans to 'reset' children's advocacy. Following this the government published its strategy and consultation on children's social care, Stable Homes, Build on love in February 2023; consultation in respect of these publications is currently ongoing.

2. The Aims of the Children's Rights Team

- Communicate the wishes and feelings of any child or young person 'Looked After' by Kirklees Council.
- Uphold children and young people's legal rights and human rights, ensuring that they are fairly treated, current framework of legislation, incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Easily explain information or processes that are happening in a way children and young people understand.

- Assist children and young people in making a complaint.
- Attend decision making meetings with the Local Authority or school.
- Signpost to relevant services.
- Support the empowerment of children and young people looked after to assist them to engage in meaningful participation in respect of decision-making which affects them, both individually and collectively.

3.Children’s Rights Team Structure *



(The team structure was correct at the time of the report being prepared, however please note that this is under review)

4.Children’s Rights Service Overview

4.1 The service works collaboratively with Children’s Social Care /Children’s Services to ensure that the views, wishes, feelings and opinions of children Looked After are heard and considered individually and in respect of service delivery and policy development. Additionally, the team supports children and young people to navigate and use the complaints process.

4.2 The service works with children and young people through training and supporting them to undertake a meaningful role in the recruitment process of professionals and supports children and young people to deliver their own training session to practitioners and professionals (Total Respect Training). This training helps practitioners and professionals to consider the barriers for children and young people’s participation, and why it is important to listen to what children and young people say.

4.3 Children and young people who are new into care (or when they reach the age of 10 if already Looked After) receive information about the service, or as required a visit from an Advocate. This is undertaken with consideration to the child’s individual needs and circumstances. The purpose of this is to share information about what support that they can receive, and what participation opportunities they can become involved in.

4.4 Two Advocacy & Participation Workers co-ordinate and support the Children in Care Council (CiCC) and Care Leavers Forum (CLF). The CiCC and CLF enable children and young people Looked After and care leavers to come together to work on projects, and /or to meet with senior managers, to enable their voices to be heard and influence service provision.

Appendix 1 of this report provides an outline of the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum activities undertaken during 2022 to 2023.

4.5 The service aims to offer support to children and young people over the age of ten, subject to the Child Protection process; however, how this can be fully incorporated into Service Provision, to provide a consistent offer requires further exploration with colleagues in the Child Protection and Review unit.

4.6 The Independent Visitors Scheme sits within the Children's Rights; the scheme matches children and young people who are in the care of the local authority with adult volunteers who spend time with the child or young person they are matched with, supporting, and listening to them, and undertaking positive activities.

A separate annual report for the Independent Visitors Scheme can be found in Appendix 2

6. Contact with Young People

6.1 Advocacy must be easily accessible to children and young people and children; this involves ensuring children and young people are informed about the availability of Advocacy services, and that these services are delivered in places that are 'child or young person friendly', including being convenient, safe, and private. Access to advocacy services also needs to consider disability, language and communication, culture, an/or access to technology. These should be considered on an individual basis, taking the lead from the child's or young person's wishes and needs wherever possible.

6.2 Information about the Children's Rights service is provided in a variety of ways and promoted in places that young people use, in addition the team also provides:

- **Link Visits** – Advocates maintain links with all the Kirklees residential Children's Homes, visiting each one separately, and at least monthly, ensuring a presence whilst also providing relevant information and literature in respect of the Children's Rights Service to the young people.
- **Drop-In Sessions** - The Children's Rights Team offer weekly Drop-in sessions at Brian Jackson House for Care Leavers and children and young people who are Looked After, to support and enable them to access support, guidance, and assistance from an Advocate.
- **Initial Visit/Contact** – The service aims to offer a visit and/or send information to every child and young person over the age of 10 years old who is new into care, or who becomes 10 years old whilst Looked After.
- **Birthday/Celebration Cards** - Currently children and young people Looked After are sent birthday cards and a card at Christmas, both which also contain information about the Children's Rights team and the contact details for the service.

7.Children and Young People who are Looked After/Care Leavers Advocacy

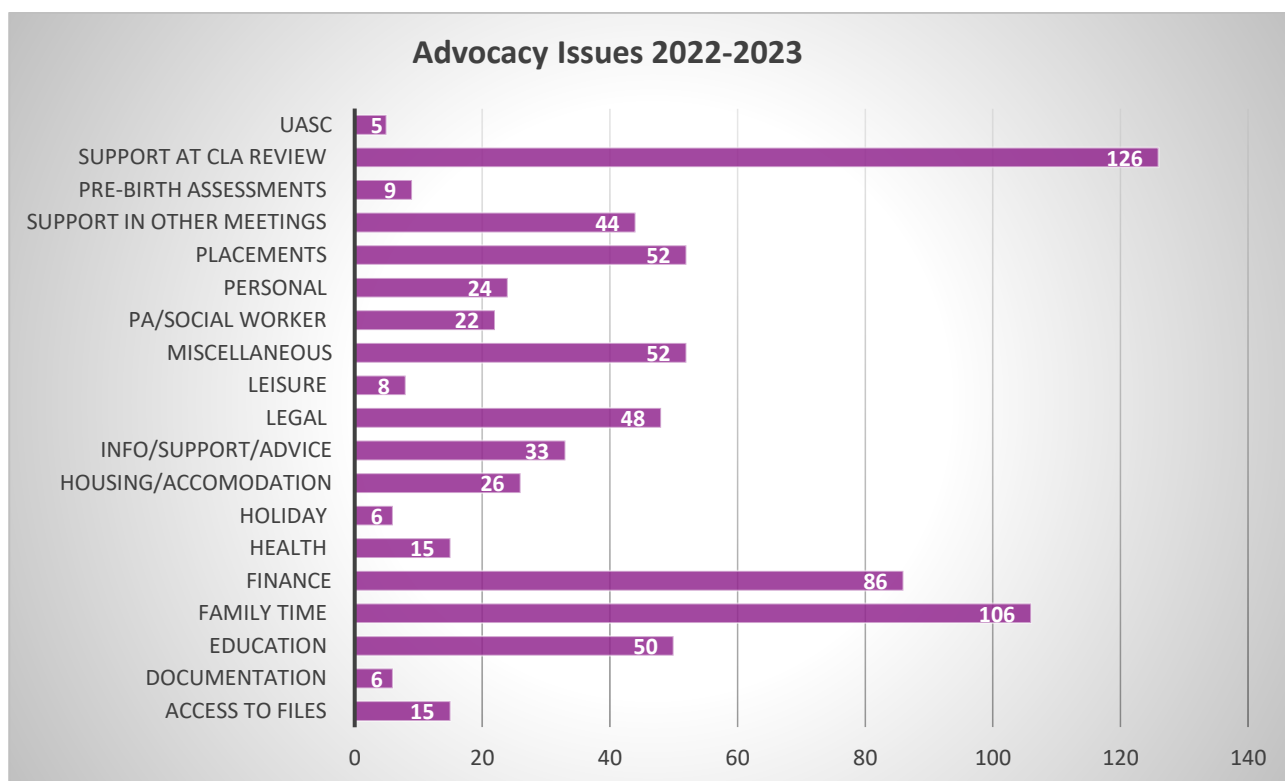
7.1 Every child Looked After by the Local Authority has the right to an independent Advocate. This is defined in the Children Act 1989, which placed a duty on Local Authorities to provide advocacy for children and young people Looked After, who wish to make a complaint.

