



[PICTURE OF CHILDREN]

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Children and Young People's  
Interim Sufficiency Strategy

2018-2019

April 2018 V6.6

24/4/18

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## Introduction: the challenge and our approach

Our shared vision, developed with partners in the private, public, and voluntary sector, is for Kirklees to have both a strong sustainable economy and a great quality of life – leading to thriving communities, growing businesses, high prosperity and low inequality where people enjoy better health throughout their lives. We are working with our partners to lead the district in being progressive and responsible whilst ensuring that everyone benefits from our joint work. Our shared approach can be found in our Corporate Plan ([link](#)).

This Strategy focusses on meeting local demand for family-setting (especially foster) and residential care placements so that our children and young people do not need to move away. Moving into care is usually a difficult experience. It can bring with it a significant sense of loss. Older children may experience significant problems at school not just due to the earlier problems that led them into care, but also from other factors such as having to travel to maintain a stable school placement and losing friends and support networks, which are crucial for our children and young people's wellbeing. Being placed out of area exacerbates these challenges and makes it harder for us as Corporate Parents to quickly and effectively respond to the child or young person's needs.

Since 2005, the number of looked after children in Kirklees has increased from 312 to 656 (November 2017). The local market has been unable to meet demand because of the speed and size of this demand shift, which has led to more of our children and young people being moved outside Kirklees. This is one of the major challenges in the District and the focus of this Strategy.

One of our shared priorities, developed with partners and published in the Corporate Plan, is to give children and young people the best start in life. This Strategy aims to help deliver a better start by placing our looked after children within the District and therefore minimising the impact of moving into care on our children and young people. It aims to do this in a sustainable way, with an emphasis on increasing the proportion of children placed in family settings such as foster care.

This Strategy sets out for the public, service-users, and other stakeholders how we will develop our services from now through 2019 to secure sufficient accommodation to meet present and expected need. Given the high demand and where we are now, this will not happen by the end of 2019, but by then we will have developed our understanding of local need and have reviewed our practices to ensure they are effective and efficient. This will put us in a position to set out a longer-term plan.

The Strategy approaches the challenge by aiming to deliver three outcomes:

1. Children and young people are confident our decisions more clearly reflect their needs and views (p. 7);

2. More children and young people can stay at home and more leave care early (p. 8); and
3. More accommodation of the right kind for children and young people in need (pp. 9-13).

Firstly, we will develop our understanding of need and listen better to the voice of the child.

Secondly, we will review and develop our support offer. With the right early support and when it is safe to do so, we can find a way for children and young people to stay with their families. This is not just about what is easier or more cost-efficient for the Council: it is usually better for a child or young person to avoid the disruption of moving into care. This also benefits the children most at need by ensuring there is enough accommodation within the District for a person that cannot stay safely at home.

In some cases, it's not safe for a child or young person to stay at home, even with extensive support. So, thirdly, we will maintain our efforts to secure more accommodation within the District and will review our practices to ensure they are effective and sustainable. The additional accommodation will help our children and young people retain friends and support networks and make it easier for us and our partners to improve their wellbeing. We will review how we secure new accommodation and assess new or more sustainable models for doing so to ensure we can continue to secure more accommodation if required. Kirklees already has an above average proportion of children in residential care. This is expensive and it would be unsustainable for this proportion to rise. To further ensure the financial sustainability of our offer as numbers in care and numbers placed in the area increase, we will focus our efforts on recruiting and retaining more foster carers and family placements when appropriate. These are better for our children and young people and make our offer more sustainable.

The three appendices to this document provide more detail on this approach: specific actions in the action plan, an outline of our approach to commissioning as we move towards outcomes-based commissioning, and the latest figures on the demographic and need of children in care in Kirklees.

## Ofsted's recommendations and the Improvement Plan

In June 2017, Kirklees entered into an Improvement Partnership with Leeds City Council. This Strategy forms part of Council's efforts to deliver the outcomes stated in the Improvement Plan, which are, in turn, our response to Ofsted's recommendations following their September-October 2016 inspection ([link](#)).

Following the inspection, Ofsted recommended that Kirklees 'increase the availability of local placements to ensure that children and young people do not need to be placed at a distance from their communities' (recommendation 20) ([link](#)). In the Improvement Plan, we committed to deliver this outcome through this Sufficiency Strategy and its accompanying Action Plan.

This Sufficiency Strategy also partly addresses recommendation 19: 'review all arrangements when children are placed with parents to ensure that these are appropriate and that children are not unnecessarily made subject to a care order'.

