

Corporate Parenting Board – Highlight Report

Date of Board: 05 December 2023

Data is as at 31st October 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	
		Oct-22	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-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	64.1 (628)	60.4 (592)	62.5 (613)	63.4 (620)	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)	11.1% (70/628)	11.3% (67/592)	11.4% (70/613)	11.6% (72/620)	12.0%	16.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↑		
4.05.01 Placement Stability Within Year - CLA with three or more placements	% (number)	8.8% (55)	10.0% (59)	10.3% (63)	11.0% (68)	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	292	274	308	346	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↑		
Average number of SW changes	Average	0.61	0.65	0.72	0.82	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- During the 12-month period from Nov 22 to Oct 23, the number of children looked after peaked at 63.3 (621 children) in Dec 22 and is currently 63.2 (620 children) in Oct 23. The current 12-month average for Kirklees is 61.7 (605 children), marginally below our 31 March 2022 published rate of 62.0, and below the England 2022 rate of 70.0 and significantly below our Statistical Neighbours 2022 rate of 92.0.
- Of the 72 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	54	75.0%
Residential	7	9.7%
Placed for Adoption	3	4.2%
Hostel/Supported Accommodation (not subject Children's Home regs)	3	4.2%
S1 - Residential School	1	1.4%
YOI or Prison	1	1.4%
Secure Unit	1	1.4%
Family centre or mother and baby unit	1	1.4%
Other / unknown	1	1.4%
Total	72	

- The care planning and decision-making processes for children and young people is monitored and reviewed at Legal Gateway, Permanence and Children Accessing Service Panels that are chaired by the Head of Service. 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 of 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 a review panel held fortnightly 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 of high support and challenge as required to avoid drift and delay in care planning for children and young people.
- Timely care planning to achieve permanence for children and young people continues to see improvement with maintained senior manager oversight. Timely accessing of early support services has supported this area of improvement and the promotion of Family Group Conference (FGC) service that is a family-led meeting and contributed to increased number of Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) an alternative legal status for children that offers greater security than long-term fostering but without the severance from the birth family. Since January 2023 we have successfully supported 56 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 Emotional Wellbeing 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.

Children Looked After Reviews, Visits and Missing

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Oct-22	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	SN	Eng.
4.06.01: CLA Reviews Within Statutory Timescale	%	98.1%	98.1%	98.0%	98.0%	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↓		
4.07.01: CLA visits within statutory timescale: % of CLA visited in line with Kirklees Practice Standards	%	94.2% (586)	93.4% (552)	89.6% (552)	91.5% (563)	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)	2.4% (15)	1.5% (9)	2.0% (12)	1.9% (12)	8.7%	10%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↓		
b. No. of CLA that have more than one missing episode in the month (repeat Mispers)	% (number)	40.0% (6)	33.3% (3)	58.3% (7)	16.7% (2)	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)	47.1% (8/17)	15.4% (2/13)	38.5% (10/26)	60.0% (9/15)	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- 16 requests for Initial Review forms were received by the Child Protection and Review unit (CPRU) for children to become Looked After in October 2023, relating to 25 children in total. 3 of these requests were for sibling groups, including one sibling group of 6. 44% of the requests referred were for children subject to Child Protection Plan at point of becoming Looked After, which was a higher % than generally seen. For all the referrals received, children and young people were allocated an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) within 24 hours and Initial Child Looked After Reviews were arranged within 4 weeks.
- In October 2023 Independent Reviewing Officers held 122 Looked After Review Meetings, of which all but five were occurred 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.
- Children's Looked After Review meetings are well attended by a range of partner agencies, who commit to taking actions to improve children's experiences and outcomes.
- Independent Reviewing Officers robustly review children's care plans. They provide time-bound actions, which are followed up in between Review meetings to ensure that plans for children progress, and where drift and delay is identified this is raised via informal and formal resolution processes.
- From June 2023 allocated IRO's for children New into Care have been required to undertake New into Care case audits. Findings are shared with the area social work Service Manager for oversight, and social work Team Managers. Key themes highlighting best practice and areas for practice and service improvement are captured in monthly CPRU reports for senior managers, and the findings are also shared in the monthly Children's Social Care Quality Assurance Board Meeting with Service Managers.
- The Children's Rights team continue to provide advocacy for children and young people, along with supporting young people at their Looked After Review meetings and working with the Children in Care Council (CiCC) and Care Leavers Forum, both which meet on a regular basis.
- Service Managers for children in care meet with the Children in Care Council young people to obtain their wishes and feelings and consult with them in relation to areas of development and proposed