Subsequent updates and other legislation, including The Adoption and Children Act 2002, extended this to include Care Leavers, and to children and young people outside of the complaint's procedure, when decisions are being made which affects their lives.

7.2 Due to the variety of circumstances and complexities encountered in advocacy referrals, it can be difficult to capture the specifics of each individual issue raised. Children and young people who are Looked After and care leavers approach the team with a wide range of issues. In this reporting period **133** individual children and young people were supported by the Children's Rights Team and **733** separate pieces of advocacy were undertaken. This shows that children and young people may experience multiple issues and that they feel confident to seek support from their Advocate or contact the service on multiple occasions.

7.3 The majority of the advocacy work undertaken (498) pieces related to working with females, indicating that girls/young women are more likely to contact the service when they are experiencing issues or require advocacy support. The remaining 235 pieces of advocacy work related to the service working with males or children /young people who identified as 'other'.

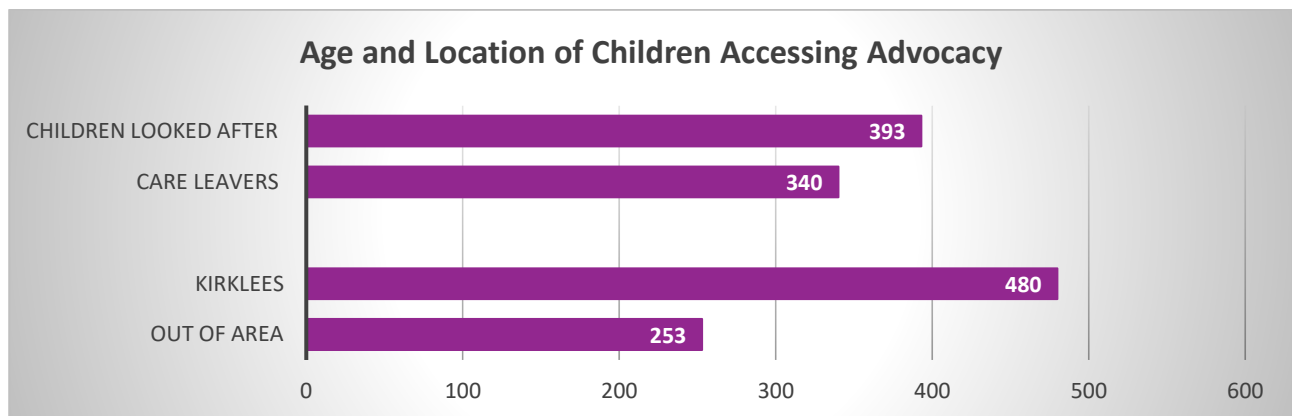
7.4 The chart below illustrates the types of advocacy issues that the Children's Rights Team support children and young people with, the most common being support for Children Looked After (CLA) Reviews and other meetings, such as supporting care leavers with children going through Care Proceedings, support at Pre-Birth Assessments or supporting children /young people at their Personal Education Plan Meetings.



7.5 As illustrated in the chart above, there were **22** pieces of advocacy undertaken in relation to issues with Social Workers or Personal Advisors, **52** in relation to placements, and **86** regarding issues relating to finance; themes and patterns relating advocacy issues are further explored in **section 8**.

7.6 Non-Instructional Advocacy - in this reporting period for 2 children /young people non-instructional advocacy was provided. This is provided when a child or young person does not have the capacity to clearly communicate their wishes or feelings or have an appropriate level of understanding. For these children and young people their Advocate gathers information from a range of sources such as parents, carers, and professionals, to assess if the best interests of the child are being considered in any decisions that are made. The Advocate also ensures that the rights of the child are being upheld.

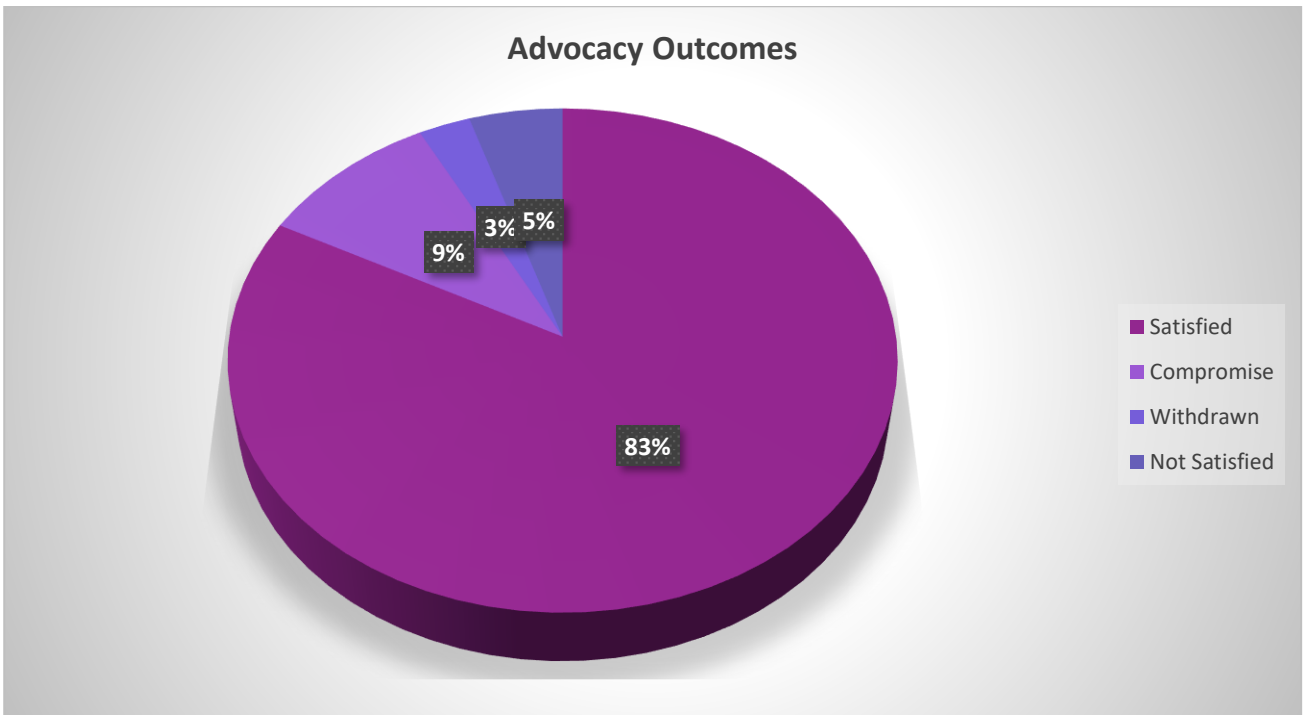
7.7 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children – During this reporting period there has been an increase in Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children accessing support from the Children’s Rights team, together with the service receiving requests for Advocates to attend Age Assessments.