## Other documents

This Strategy's scope is limited to managing and meeting accommodation need for our looked after children, but it is part of a wider strategic framework, aiming to improve the lives of all children and young people and their families living in Kirklees:

- Our shared vision, outcomes, and values come from our [Corporate Plan \(2017-18\)](#).
- This Sufficiency Strategy sets out ways of improving children's wellbeing. With partners from across the health sector, we are aiming to deliver the health and wellbeing outcomes agreed in the [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy \(2014-2020\)](#) ([link](#)). The [Economic Strategy \(2014-2020\)](#) ([link](#)) sets out priorities complimentary to those in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, recognising the role of inequality in the health and wellbeing of all Kirklees' residents, and its implementation will support this Strategy.
- We are developing a Children and Young People's Plan, setting out our overall approach to improving children and young people's lives in Kirklees and we are looking at developing a distinct strategy regarding children subject to safeguarding activity.
- Future in Mind: Transformation Plan 2015-2020 ([link](#)) sets out how Kirklees is working together with the NHS to provide better outcomes for children and young people's mental health and this strategy will help deliver its commitment to protect those at risk of serious mental health problems through its emphasis on early intervention services.
- Ensuring we have the right offer is particularly important for children and young people living with special educational needs or disabilities. This Strategy compliments the outcomes stated in the Joint Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities ([link](#)).

## The statutory duty to secure sufficient accommodation

The Strategy sets out our approach for 2018-19 on meeting the requirements of section 22G of the Children Act 1989 in line with the statutory guidance 'Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked after Children' (2010).

Section 22G ([link](#)) applies to all children looked after under the Children Act. It requires local authorities to secure, as far as practicable, enough accommodation to meet the needs of any children whose circumstances are such that living within the local authority's area would be consistent with their welfare.

The UK Government guidance 'Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked after Children' sets out a check-list for what counts as meeting the sufficiency duty:

1. The right placement is available at the right time.
2. There is a range of local placements and supporting services that are sufficient to meet the needs of all Looked after Children or a plan to move towards that position.
3. There is consideration of the service requirements of children that are looked after, on the edge of care, at risk of custody, and/or leaving care.
4. Working with local partner agencies and neighbouring authorities to ensure this need will be met and that young people with this need receive the support they need.<sup>1</sup>

The guidance also sets out the building blocks of effective commissioning for children and young people in care: high quality assessments, care planning, and placement decisions.

This Strategy's approach has been developed in line with that guidance.

The Corporate Parenting Board will review our progress against the Action Plan appended to the Strategy. Progress against our key indicators will be presented to Corporate Parenting Board every six months.

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<sup>1</sup> Partners have obligations under the Children Act 2004 section 10 in relation to improving the outcomes for children in the local area.

## Children and young people are confident our decisions more clearly reflect their needs and views

We will continue to develop our intelligence, to better understand how much and what kind of accommodation and support is needed. We will also demonstrate that we listen and act on the voice of our children and young people in coordinating their care.

Research and reviews from Laming to Munro emphasise the importance of the voice of the child in ensuring children are effectively supported and protected. Children's services need to build the right relationships and trust with our children and young people to enable them to voice their concerns, share their views and be involved in agreeing the support and plans that are right for their needs. Kirklees will have better services, better outcomes and better future if our children's voices are at the heart of everything we do. In line with the Improvement Plan, this is becoming a shared value and central to the work of our services and partners.

In 2016 a survey was sent to 165 young people placed out of area to which 20 responses were received. For this small quota of young people most were happy with their placements but the overarching issue was around contact with family and friends i.e. wanting to see them more. Whilst placing young people out of area makes contact more difficult, the Local Authority has a duty to ensure that good quality, regular contact happens (unless restrictions apply) and this should be facilitated by giving whatever support is needed. For any young person moving placement either within or out of area there are also the obvious issues of feeling nervous / frightened as they move to somewhere new and have to get to know new people and used to new surroundings. Having to change school is a further disruption as they leave familiarity and their school friends behind.

We will strengthen arrangements for involving and empowering children across children's services. All Care Plans and Pathway Plans will be outcome focused and include evidence of the voice of the child.

### **What our Looked after Children and Care Leavers told us:**

- "Make sure you listen to children and young people to get their views on their placements"
- "Care Leavers should be in a comfortable placement so they can feel at home"
- "Make sure that people in care feel important"
- "Not enough attention given to Care Plans and Pathway Plans"
- "Kids in care and care leavers don't know what social workers expect of them"

Extracts from "Views of Children" by the Kirklees Children's Rights Team, March 2017

## More children and young people can stay at home and more leave care early

Early help delivers better outcomes for children and families and is less expensive than late intervention.

Problems at home become entrenched when left too long, which makes them more disruptive for the children and family and harder and more expensive to solve. It also raises the risk of a child being taken into care, which is disruptive for the child and expensive for the Council.

