

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 14 February 2019
Title of report: Children in Care Services Performance Highlights

Purpose of report

This report outlines key performance highlights for children in care and care leavers up to December 31st 2018.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not applicable – for information
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Steve Comb on behalf of Elaine Mcshane (5.2.19)
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	Not applicable
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	Not applicable
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr V Kendrick (Children)

Electoral wards affected: None

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

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

1. **Summary**

The key performance highlights for children in care and care leavers up to December 31 2018 are as follows:-

Number of children in care

The number of children in care remains currently stable with a reduction of 38 since January 2018, current number 629.

Placement Stability and support

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

We have reinstated Placement Stability Meetings to identify when and what support placements require. Placement Support Team are increasingly focussing their work on some of our most trouble and young people to help build resilience in placements. Whilst the data shows improvement over a 12 month period we are mindful of the deterioration and the impact this has on our children and young people and will continue to focus on the retention of staff and consistency in case allocation.

Decision making for looked after children

The Legal Gateway Permanence Panel continues to support consistency in regards to decision making in relation to children becoming looked after, planning in relation to long term placement moves for children and young people is considered at the permanence panel. A weekly External Placement Review Panel is now in place, to provide better oversight of children who are not placed in council provision. An External Placement Review of all children who are placed out of Local Authority to consider their care planning and explore options of returning to the local area if this is in line with meeting the children and young person's needs. We have reviewed all children in care who were placed at home on interim or full care orders as a legal status (Placed with Parents), this has led to more stability in those numbers.

Health for children in care

What difference did we make?

Initial health assessments:

Kirklees *rolling 12-month data* for Dec 18 shows 91.3% were completed in timescales. Locala monthly data at source, reports that 100% were completed in timescales with no breaches. The difference between the figures has been analysed, this shows that there are some situations, for example children remanded, an IHA that was completed by another local authority and children who go missing, which have a negative impact on the data. A regular process of reconciliation between the Designated Nurse and PIU will be established.

Review health assessments:

Kirklees rolling 12-month data for Dec 18 for developmental assessments, i.e. children under 5 years old, stands at 74.4% and annual assessments, i.e. children over 5 years old, was 89.6% on time. Locala monthly data at source records that 100% of the developmental and 97% of the annual assessments were completed in timescales. There was 1 breach for a young person who refused the assessment.

Dental Checks within last 12 months:

88.9% of LAC have been recorded as having received a dental check at Dec 18. A recent request has been made to the Locala data service to provide monthly figures to allow future comparisons. Locala's 'Registered with Dentist' data shows 100% of looked after children at health assessments in December were registered with a dentist.

Substance misuse:

There has been a positive reduction to 2.76% in the number of young people who were identified at their last review health assessment, as having a dependant problem with substances. Consideration must be given to the difficulty in obtaining an accurate figure, as it is dependent on the young person admitting the extent of the issue, given that it is illegal and they may not wish to share the information. Those young people who refuse any support are discussed with the local support service, to try to have a targeted response. Any young person mis-using substances at any level are offered support.

Early permanence placements

We continue to consider early permanence placements for children with a plan for adoption and have made some improvements in this area in terms of timescales for children.

One Adoption West Yorkshire

Managers from One Adoption West Yorkshire have attended the Corporate Parenting Board in January 2019, and will be invited to a future meeting to update again.

Senior Managers from One Adoption meet with relevant senior managers within the council on a regular basis. We have implemented a new arrangement for Agency Decision Maker, bringing us in line with our colleagues in Leeds and the remaining three local authorities in West Yorkshire, to ensure continuity and consistency for care proceedings dealt with in the Leeds Court Centre.

Child permanence reports

We have established weekly clinics to support children's social workers who are undertaking child permanence reports, sibling assessments and considering whether a plan for adoption is appropriate. This is a joint initiative between the Assessment & Intervention Service and One Adoption and will be supported by regular training and workshops.

Children with a plan for adoption

We continue to consider early permanence placements for children with a plan for adoption and have made improvements in this area in terms of timescales for children. There is now a fully agreed and operational flow chart which outlines the process involved for all workers from the two agencies and clarifies roles and responsibilities.

Managers from One Adoption West Yorkshire attended Corporate Parenting Board in January 2019 to provide an overview of their performance.

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One Adoption continue to attend legal gateway on a weekly basis in order to track children with a plan for adoption and to ensure a family finder is allocated.

If an adoption placement ceases then One Adoption have a 'disruption review' and their new procedure is on our procedures website. There will be work with Kirklees staff as to the implementation of this process.

We have a structured Agency Decision Making process in relation to adoption planning. This includes legal and medical advice as well as advice from One Adoption West Yorkshire.

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

What do we want to improve?

The family finding team at One Adoption with responsibility for Kirklees will be moving to Civic Centre in the near future, which will improve areas of communication and partnership working to assist timely adoptions.

In December 18, 11.3% (19 children) were adopted as a percentage of children leaving care in a 12 month rolling period, the average timescale decreased in Nov 18, with an average of 306.4 days as compared to 309.6 days in September and October. Overall this is very good performance compared to the Statistical Neighbours and National averages from the most recent Adoption Scorecard (3-year average outcome to March 2017). Kirklees performance on the Scorecard was 549 days, so there has been a considerable improvement since this time.

Early Permanence Planning

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EDUCATION

The initial PEP Completion rate had increased to September 2018. All initial PEP's have been completed within 10 working days of notification to the Virtual School since 01/09/2018.

Attendance has improved and the number of persistent absentee pupils has reduced slightly. This is a very positive impact as at this time of the year one or two days absence can have a large impact on the overall percentage.