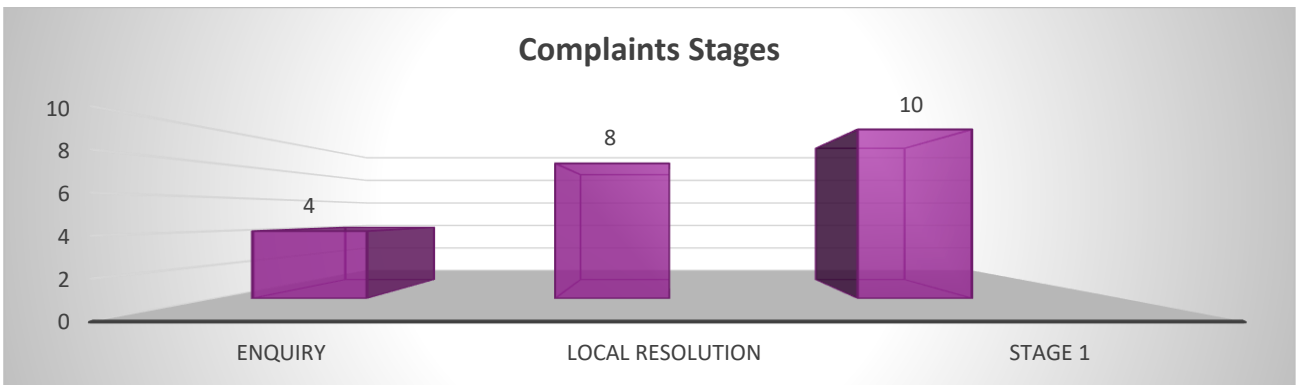
7.8 The above graph shows that a slightly higher volume of advocacy was provided to Children Looked After (**393**) as opposed to Care Leavers (**340**). The graph also illustrates that whilst the service supports children and young people living within the local authority area, those who live outside of the area do access the service, with 253/733 pieces of support provided to children / young people Looked After who did not live in Kirklees.

7.9 In the reporting period, in **56** instances, issues were raised by children and young people living in a residential setting, whilst **143** were raised by children and young people from a Black and Minority Ethnic Group and in **62** instances advocacy was provided to children with a disability.

7.10 The pie chart below shows that, (not including Child Looked After Review or support at other meetings,) **301** young people were satisfied with the outcome achieved in relation to the issue they raised and were supported with, **35** felt they reached a compromise, **10** issues were withdrawn, whilst **18** children /young people were not satisfied.



7.11 There were **22** formal Complaints raised by the Children’s Rights service on behalf of children and young people in this reporting period. The chart below details at what stage of the Complaints process the complaint was satisfied. It is positive that most complaints were able to be resolved informally. However, further work will be undertaken to better understand the reasons why in almost half of the complaints, young people felt the need to initiate the formal Complaints process.



8. Themes and Patterns

8.1 The majority of requests for advocacy work are received through young people self-referring to the service, with the second highest referral source was from Independent Reviewing Officers Social Workers or Personal Advisors, followed by referrals made by Foster Carer’s.

8.2 As noted in the graph in section 7.4, many of the issues raised by children and young people related to Family Time, the majority of which related to requests for sibling and/or

parental contact. Other areas included contact with extended family and requests for overnight stays.

8.3 Of the **86** issues raised in relation to finance, common themes related to driving lesson requests, bus passes or train tickets, support with utilities, bank accounts, and clothing allowances.

8.4 There were **52** pieces of advocacy undertaken in relation to placements. Of these, **15** were in relation to children and young people living in foster care, **11** related to young people living in Children's homes. **6** young people were living in semi-independent, **8** were classed as residing in 'other' placement and **5** children /young people were living with a parent or family member. Whilst **7** issues were raised by young people recorded as either living independently, living in temporary housing, living in supported lodgings, an unregulated placement, or in a Young Offenders Institute. Issues raised included post 18 planning, placement moves and uncertainty in relation to this, and homelessness. One theme identified has been in relation to Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children moving homes when they reach the age of 18, when they have not received their 'leave to remain' and have no recourse to public funds.

8.5 Requests for advocacy to support young people and care leavers through Pre-Birth Assessments and Care Proceedings in relation to their own children has marginally increased in this reporting period. Further exploration as to why the take up of this advocacy offer is not higher, will help ensure that this group of young people receive appropriate support to understand and navigate the processes and access impartial advice.

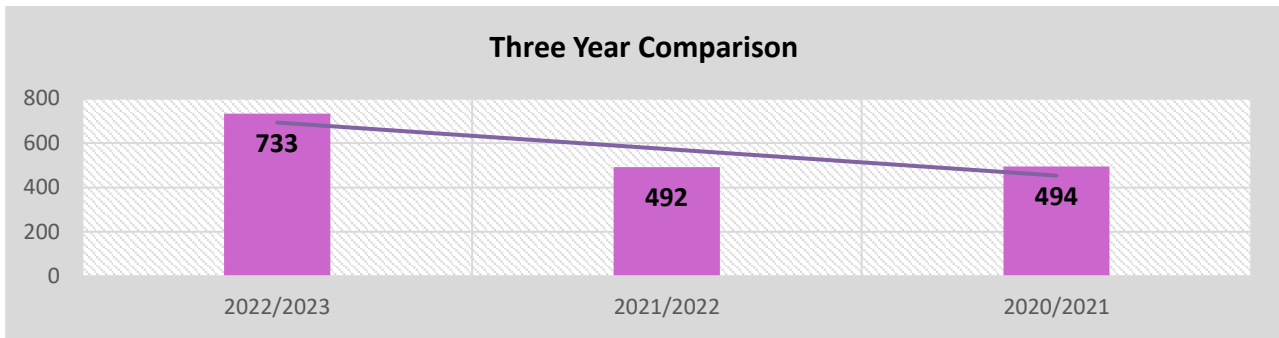
9. Child Protection Advocacy

9.1 The Children's Rights service works closely with the Child Protection and Review Unit, with the aim to continuously improve the offer and expand choice, for how children and young people are able to access and participate in their Looked After Review meetings and in Children Protection Conference meetings.

9.2 In the reporting period the Children's Rights Team have continued to be notified of all Child Protection conference meetings, and where advocacy may be appropriate and a child over the age of 10 is referred by the social worker to the team, each request is discussed and considered according to the individual child's needs and wishes.

10. Three-year Comparison

10.1 The chart below shows the level of advocacy support provided over a 3-year period. Of note, due to service improvements made in the last reporting period how the recording of advocacy is undertaken and captured has improved. This requires consideration when comparing the year-on-year data, and the perceived increase in advocacy support requested and provided. However, year on year data does indicate that advocacy support provided to children Looked After in relation to their Looked After Review meetings, and other meetings, remains consistently high, with support requested relating to placements, contact, and finance issues, accounting for other significant areas of service provision.



11. Participation Opportunities

11.1 The Children’s Rights service works with children and young people to support participation opportunities, this includes:

- **Children in Care Council (CiCC):**

11.2 The council is for children and young people Looked After aged between 12 and 16. It meets to consider issues relevant to being Looked After and to work with professionals to promote the views of children and young people to inform change and best practice. (See appendix 1 for more details.)