changes to key documents. The CiCC and Care Leavers forum also meets with senior leaders. In October the Service Director for Child Protection and Family Support met with both groups and there are plans for the Principle Social Worker to attend the groups to explore with them their views of social workers including what makes a good social worker, and to gain young people's experiences of services they have received, and where they feel improvements can be made.

- Independent Visitors (IV's) continue to support young people through a range of activities, according to the needs and wishes of the young people they are matched with. Currently there are 27 Independent Visitors matched with children and young people, and 18 young people previously referred are on a waiting list to be matched with an Independent Visitor, however this is under review to ensure that this continues to be an accurate reflection of demand on the service.
- The children in care service management team meet with the Children in Care Council young people to obtain their wishes and feeling along with consult with them in relation to areas of development and proposed changes to key documents. 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.
- 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.

Missing CLA:

- The number of Children having at least one missing episode has seen a decrease and 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 considerably 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.
- Those completed within 72 hours of their return was low in August, however under those principles of utilising the right person 100% of all Independent Return Home interviews offered and accepted were completed.
- The number of children having multiple missing episodes has fallen along with those children with more than one missing episode. 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. Along with fortnightly practitioner focused performance meeting chaired by the team manager to ensure all relevant support and development is in place for all staff.
- The report identifies the number of independent Return Home Interviews offered and accepted. Securing more IRI's remains a priority and together with securing those IRI's comes the requirement to ensure quality and value is maximised.
- The Youth Engagement has seen an increase in conversation from offer of IRI to Acceptance. This remains an ambition to constantly improve and harvest information that supports the young person and develops knowledge to reduce future missing episodes.

Children Looked After Education Outcomes

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Autumn Term 22/23	Spring Term 22/23	Summer 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%	N/A	N/A

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Cumulative	SN	Eng.
Initial PEP completed within 10 school days of Virtual School being notified child came into care	%	N/A	95.3% (41/43)	95.0% (19/20)	95.2% (60/63)	N/A	N/A

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Oct-22	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	SN	Eng.
CLA Persistent Absentees	%	23.5%	N/A	20.9%	20.7%	28.4% (2020/21)	30.4% (2020/21)
	Direction of Travel		-	↓	↓		
CLA with a mid-year school move	Number	8	N/A	23	6	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		-	↑	↓		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

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

What do we want to improve:

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

Children Looked After Health

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Oct-22	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	SN	Eng.
4.11.11 Dental Checks within last 12 months - timeliness	%	60.4%	65.2%	67.8%	65.2%	73.0%	70.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↓		
4.11.12 Initial health Assessments completed on time - within 20 days	%	77.8%	60.4%	53.2%	40.5%	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	%	86.2%	82.5%	80.2%	82.2%	82.6%	89.0%
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↑		
b: Over 5s Annual Health Assessments – percentage up to date	%	93.7%	90.5%	88.7%	87.4%	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)	1.26% (6)	0.24% (1)	0.23% (1)	1.18% (5)	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 40.5% were completed in the statutory timescale, which is showing a false representation of the current situation, as it captures data from previous months. The current percentage has dropped to **0%** in real terms. These challenges are replicated across regional neighbours and is highlighted on the WY risk register. Prior to the recent situation an average of 95% were in timescales with no waiting list.

Several factors are responsible e.g. continuing increase of numbers coming into care incl. sibling groups, increased complexities, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and some older individuals who we are unable to engage in the process and require alternative options needing extra resource. The new timeframe for IHA completion is the end of January 24.

There is a planned, booked waiting list from November to the 25th of January comprising of: 32 Virtual telephone assessments and 38 Face to Face

- There were 29 IHA timescale breaches for the Kirklees CLA related to clinic availability & capacity'.
- The Business Case to consider additional nurse/doctor resource/alternative CLA Health model, which would support the whole team remains under commissioner consideration.

