

Contact Officer: Leigh Webb

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Wednesday 30 September 2020

Present: Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)
Councillor John Lawson
Councillor Carole Pattison
Councillor Richard Smith
Councillor Andrew Marchington (Ex-Officio)
Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting
Tom Brailsford, Service Director (Resource, Improvement and Partnerships)
Stewart Horn, Head of Joint Commissioning - Children and Families
Barry Lockwood, Kirklees Fostering Network
Janet Tolley, Virtual School Head Teacher

In attendance: Anna Gledhill, Service Manager Quality Assurance & Social Work Practice Lead
Andy Quinlan, Service Manager – Fostering
Laura Counce, Acting Head of Sufficiency

Apologies: Gill Addy
Sara Miles
Ophelia Rix
Jo-Anne Sanders

1 Membership of the Board/Apologies

The Chair welcomed Board Members. Apologies had been received from Gill Addy, Sara Miles, Ophelia Rix and Jo-Anne Sanders.

2 Interests

No interests were declared.

3 Minutes

RESOLVED-

That the minutes of the last meeting, held on 1 July 2020 be approved as a correct record.

4 Admission of the Public

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

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5 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Public Question Time

No questions from the public were received.

7 Kirklees Looked After Children Annual Health Report

The Board received a report outlining the work that has taken place in the Looked After Children's Health Team to provide assurance that the Clinical Commissioning Groups are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities.

The main body of the report set out the local activity related to Looked After Children, during the time frame 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 and highlighted the latest relevant National data for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, ('Statistical First release' DfE 2019)

It was reported that the Key Performance Indicator results have remained at a high level, with 95.5% of Initial Health Assessments (IHA) (n224) completed within the statutory 20 working days timescale and an average of 94% Review Health Assessments (RHA's) (n697) completed in Kirklees within their timescales. (National average 89%)

The report set out information in respect of the following key points:

- All the data for dental registration, dental attendance and immunisation uptake is higher than the national average.
- The work with sexual health and substance misuse outreach and the emotional health and well-being team, has continued, reinforcing a collaborative working model.
- The regional adoption agency is established and the Designated Doctor, continues to carry out adult and child medical reports.
- The Strength & Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ) process, continues to provide a robust formula for ensuring alerts are made about children, who may be struggling with their emotional health. The resulting scores are in line with national data. The return rate for questionnaires has improved significantly from 65% in April 2019 to 88% in February 2020, due to a targeted focus.
- The Ages & Stages Social & Emotional (ASQ–SE) questionnaire, has provided a further resource to measure the emotional health of children and babies under 4 years old and dovetails into the SDQ process.

Despite being outside the timeframe of the Annual report, information was included in relation to the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic which outlined the focus made to identify and target vulnerable children and families, while supporting the staff team and colleagues.

In response to a question from Councillor Lawson health assessments, Stewart Horn explained that video and phone assessments were taking place and were prioritised and marked accordingly.

RESOLVED -

The Board noted the Kirklees Looked After Children Annual Health Report 2019-2020.

8 Children in Care Services Performance Highlights

The Board considered a report giving key highlights on Performance Monitoring data for the Children's Service up to September 2020 presented by Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting.

The report outlined performance data relating to children entering care, children in care and placement stability, looked after children reviews, visiting and missing.

It was reported that there had been an increasing trend in the number and rate of children in care from 64.0 (641 children) in Sep 19 to 68.8 (689 children) in Aug 20. The current 12-month average for Kirklees is 66.9 (670 children), above the 31 March 2019 published rate of 62.0 and the England 2019 rate of 65.0, but below Statistical Neighbours 2019 rate of 91.6.

In response to a question from Barry Lockwood concerning payment of fines for foster children breaking Covid regulations, Tom Brailsford explained that a response was being drafted on the issue through Kirklees Fostering Network

Janet Tolley, Virtual School Head Teacher submitted an update on data in respect of Looked After Children Education Outcomes, providing performance information relating to Personal Education Plans, attendance figures and school moves.

With regard to the transition into post 16 education it was reported that C&K had worked to ensure transition plans are in place and that a further report would be submitted when results are validated.

RESOLVED -

1. That the report be noted
2. That an update in respect of examination results and transition to college be submitted to a future meeting.

9 One Adoption West Yorkshire Annual Report & Highlight Report

The Board considered an Annual Report from One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY) and welcomed Sarah Johal from One Adoption to the meeting.

Sarah Johal presented the report and highlighted the following key points:-

- Between April 2019 and March 2020, 220 children had a plan for adoption ratified by the 5 West Yorkshire local authorities Agency Decision Makers which was a slight decrease on last year's full year figure of 226 children;
- There were 162 children with a plan for adoption agreed;
- 113 adoptive households were approved during 2019-20 which is an increase on the preceding 2 years

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- The final outturn position for 2019-20 was a £5k underspend
- There had been a lot of interest in adoption since the start of the pandemic.
- New ways of promoting the service have been introduced which includes an online film; facebook Q&A; and Zoom webinars.
- Between April 2019 and March 2020, 21 children from Kirklees were matched with families at adoption panels
- One Adoption introduced peer mentoring services for peer mentors in Kirklees and 9 families had benefited from this service.
- Between 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020, 76 successful applications have been made to the Adoption Support Fund in respect of adopted children in Kirklees accessing £335,545.30 for therapeutic support.
- There has been an increase in referrals for Adoption Support services; there was 12 families from Kirklees awaiting allocation at the end of March 2020. In the interim all the families continue to have access to the Core Support Services and some are accessing these. We hold monthly tracking and allocation meetings to ensure those families who are waiting are discussed routinely and progress to allocation is monitored. Keep in touch phone calls are made to some families who are waiting for an allocated worker.
- There are currently 262 letterbox contact plans facilitated for Kirklees children and young people by One Adoption West Yorkshire.
- Between 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020, 269 referrals were made to PAC-UK for families inclusive of adult adoptees, birth parents/relatives across West Yorkshire. 48 (18%) were families living in Kirklees.