- **The Care Leavers Forum (CLF):**

11.3 CLF is for young people aged 16 and over to support young people to work with professionals, to help ensure that their views are heard regarding Care Leaver service delivery and provision. (See appendix 1 for more details.)

- **Professional Recruitment Panels:**

11.4 The Children’s Rights team supports service areas to meaningfully involve children and young people in the recruitment of professionals, i.e., Social Workers, team, Service or Senior managers and Independent Reviewing Officers.

- **Total Respect training:**

11.5 The Children’s Rights Team facilitated Total Respect Training in June 2022 and October 2022 with 26 attendees in total. From June 2023, this training will revert to being delivered in person.

- **Skills to Foster training:**

11.6 In person delivery input by young people did not occur during this reporting period. However, children and young people made a video to share their experiences of being in care, which was utilised by a commissioned company who delivered the training package virtually, due to the Covid -19 Pandemic. The training returned to being delivered in person and in-house with our young people participating in the delivery from May 2023.

11.7 Delivering training to final year Social Work Students takes place when requested and during the reporting period this has taken place at Leeds and Huddersfield Universities; feedback from students was positive and evidenced that this training can be very impactful.

12. Quality Assurance

12.1 The Children's Right Service works closely with the Child Protection and Review Unit to share information, including themes from advocacy, to support positive outcomes and service delivery improvement. The Team Manager also works closely with the Children's Complaints team to discuss ongoing complaints and cater for joint working to resolve these at the earliest opportunity.

12.2 A quarterly Children's Rights report is completed to capture and report on data, themes and patterns relating to advocacy issues. Also, on a quarterly basis the Children's Rights Team seeks feedback from children and young people who have received advocacy, both support continuous service improvement and delivery.

12.3 Practice learning days (PLD's) have been implemented and are seen as an important tool in working collaboratively with practitioners to identify what is going well and where improvements can be made. PLDs will help support continuous dynamic learning.

13. Young people's voice



Direct quotes from children and young people gathered from feedback forms in relation to service provision.

13.1 When a matter is resolved and/or advocacy support ends, children and young people are asked to complete an evaluation feedback form to share their views on what went well, and how or if the service can be improved. Young people have shared that they do not want to receive lots of paper forms or information, so in response to this an electronic feedback form is sent directly to their phone or e-mail address. This has been extended to the children and young people's participation groups, with feedback forms being sent after each group session. Feedback is gathered and analysed on a quarterly basis, to support service development.

14. Conclusion

14.1 Overall the figures suggests that the take up of advocacy has significantly increased within this reporting period from **492** to **733**, however this is partially attributed to improvements made in service delivery and the recording of advocacy. The extent that this is attributed to the recording improvements made will be better understood going forward, as year on year data will be more comparable.

14.2 Members of the CiCC and CLF have continued to be consulted on a variety of projects and have shared their experiences and thoughts regarding service delivery, including with managers and senior managers with the aim of improving outcomes for children Looked After and Care Leavers.

14.3 Total Respect Training has returned to being held in person; positive feedback has been received in relation to this. There are plans to make this training 'mandatory' for all managers and to offer the training to Elected Members.

14.5 The demand for Young Person's Interview Panels has continued in this reporting period with the team endeavouring to facilitate the majority of requests received.

14.6 It was envisaged that the service would be able to provide a more consistent offer for Child Protection Advocacy. With recent staffing changes, this continues to be under review.

14.7 The recommendations in the Independent Review of Children's Social Care (2022) final report regarding advocacy is not yet published. We await the recommendations of this report and will seek to review the service when published.

15.Key Areas of Development from Previous Year 2021-2022

- **Introduction of improved quality assurance mechanisms, to support further development of the service and provide assurance that a consistent and high-quality service is provided.**

A new Service Manager for the team implemented the introduction of regular Practice Learning Days to be held throughout the year to support practice and service development. An improvement in how advocacy support is recorded has helped to ensure a more accurate understanding of the issues and concerns raised and the support provided.

- **To review and develop advocacy support to Care Leavers and Children Looked After who are going through Care Proceedings in relation to their own children.**

This offer has now been written into the Pre-birth policy and an Advocate attended Social Work Cluster meetings to promote this. Further work needs to be undertaken to ensure that consistency of the offer is achieved for every young person going through Care Proceedings in relation to their own child/children.

- **Further develop the Child Protection advocacy offer, to provide a more consistent offer to children and young people.**

Although this is not a statutory requirement, this is an area of service development that remains a high priority to ensure a consistent offer for all children and young people. Development work continues to ensure that all children who request Child Protection advocacy are able to access support.

- **To create stronger links with strategic groups and Boards.**

The Service Manager of the Children's Rights team attends the Corporate Parenting Board to report on current advocacy issues. A plan has been devised to ensure that the topics, themes, and projects the Children in Care and Care Leaver Forum groups are involved in are communicated to board members.

- **To continue to work with others across Children's Services to capture children's voices, experiences, and help support participation and inform service development.**

The Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum have been involved in a number of projects including consultation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and the team is also involved in other service area's Practice Learning Days which provide valuable feedback from children and young people to support improvements in service delivery and working practices.

- **To review the service against the new Advocacy Standards which are due to be published.**

The new Advocacy Standards have not been published.

- **To ensure key links and relationships are developed and maintained with Magdale House, the new Kirklees Children's home.**

The service has identified a named Advocate for the Children's home, ahead of the planned opening.

16.Key Areas of Development for the Next 12 Months

- To develop further the recording of advocacy work by exploring electronic recording of work with Liquid Logic Developers, with the view of establishing Tableau dashboards.
- Continue to develop and enhance involvement in Practice Learning Days across Children's Services, to further capture children's voices, experiences, and help support participation to inform service developments and practice improvements.
- Review the Service against revised Advocacy Standards when published.
- To complete a review of the current service capacity and offer, with a view to exploring:
 - Developing a consistent and achievable Child Protection Advocacy offer.
 - Expanding the current Advocacy offer to include an offer to children subject to Child in Need Planning and Children with a Disability.
- In collaboration with the Looked After Children's service, develop a children's consultation forum to ascertain the view of children and young people Looked After in respect of how they wish to celebrate their achievements.