We continue to maintain a strong focus on pupils not in full-time educational provision. Wherever possible we look to ensure a return to full time education as soon as possible but these situations are often very complex. The number of young people not in full-time education has decreased, we have 3 young people not on a school roll for exceptional reasons and they have a personalised package of education in place. Whilst we keep this as a priority, performance is now in line with Statistical Neighbours and in line with the national picture.

What do we want to improve?

PEP Completion. We continue to work with social work teams to improve both PEP and initial PEP completion. This includes weekly updates to Social Work managers and regular chase up emails and phone calls to Social Workers where there is missing information. This is a concern for us and the implementation of Liquid Logic had contributed to a decline in performance within timescale. We appear to also have an ongoing issue around the notification of when a young person comes into care, impacting on initial PEP completion data. We are working together across services to try to resolve these issues, for example to enable a PEP alert for all Social Workers on the Liquid Logic system.

Looked after Children involved in the criminal justice system

Three years ago, Kirklees YOT became aware that successful outcomes for LAC young people we worked with were significantly worse than those of the general YOT population, with less than 30% successful completions by LAC compared with over 60% for the general YOT population. We have taken various measures to address this including having specialist YOT Officers who work with all LAC cases. Over the past 2 years there has been a welcome increase in the percentage of LAC young people having a successful outcome to their YOT intervention. In fact during 2017/18, 75% of LAC young people on Orders to the YOT successfully completed their intervention, compared with 68% of the general YOT population, a remarkable turn-around. For the 1st Quarter of this year (Apr to June) the percentage of LAC offending

is 2.13%, a very slight reduction on the same period last year of 2.32%. The 2nd Quarter (July – Sept 18) again gives a figure of 2.13% of LAC offending, this indicates that we are on target for 2018/19 to have the same LAC offending rate as in 2017/18. The 3rd quarter (Oct to Dec 18) the percentage of LAC offending is 0.61%, which gives us a total of 4.88% April to Dec 18. All being well, the continuing of this trend for the next quarter will result in a reduction in the LAC offending for the full year

What do we want to improve?

Compared to last year there has been a small increase in the percentage of LAC offending. In the year 2016/17, 6.14% of LAC had offended, compared to 2017/18 when the figure was 7.26%. While the overall performance this last year is disappointing, given the steady reduction over the previous few years, the figure of 7.26% is significantly lower than 2012/13 when almost 10% of LAC offended. The YOT will continue to closely monitor the figures to ensure that we are ready to respond should the situation deteriorate. The latest published figures for a full year (2015/16) show a national average of 5% of LAC offending, while regionally the range was between 5% and 9%. It should be noted that these returns are provided by each local authority individually and we are not aware of any validation exercise. Also numerous local authorities, locally and nationally have not submitted any figures.

LEAVING CARE

Contact with care leavers

We are maintaining a high percentage of care leavers we are in touch with, at the end of quarter two we were in touch with 99% of care leavers, this has to be viewed in the context of this group all being aged 18 plus. In some situations, young people are not wanting to keep contact with their Personal Advisor, the team work innovatively to keep in touch, we have a best practice protocol in place.

Number of young people in suitable accommodation

There has been a small rise in the number of young people in suitable accommodation since June 2018. We continue to maintain strong links with KNH and Housing and the Housing Panel is enabling us to ensure that suitable accommodation is available in a timelier manner when young people are moving to their own accommodation. We have recently made some strong links with private housing providers and are considering how collectively we can improve our skills for independence training. We now have life skills and pre-tenancy training in place held weekly at “No.11” and where possible link young people with tenancy support when housed in KNH tenancies.

Kirklees Commitment to Care Leavers

The Kirklees Commitment for Care Leavers was launched on Friday 17th January alongside reviewing our service provision for “No.11” to ensure that this is more effective. There has been consultation with Children and Young People along with partner agencies for the development of our offer. We are also working on opening a similar service to number 11 in the North of the district to improve reach with our young people.

Personal Advisors

The majority our Young People aged 17 have an allocated PA, as well as an allocated Social Worker. We have been able to strengthen our pathway planning in relation to developing timely transitions with young people.

Education Employment Training

Our performance in relation to Employment, Education and Training (EET) indicator is a focus for improvement at 4% below our statistical neighbours and we have a C&K Careers Advisor in the Leaving Care Service. We now 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. We are also working on opening a similar service to number 11 in the North of the district to improve reach with our young people.

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

Number of young people with a pathway plan

The number of young people with a pathway plan in place has been over 81.7% since March 2018 and we have improved to reach 88.2% at the end of quarter two. We have recruited new Personal Advisers this has led to improved Pathway Planning. We continue to work with the Personal Advisors to ensure pathway plans are completed in a timely manner to meet targets with a focus going forward on the improvement of the quality of plans, the involvement of young people and ensuring we capture their wishes and feelings.

CHILDRENS HOMES

The Councils five Ofsted Registered Childrens Homes have all been inspected unannounced by Ofsted within this financial year, for their main annual inspection four are graded as Good and one Outstanding.

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

3.4 **Improving Outcomes for Children**

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

3.5 **Reducing demand of services**

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

4. **Consultees and their opinions**

Not applicable

5. **Next steps**

Managers to lead the focus on areas of performance with staff, in areas where outcome data is not what we expect it to be.

6. **Officer recommendations and reasons**

That the report and key highlights on performance within Children in Care Services be noted.

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

Not applicable

8. **Contact officer**

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

Monthly performance information is used to inform the narrative for this report

10. **Service Director responsible**

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

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