



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.

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