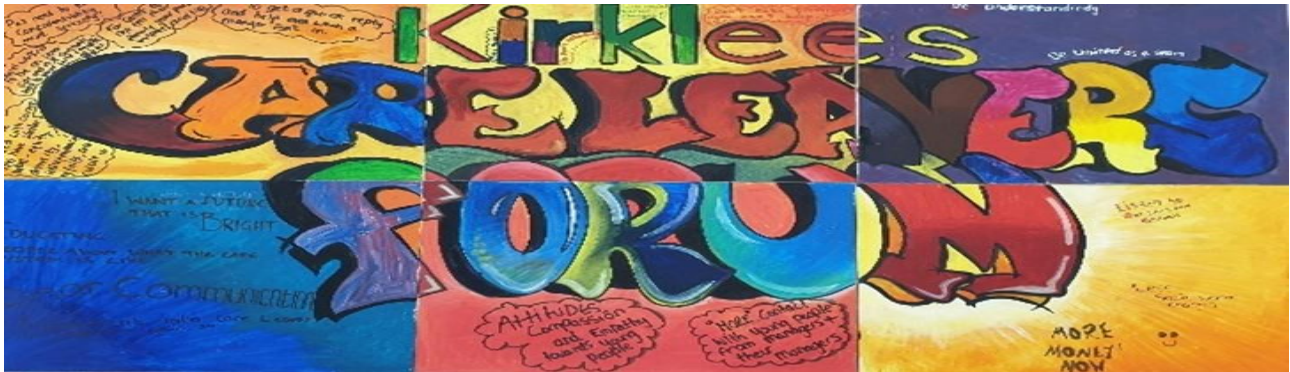
Appendix 1- Children in Care Council (CiCC) and Care Leavers Forum (CLF)

1. The Children in Care Council meets bi-weekly. The aim of the group is to discuss the issues for children and young people who are in care, and to work with professionals to improve services to best meet the needs of children and young people.
2. The Care Leavers Forum is for young people aged 16 to 21 (or 25 if still in full time education) and the remit is to discuss the issues that young people face as they prepare to leave care and move into independence. Young people work with professionals with the aim to improve services and ensure that these meet their needs. The group also meets bi-weekly.
3. Membership continues to be stable and due to the differing issues that children in care and care leavers experience, the groups were reformed as separate groups in September 2022. This enables better focus on the issues for each of the groups.
4. During this reporting period the groups have been involved in the following:
 - Creating a new logo for the CLF and CiCC
 - A member of the Leaving Care Team to discuss their role & the tenancy related issues/independent living.
 - Guest consultation re the regeneration of the town centre & to gather the YP's views.
 - Artwork Project.
 - Visit from the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board.
 - Consulting with the Service Managers for Looked After Children and the Leaving Care Team Service regarding the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Logo.
 - Terms of reference for the respective groups.
 - Consultation on new Financial Policies and the Staying Put Policy.
 - National Care Day Celebration.

5. What do we want to Improve?

- To increase the membership of both the Council and the Forum, to ensure that both are representative of all groups of children and young people.
- Further develop links with the managers of services, to ensure that there is an effective mechanism for communication and the development of services which are led by children and young people, whilst also providing a forum for managers to consult children and young people.

- To identify alternative ways to facilitate sharing the wider views of children and young people who are Looked After and those leaving Care to the Corporate Parenting Board; suggestions include.
 - A video or PowerPoint created by the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum being shared with the Corporate Parenting Board perhaps two or three times a year which outlines the work they have been doing.
 - The Corporate Parenting Board members attending an activity with the groups.
 - Individual members of the Corporate Parenting Board attending the groups periodically throughout the year.



Appendix 2 - Independent Visitors Scheme Report

Kirklees Independent Visitors Scheme (IV)

Children Act 1989 Section 23ZB requires that:

(1) A local authority looking after a child must appoint an independent person to be the child's visitor if—

(a) the child falls within a description prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State

or

(b) in any other case, it appears to them that it would be in the child's interests to do so.

1. Introduction

Kirklees Independent Visitors Scheme is also known as Care2Listen. The scheme was established in its current format ten years ago; it is coordinated by an Independent Service Officer.

The scheme provides independent adult volunteers who befriend children / young people in the care of the local authority; to spend time with them on a one-to-one basis, undertake activities and develop a positive relationship with a trusted, responsible adult. Volunteers provide children / young people with the opportunity to talk to someone independent, seek advice, guidance, and support from and have fun with, in an informal setting.

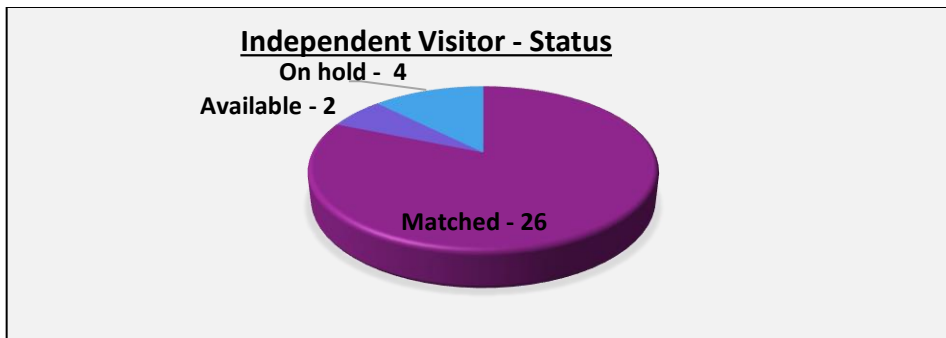
Volunteers undergo a recruitment and selection programme which includes, submitting a formal volunteer's application, an adult and young person interview panel, and a bespoke training package; tailored to equip and inform volunteers for the role of an Independent Visitor. Enhanced DBS checks are undertaken, together with employment checks and two references.

Children and young people are referred to the scheme by either their Social Worker or Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). The IRO has a duty to discuss the scheme at a child's / young person's Looked After Review. Young people are also encouraged to express an interest themselves in having an Independent Visitor and can apply through the Children's Rights webpage or they can discuss it directly with the Scheme Coordinator, their Social Worker, key worker, or carer. However, a formal referral document needs to be completed and submitted by the child's Social Worker.

In 2022/23 4 new volunteers were recruited and trained and matched with children or young people.

2. Current position

Ideally the scheme seeks to match a volunteer with a child/young person who meets their preference in terms of placement, location, age, and gender within 8 weeks of being classed as available. It can take longer to ensure that the match is appropriate and likely to be successful.

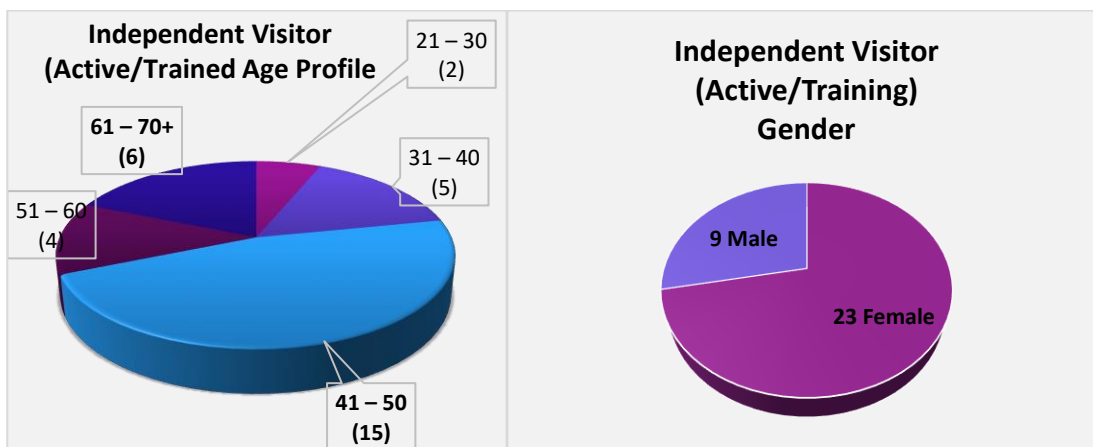


There are currently 32 trained volunteers. 26 Independent Visitors are matched with a child/young person on a one-to-one basis, 2 are available and are due to be matched and 4 volunteers are not matched at their request, and 1 person is currently undergoing training. Due to personal circumstances 2 Independent Visitors have left the scheme in the reporting period.