RESOLVED –

The Board noted the Annual Report and Highlight Report from One Adoption West Yorkshire and thanked Sarah Johal from One Adoption for her contributions.

10 Statement of Purpose Fostering 2020

The Board considered the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service presented by Andy Quinlan, Service Manager (Fostering)

The Board was informed that each Local Authority must have a Statement of Purpose (SOP) for the Fostering Service. Andy Quinlan explained that there was a version of the Fostering Service SOP which had been developed with children for children and when finalised, this would be sent to children who had been fostered.

The Board was informed that the Statement differed from last year with regard to the fact that the Team had been re-aligned alongside the introduction of the Mockingbird project.

RESOLVED –

1. The Board noted the Annual report on the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service and thanked Andy Quinlan for his contributions.
2. That the Statement of Purpose Fostering Service brochure be circulated to Board Members and Kirklees Fostering Network for information.

11 Statement of Purpose for Registered Children’s Homes

The Board considered the Statement of Purpose for Registered Children’s Homes presented by Tom Brailsford and Laura Caunce.

In response to a question from Councillor Lawson concerning whistleblowing, Laura Caunce provided details and assurance of the mechanisms in place within the Service.

During discussion of this item, it was explained that changes to the Statement would be required as a result of Orchard view moving back to being a respite facility; the purchasing of a new care home (as approved by Cabinet); and the developing contingency plans as a result of COVID 19

RESOLVED -

1. The Board noted the Annual report on the Statement of Purpose for Registered Children’s Homes and thanked Tom Brailsford and Laura Caunce for their contributions.
2. That an updated Statement of Purpose be submitted to a future meeting as a result of the upcoming changes referred to above.

12 Ofsted Improvement Board Update

Tom Brailsford provided a verbal update and reported that the Improvement Notice had now been lifted. This now gives the opportunity to rethink the focus of the Improvement Board going forward as a means of getting all areas of Children’s Services to being classed as outstanding.

RESOLVED –

The Board noted the update on the Ofsted Improvement Plan and offered congratulations to all staff who had contributed to this positive outcome.

13 Mental Health Support for Children in Care and Thriving Kirklees Update

The Board received a report providing an overview of the Emotional wellbeing and mental health support provided to Children in Care and the commissioning review of the Thriving Kirklees Partnership.

Kirklees has commissioned dedicated services to ensure that Children in Care receive a timely, high quality service. A dedicated multi-disciplinary team is embedded within Kirklees Council Children’s services to provide holistic support to children and families. Within the team are a number of specialised clinicians employed by South West Yorkshire Foundation Trust (SWYFT) to provide a high level of clinical support to children and their carers.

The team includes a Clinical Psychologist who, as well as providing direct mental health support to children and families, also provides clinical support and advice to the clinical teams and staff in residential settings. This includes supporting their learning and development and providing training.

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There is a dedicated Child Psychotherapist who provides in depth support and therapy, particularly to younger children and their carers, providing rapid access to this specialist service.

As a result of a recommendation in the 2016 Ofsted report, a Senior Mental Health Practitioner role was commissioned to work with Care Leavers (17+ years). The practitioner provides direct therapeutic work with young people, including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Moodmasters group therapy and holds drop-in sessions at no. 11 and no.12. It was reported that the drop-in sessions had to be postponed during the Covid restrictions but work is currently underway to re-open these facilities.

Additionally there is facility through Northorpe Hall Trust for Children in care to be referred for support from the Children's Emotional Wellbeing Service (ChEWS) where they have priority access to therapists and counsellors.

It was reported that currently there is no waiting list for Children in Care. In the past year 53 children have accessed the service. The average waiting time from referral to first appointment has been 4 weeks, compared to 20 weeks for the equivalent general service. The length of intervention for Children in Care is, on average, 15 weeks longer than that experienced by a young person in the ChEWS service.

With regard to the Thriving Kirklees Partnership it was explained that a report will be produced in early October with a summary of findings and initial recommendations. Stakeholder events will be held to inform an action plan, which will be developed between October and December.

RESOLVED-

1. That the following issues be considered as part of the scoping process for an updated Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy:

- when looking at early years, parental and maternal mental health be considered
- The importance of support following through a child's full life course, recognising adverse child experiences and the merits of a trauma informed approach.

2. That the Thriving Kirklees Action Plan be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

14 Risk Register

The Board discussed whether it would be useful for the Board to be sited on relevant areas of the Council's Risk Register as a means of informing their work going forward.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Lawson would contact officers to discuss the matter.

15 Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2020/21

The Board considered the agenda plan of the Corporate Parenting Board for 2020/21.

RESOLVED-

That the agenda plan be noted

16 Dates of Future Meetings

RESOLVED -

The Board noted the future meeting dates:

- 3rd Nov 2020, 10am
- 13th Jan 21, 10am
- 23rd Feb 21, 10am
- 23th March 21, 10am