Review health assessments (RHA):

- Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that **82.2% & 87.4%** of the under and over 5-year-olds respectively, were completed in statutory timescales. These results present a poorer picture than is the case, as it includes months since June when Thriving Kirklees have used temporary additional nursing hours. Although this is still the case, since September there has been an agreement to complete the RHA's in the month they are due instead of the exact date, in line with the DfE guidance SSSDA903, and this is providing improved results. The support of a retired CLA nurse has been an additional temporary resource.
- Locala monthly data for Oct shows that **86% & 93%** for under and over 5-year-olds respectively were completed in statutory timescales.
- Only 3 breaches were recorded, because of the positive monthly timescale changes, these were: carer arrangements & an allocation delay, which is a significant improvement.

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

- Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that **65.2%** of children aged 1+, had attended the dentist. Several factors are negatively affecting the recording. A working group has been established to look at aligning the data with Locala and using other collection methods avoiding a total reliance on once or twice-yearly recording at the RHA.
- Locala monthly data for Oct 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.

Registered at dentist:

- Locala data shows **100%** of children aged 18m to 5 years & **70%** 5 years+ at the point of their RHA, were registered with a dentist.
- The use of the 'Flexible Commissioning Project' has supported CLA and care leavers to register. Children placed out of Kirklees, especially sibling groups may struggle to register, and some older young people may choose not to register.

Substance misuse:

- There was a data recording error in previous months. The figure is currently 5 young people who are significantly affected by substance misuse in their daily lives as recorded at their RHA.
- 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.
- The working group will also look at alternative methods of collection of this data as the RHA is not a reliable source.

Immunisations: Locala

- **100% & 86%** 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 the shortened schedule offered to UASC who generally have an unknown history, some young people may decline, and placement moves or moves to semi-independent living can negatively impact take up.
- Outstanding Immunisations from Oct RHA's: HPV x2, School leavers booster and Men ACWY x2, Pre-school booster & 2nd MMR -, mother believes child had them, but no record – to access GP to discuss. All are followed up with SW.
- The working group are to look at accessing this data from Locala to include in the reporting.

Children Looked After Convictions

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Quarter				Benchmarking
		Oct-Dec 22/23 Q3	Jan-Mar 22/23 Q4	Apr-Jun 23/24 Q1	Jul-Sep 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)	%	0.00% (0/343)	0.00% (0/343)	0.61% (2/326)	0.61% (2/326)	(2021/22) Eng.: 2.0% SN's: 4.0% Y&H: 2.0%
	Direction of Travel	↓	↔	↑	↔	

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

* The data for Oct to December 2023 will not be available until January 2024.

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

- The number of Young People who have been looked after continually for 12 months or more aged 10 to 17 who have received a substantive outcome has fallen in comparison to previous year. It should be noted the cohort is very small in real terms.

What do we want to improve:

- Continued reduction in the numbers of Children Looked After offending. The overall cohort for the 23/24 year is smaller than the 22/23 year (326 compared to 343), but through continued interventions by the 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	
		Oct-22	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	SN	Eng.
5.01.04 Children in care aged 17 years and 4 months with a Personal Advisor	%	100.0%	85.5%	98.3%	100.0%	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		
5.01.08 Local Authority In Touch with Care Leavers	%	96.7%	95.2%	96.1%	96.1%	95.0%	92.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↑		
5.01.09 Care Leavers in suitable accommodation	%	91.7%	92.3%	91.9%	92.0%	91.0%	88.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↑		
5.01.10 Care Leavers Employment, Education and Training (EET)	%	61.3%	59.2%	60.3%	58.2%	50.0%	55.0%
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↓		
5.01.11 Number of Care Leavers with a Pathway Plan that is up to date	%	64.3%	85.9%	93.5%	93.6%	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- Contact with care leavers* –The personal advisors continue to support and build positive relationships with the young people they are working with. We are aware that in some situations, young people do not wish to keep in contact with their Personal Advisor, but we continue to work innovatively to keep in touch with all young people to ensure that they are kept informed of the support that is available to them.
- Number of young people in suitable accommodation* – Work is being undertaken with housing providers improve and to ensure that suitable accommodation is available and accessible for our young people at the right time.
- Children in Care aged 17 years with an allocated Personal Advisors* – This month has seen an increase from 98.3 to 100% of all young people aged 17 and above having 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.