There continues to be interest from people about volunteering with the scheme although not all enquiries result in an application being received. The scheme coordinator endeavours to contact non respondents to gain an understanding of why they have decided not to pursue volunteering with the Scheme; this suggests that there is no overarching reason and includes a change of circumstances or people looking into multiple opportunities to decide which is right for them.

16 children /young people are waiting for a match with an Independent Visitor, of these, 11 currently live in a host local authority and 5 in Kirklees. The waiting list is reviewed regularly to ensure the referrals remain appropriate and contact is made with Social Workers to check continued suitability.

3. Volunteers Profile

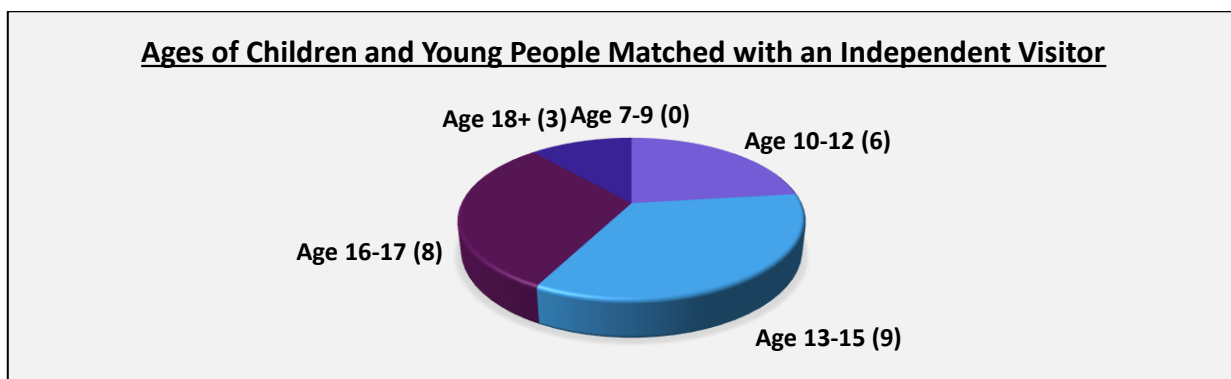


The Independent Visitors Scheme has a diverse range of volunteers. Volunteers must be aged 18 or over, with a minimum 5-year age gap between the adult volunteer and the young person they are matched to. Volunteers in the youngest age range are accepted only if they can demonstrate a degree of maturity appropriate to managing the challenges which young people may present. 26 volunteers are of white ethnicity and 6 identify as being an 'other' ethnicity.

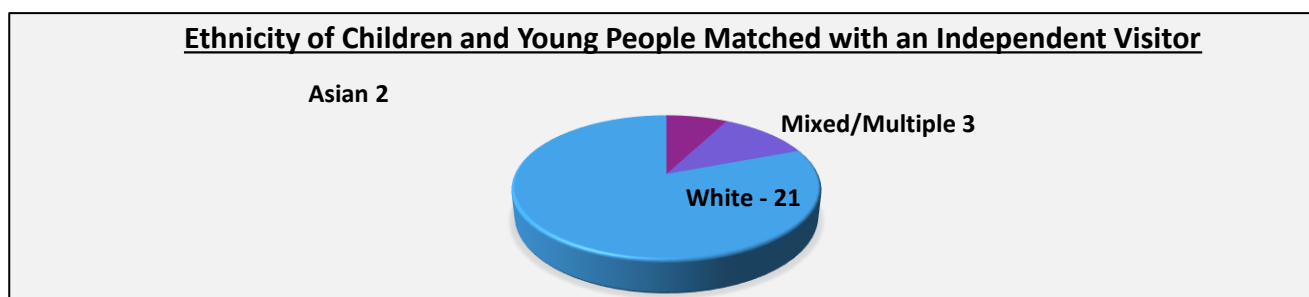
23 of the current volunteers are female and 9 are male. This is a similar cohort as seen in other regional schemes. Although some young people specify that they would like a male volunteer, many have been matched with a female volunteer and these relationships have been sustained.

4. Profile of children and young people

Of the 26 young people matched with an Independent Visitor, 16 are female and 10 are male. 3 young people are over the age of 18. Continuation over the age of 18 is in line with Government recommendations and is based on the needs of the young person, however the frequency tends to be less than monthly. All matches for young people over 18 are reviewed annually. 8 young people are aged 16 or 17, 9 are aged between 13 and 15 and 6 are aged between 10 and 12 years old.

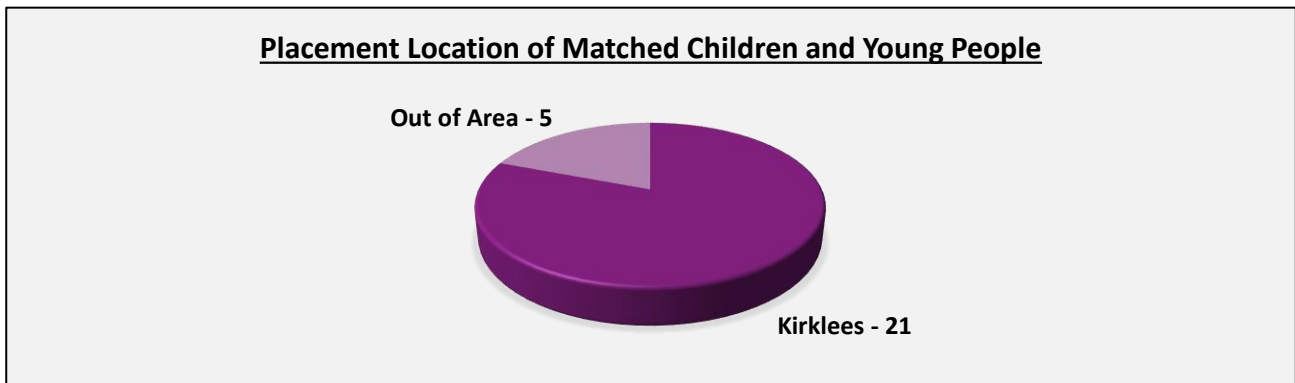


The ethnic background of children/young people who have an independent visitor is broadly representative of the wider Kirklees community. ¹



¹ [InstantAtlas Kirklees – JSA Home – People and Life Events – Vulnerable children](#)

81% of the matched children/young people live in Kirklees with 19% living in a host local authority area such as Bradford, Leeds, and Calderdale.



5. **Making a difference.**

Independent Visitors are required to submit a short feedback form following each visit or contact with the child / young person they are matched with. Volunteers should ideally have contact with their matched child/young person once a month although occasionally this may extend to a 6-weekly due to the availability of the child/young person and/or the volunteer.

Quality assurance monitoring ensures that the Scheme Co-ordinator has contact to evidence the involvement of each volunteer within a quarterly period, and if this is not the case, the Scheme Co-ordinator will contact the volunteer for an update. Independent Visitors also have an annual review which includes the Scheme Co-ordinator obtaining the views of the child/young person the Independent Visitor Volunteer is matched with.

Volunteers undertake a range of activities with children/young people including, eating out visits to the cinema, park walks, ten pin bowling and creative activities such as crafts/arts, baking and sewing.





17.6 Feedback from young people

The value and impact of the scheme and relationships built is evidenced within feedback received from children/young people.

Young people are spoken to at the time of an Annual Review for an Independent Visitor Volunteer. General feedback is they value a relationship which is 'just for them' and they do not have to share their time with other family members or with other children/young people with whom they live. The following are direct comments from young people:

"I like having J as my Independent Visitor and enjoy talking to her. We 'click' and I feel that I'm a mini 'her' – we like the same things such as Primark! I like the things that I do when I go out with her. We figure out together where we will go on the next visit. I would like to see her more if she could but I know that she's busy."

"I love seeing F and definitely want to continue. It's fantastic and the best thing is looking forward to doing something nice and having someone to talk to about the same interests. I get on really well with F, I can talk to him easily and I think having an Independent Visitor is great!"

"I like seeing my Independent Visitor. We do fun things and she makes me laugh."

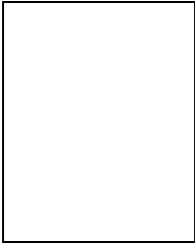
"I really enjoy seeing my Independent Visitor. I like that I can talk to her, she takes me places, we do new things that I didn't think I would ever get to do. We have been to a vintage clothes shop, to the cinema, we go for meals and shopping. I like that I can get out of the house, meet new people, and it is something just for me and not with parents. It gives me freedom. I want to continue with my Independent Visitor. I love her, she's the best. We always have a laugh, it is just good to be with her."

Projected changes in the next 12 months

Due to changes in the management structure of the Children's Rights team, how the scheme is delivered is currently under review. As part of this, tasks pertaining to the marketing, recruitment, training, and checks associated with the Independent Visitors scheme were allocated to Fostering Recruitment Advisors, to enable more effective use of resources and support service wide developments.

Priorities for the scheme

- The two existing trained and available volunteers have now been matched with young people.
- Recruitment campaign to be aligned with Fostering recruitment campaigns and marketing.
- Introduction of enhanced quality assurance processes and further development of mechanisms to capture timely feedback from children and young people to support continuous practice and service delivery improvements.



Report to Corporate Parenting Board & Scrutiny

Title	Report of Children’s Homes
Author	Joel Hanna
Date of Meeting	12/09/2023 & 22/09/2023
Report subject	To provide an overview and update on the developments within our Children’s Residential estate
Key Messages	<p>Due to the purpose and function of our children’s homes neither Ofsted nor children’s services are able to publish the names and addresses of our children’s homes. Our children’s homes provide homes in small group living settings and we aim to protect and safeguard our children’s anonymity within their community settings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We currently have four of our five registered homes caring for children with one home that closed in July 2022 due to re-open after a full refurbishment. • Alongside reopening an existing home, we are registering a new home to provide additional capacity for up to four children and young people in need of small group living in our authority. • We are working with Ofsted to improve our homes and plan to have all our homes rated as Good or outstanding within the next inspection cycle. • We have revised our staffing structures and Job roles for our residential estate and are currently working with staff, Trade Unions with support from our Human Resources Services to realign our staffing and increase our capacity across our residential children’s homes estate.
Summary of Decisions	To note the plans and strategy to expand our internal residential estate and continuously improve our residential services.
Background documents (please list)	Nil

1. Introduction

- 1.0 In Kirklees we are ambitious for our children and young people and want our children in care and care leavers to be happy, healthy, and successful. We are committed to providing children and young people with high quality parenting, care and the right support, to enable them to aspire, achieve and live healthy, independent, and fulfilling lives. Ensuring that our children have the right home to meet their needs at the right time is a core priority for our children's services and requires that we have in place the right mix of care settings including small group living children's homes where needed.
- 1.1 Our homes for children programme of work includes a focus on designing and delivering a modern residential children's estate, that meets the needs of children who are identified to best benefit from small group living. In addition to our individual children's home's improvement plans we have developed an estate improvement plan that we are delivering through various work streams through our Homes for Children leadership arrangements.
- 1.2 Whilst our work focusing on expanding and developing new children's residential provision is ongoing we are of course continually focusing on our existing provision working together with partners including our facilities management teams, health services and the police to improve our existing residential estate.

2. Change Programme for Residential Services.

- 2.0 We have developed a costed staffing model for the residential service in order to deliver six homes and support the capacity to flex with a casual pool to support smaller associated 'solo/dual occupancy children's homes' to be sourced in a later phase of the expansion strategy. We have confirmed the new role descriptions for relevant posts at grading panel for the service and have successfully recruited to the service manager role who is now leading the recruitment and expansion of our estate alongside the Head of Service for Homes for Children.
- 2.1 Our Emotional Wellbeing Service is leading on commissioning Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) training which will be a core skill shared by all in our residential estate and will provide a consistent evidence informed model of care and support.
- 2.2 Working with colleagues in Human Resources and Trade Unions we have begun to consult with and engage staff throughout this change programme. Parallel to this we

aim to promote the responsibilities of our Corporate Parenting Board partners and elected members with regards to support for our children's residential estate, inviting ward members to champion homes within their wards and support wider community engagement.

3. Expansion

- 3.0 The authority has purchased a new home that represents a significant investment in our residential estate and has been subject to extensive works to ensure that it is fit for caring for up to four children and young people in a high-quality home for young people identified for group living. The construction work has been significant and final works agreed following our 'designing out risk' assessment is due to be completed within the next few weeks. We have successfully appointed a manager and deputy manager for the home and are now in the process of identifying the staff team. Registration for the home with Ofsted is underway and we hope to be able to provide a home for our first match child as soon as the home is registered.
- 3.1 The authority took the decision to suspend its registration for one of our homes in July 2022 following a judgement of inadequate from Ofsted due to difficulties at that time. We have recently undertaken significant building works in the home which are now completed and have met with Ofsted to lift the suspension and reopen the home. As the home's last inspection judged the service at that time to be inadequate this judgement remains in place however, as soon as we have a child in the home Ofsted will return to undertake a new inspection of the home and we anticipate an improved judgement. There has been significant investment made to improve the home and the home's finish is high quality and demonstrates a high standard of care and value for our children for whom this will be their home.

4. Staffing

- 4.0 A core principle of our homes arrangements for bringing children together in group living will be ensuring that our homes' statement of purpose and functions are delivered through careful matching of the needs of the children living in our homes to the skills of our team and with consideration of the relationships between those who will live together in our home. We are working with our existing staff and our psychologist for the Emotional Wellbeing Service to develop and train our workforce

on our model of care and are currently sourcing specialist DBT training for our workforce.