Care Leavers and Adoption – Care Leavers (cont.)

- *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.

What do we want to improve:

- 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.
- To embed of the corporate parenting principles and our role as corporate parents.
- To ensure that all pathways are coproduced and reviewed with young people.

Adoption

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Oct-22	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	SN	Eng.
5.02.01 Number of children adopted as a percentage of children leaving care (12 month rolling period)	% (number)	9.4% (18)	9.4% (23)	7.8% (23)	9.1% (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	447.2	557.4	554.5	553.5	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	202.2	208.7	214.5	207.7	180.0 (17-20)	175.0 (17-20)
	Direction of Travel		↔	↑	↓		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- We are beginning to see an improvement across adoption key performance indicators, although recognise there is more to be done.
- We continue to prioritise brothers and sisters growing up together and where possible Early Permanence Placements are made.
- We have good working relationships between Kirklees and One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY), to address challenges at the earliest point.

Care Leavers and Adoption – Adoption (cont.)

- Monitoring of the adoption cases and outcomes continues to take place through monthly tracking of adoption cases by Kirklees and OAWY Service Delivery Managers. This is embedded into our day-to-day arrangements with OAWY.
- 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. This remains a key area for improvement.
- To ensure all children considered 'harder to place' are identified early for OAWY to commence family finding. For OAWY to continue taking an innovative approach to family finding for these children, ensuring that all avenues are proactively explored.
- To increase staff understanding of adoption, including Early Permanence, through training.
- Continue to jointly review cases where adoptions disrupt or breakdown to understand contributing factors to inform future practice.
- Finance staff and Service managers should review all available data at the time of formula reset to ensure all parties are clear what the apportionments are based on. This should commence swiftly to ensure it concludes in time for the 2024/25 refresh.

Fostering

Key Indicator	Type of measure	Month End				Benchmarking	
		Oct-22	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	SN	Eng.
6.02.07 Total new Mainstream In-house Fostering approvals in the month	Number	0	1	0	0	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↑	↓	↔		
Total new Connected Person Fostering approvals in the month	Number	1	4	2	2	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↓	↔		
In-house Mainstream Fostering De-registrations in the month	Number	2	1	5	1		
	Direction of Travel		↑	↑	↓		
In-house Connected Person Fostering De-registrations in the month	Number	3	7	5	1	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↔	↔		
6.02.09 Placements split: a. In-house foster placements	Number	174	148	155	157	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↔	↑	↑		
b. Family and friend placements (inc. Reg 24)	Number	129	113	116	118	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		
c. Independent Fostering Agency Placements	Number	165	166	169	171	N/A	N/A
	Direction of Travel		↓	↑	↑		

Service Narrative

What difference did we make:

- In September 2023 there were 2 foster carer approvals, both were kinship foster carers. In October 2023 there were 2 foster carer approvals, both were kinship foster carers.
- There were 10 de-registrations in September 2023, 5 Kinship Carers and 5 Mainstream Carer. Of the Kinship carers, 3 were in relation to kinship carers who became SGO's, 2 were in relation to children who were reunified with a parent.
- There were 2 de-registrations in October 2023, 1 Kinship Carer and 1 Mainstream Carer. The Kinship Carer progressed to a Special Guardianship Order.
- The number of children placed with Kirklees foster carers stood at 157 in October 2023, just below the 12-month average of 159.
- The number of Family and Friends Placements stood at 118 in October 2023, inclusive of Reg 24 Placements. The 12-month average is 122
- The October 2023 there were 171 Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements. The 12-month average is 168

What do we want to improve:

- Recruitment and retention of foster carers continues to be a priority. We are focused 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. We are exploring quality assurance of all mainstream carers who have left the service.

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 continue to develop and implement policies and procedures for the Fostering Service. This service improvement plan is regularly reviewed and is 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