- 4.1 We have also invested in our residential services infrastructure to ensure that we have adequate business and administrative support resources across our homes and have designed this into the new establishment model to support our growing estate.

5. Ofsted Judgements and Regulatory Visits

- 5.0 As regulated services children's residential homes are registered with Ofsted and subject to inspections as set out within the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF). All SCCIF inspections follow the 4-point scale (outstanding, good, requires improvement to be good and inadequate) to make judgements on the overall experiences and progress of children. Full information on the inspection framework is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-care-common-inspection-framework-sccif-childrens-homes/social-care-common-inspection-framework-sccif-childrens-homes#timeframe>. In addition to an annual inspection children's homes are also subject to a monthly visit form an independent specialist who will set out a report to the home and manager and submit the report to Ofsted sharing their monthly assessment of the homes performance and compliance considered against the regulation for operating a children's home. Ofsted publish all reports on their website though are careful not to identify the location or names of homes so as not to risk the safeguarding of children living in those homes and communities.
- 5.1 Alongside a judgement rating for the home Ofsted may set out **Compliance Notices**, where they assess that a service is not complying with a requirement, **Requirements** to improve to meet regulation and **Recommendations**. Compliance notices are time bound and will be subject to short term re-inspection. With regards to requirements and recommendations these will usually be subject to the evaluation at the homes next inspection.
- 5.2 At the time of writing this report we are awaiting a reinspection for one of our homes that was judged to be inadequate at the last inspection in July 2023. This home was issued with two compliance notices which have been subject to re-inspection and confirmed as met. We anticipate that this home will move judgement in the next inspection due in the next six weeks. As stated above one of our homes is due to re-open after being closed for over a year and subject to extensive renovations. At the point of closing the home was judged to be inadequate and therefore upon re-opening

we will receive a new inspection and judgement. Of our five registered homes there current Ofsted judgements are as set out below.

One home is judged to be Outstanding
One Home is judged to be Good
One home is judged to be Required improvement
One home is judged to be Inadequate and is due to be re-inspected in the next 6 weeks
One home is due to be re-inspected after being closed for a year and there fore awaits a judgement

5.3 Our ambition is to ensure that all our children’s homes are rated to be Good or Outstanding within the next inspection cycle and our work with facilities management and the revision of our staffing structures and staff training are central to achieving that aim.

6. The balance of internally provided and externally commissioned homes.

6.0 At the time of writing Kirklees has 593 young people who are looked after by the Local Authority. There are 18 young people living in externally commissioned resident children homes arrangements and 12 young people living in internal children’s home estate, which is a total of 30 children and young people. The % of children in care who are living in residential children home arrangements is 5.% for Kirklees. There are 12 young people currently living in our internal residential estate and 18 children living in externally commissioned residential children’s homes. Therefore 40% of all children living in residential homes are provided by the local authority. Of the 18 children living in externally commissioned arrangements 5 are in highly specialist health and or education settings that the local authority does not provide.

6.1 With the plans to expand our internal capacity as set out above we aim to reduce the proportion of children and young people where accommodation is commissioned from external providers.

END

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Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2023/24

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>

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2023/24

<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 2023/24

	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>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p>Overview Reports</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>Annual Health Report</p> <p>Virtual School 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>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p>O Rix</p> <p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p>G Addy</p> <p>L Hallas</p> <p>CLlr Pattison / L Hallas</p> <p>K Lord / V Metheringham</p> <p>Board Members</p> <p>J Harris</p>
	Pre-meeting (Informal)	

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2023/24

<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>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p>Overview Reports</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>One Adoption West Yorkshire Annual Report</p> <p>Annual report on Complaints and Compliments for Children in Care</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>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy O Rix</p> <p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p>M Rawlings</p> <p>Rachel Fairhurst</p> <p>Cllr Pattison / L Hallas</p> <p>T Brailsford /V Metheringham</p> <p>Board Members</p> <p>J Harris</p>
<p>Tuesday 23rd January 2024</p> <p><i>Report Deadline: Thursday 11th January 2024</i></p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p>	<p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy O Rix</p>

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2023/24

<p><i>Agenda Publish: Monday 15th January 2024</i></p>	<p>Overview Reports</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>Sufficiency Strategy (TBC)</p> <p>Fostering Annual Report (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 Plan</p>	<p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metherringham /G Addy</p> <p>V Metherringham</p> <p>J Hanna</p> <p>K Lord / V Metherringham</p> <p>Cllr Pattison/ L Hallas</p> <p>V Metherringham</p> <p>Board Members</p> <p>J Harris</p>
<p>Tuesday 5th March 2024</p> <p><i>Report Deadline: Thursday 22nd February 2024</i></p> <p><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>Overview Reports</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p>	<p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metherringham /G Addy</p> <p>O Rix</p>

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2023/24

	<p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>Statement of Purpose for Residential Care</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>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p>K Lord</p> <p>Cllr Pattison/L Hallas</p> <p>V Metheringham/ K lord</p> <p>Board Members</p> <p>J Harris</p>
<p>Tuesday 19th March 2023</p> <p><i>Report Deadline: Thursday 7th March 2024</i></p> <p><i>Agenda Publish: Monday 11th March 2024</i></p>	<p align="center">Pre-meeting (Informal)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring report (Children’s Services)</p> <p>Overview Reports</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight Report</p> <p>Virtual School Governing Body Update (verbal)</p> <p>Children’s Ambition Board Update (verbal)</p>	<p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p>O Rix</p> <p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p>Cllr Pattison/L Hallas</p> <p>V Metheringham/ K lord</p>

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2023/24

	<p>Updates from Board Members on interaction with services</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Board Agenda</p>	<p>Board Members</p> <p>J Harris</p>
<p>Tuesday 23rd April 2023</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>Overview Reports</p> <p align="center">Public Items:</p> <p>Children’s Performance Highlight 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</p>	<p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy</p> <p>O Rix</p> <p>O Rix/ L Hallas / V Metheringham /G Addy Cllr Pattison/L Hallas</p> <p>V Metheringham/ K lord</p> <p>Board Members</p> <p>J Harris</p>

Standing Items (as on Agenda Plan)

- Minutes of Previous Meeting
- Attendance by Strategic Director Update on the Role of Corporate Parent

Corporate Parenting Board

Agenda Plan 2023/24

- (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
- (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)

Childrens Ambition Board Update (verbal)

Updates from Board Members on interaction with services

Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan

Items for consideration /to schedule :

Statement of Purpose for Fostering

Statement of Purpose for Residential Care (K Lord)

Report on Accommodation

Fostering Annual Report

Pathway planning report

Missing report

The Sufficiency strategy

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.

Corporate Parenting Board

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Annual / 6 monthly reports:-

- 6 monthly report on Children's Rights (Oct to March) A Gledhill (June)
- Annual Report on work of the Children's Rights) April onwards
- 6 monthly report on Independent Visitors Scheme (Oct to March)
- 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)
- Annual Report on Kirklees Fostering Service
- OAWY – Annual (highlights report on Kirklees performance data)
- OAWY – 6 monthly report (June/July)

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