Early help means managing challenges when they are easier to solve, to prevent entrenchment. It also means targeted and evidence-based responses to entrenched problems to support a child or young person to stay at home when safe. This is an urgent issue, as without any intervention the number of looked after children is predicted to rise. Entrenched problems increase pressure on social services. Early help helps manage that pressure, which helps social workers make high-quality, cost-effective decisions.

Our early support approach is to deliver innovative edge of care services and collaborate with partners on our care and support packages.

### ***Collaborative care and support packages, including edge of care***

We have learnt from other local authorities, who have tried a number of different models for edge of care services with varying success and value for money. We will build on this knowledge when reviewing our edge of care services to ensure they are innovative and evidence-based.

We want a full range of care and support packages to support children and young people living with disabilities or health (including mental health) problems. Disabilities and health problems create challenges at home that make it more likely that a child or young person will be looked after, but the right support can help them and their families manage. It is more difficult and costly to complete health assessments on our children and young people once they are placed outside the District, making it harder to ensure we're meeting all the needs of those with complex health problems, including mental health problems.

Our looked after children have often had a poor start in life and may need additional support to achieve their potential. We and our partner agencies will provide all our children with good quality wrap around care, tailored to their needs and provide excellent support to their carers.

## More accommodation of the right kind for our children and young people in need

Our broad approach: a mixed offer of mostly family settings complemented by good relationships with private providers that helps children return home when safe.

### *We will increase the proportion of our children and young people in foster placements*

Wherever it is in their best interests, children and young people will be placed in family settings with friends and family (Connected Persons) or foster placements rather than residential settings.

The local children's residential market is not currently meeting local need either due to availability, quality or affordability. We have above average numbers of children in residential care. In November 2017, 11.2% of Kirklees' looked-after-children, comparable local authorities have around 8.2%. Residential care placements are expensive and this high proportion in residential care affects the sustainability of our offer.

We will continue our mixed approach of Council-run and commissioned provision. Like most local authorities, we will try to reduce private-sector placements. Whilst the cost of Council-run services remains stable, in times of high-demand private sector providers cost more and we are therefore forced to pay extra or find a provider out-of-area. Over-reliance on private-sector placements can therefore lead to more out-of-area placements. The Specialist Accommodation project board will assess ways for the Council itself to provide more small children's homes.

We have proportionately fewer foster placements than comparable local authorities: 68% of children are in foster care compared to 73% in others. The use of the Council's own in-house foster carers for placements is also low at 34% of placements against 44% for our comparators. In April 2017 there were 169 Kirklees Council carers offering 221 placements this equates to 1.3 placements per carer, the national average is 1.7 placements per carer.

With this in mind, increasing local fostering and other family setting placements is our key measure to guaranteeing the sustainability of our local offer. We will try to lower the proportion of children placed in residential care by increasing the number placed in family settings such as foster care. Children in residential care aged 12 or below might especially benefit. These decisions will always be made with the best interest of the child in mind and in light of their views.

The key challenges to fostering in Kirklees are:

- We heavily rely on Independent Agency Foster placements (IFAs). There are currently 153 IFA placements and 75% of these placements are outside Kirklees.
- 23% of Kirklees foster carers are aged 56 and above. We need to make plans now for their potential retirement as well as other carers deregistering.
- Kirklees Councils' recent foster carer recruitment campaigns have not been as successful as anticipated and have not kept pace with carers de-registering or retiring.
- The introduction of Staying Put has reduced the local foster placement capacity as young adults are now staying in their foster placements after their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday.
- There are especially few foster carers for older children, long term placements, sibling groups and young people with complex needs.
- Staying Put arrangements give children and young people the right to stay in their foster placement after they are 18, so long as both parties agree. Whilst this brings many benefits for the child or young person, this reduces the number of foster placements.

We know that majority of 'therapeutic or specialist' residential placements badged do not currently deliver the outcomes we expect or value for money. We will explore other options to meet needs.

For some children and young people, specialist placements within fostering or residential care can be the best way to give them the best start in life. A small number of children and young people living with disabilities or emotional and behavioural issues may have their needs best met in specialist provision. Our local offer will reflect this. Some of these young people will transfer to Adult's Services on or close to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. We will support them in this transition.

We will monitor the Government response to the 36 recommendations in the Review into Foster Care in England by Sir Martin Narey and Mark Owers. We will consider the impact of the Government response on providing sufficient accommodation in developing the next, 5-year Sufficiency Strategy (2020-2025).

### ***We will support our children and young people exiting care early***

When safe, young people will be enabled to return home or exit care early. To this end, we will try to support more children and young people into adoption and other permanence arrangements. We will work more closely with One Adoption West Yorkshire, who provide our adoption services. We will also support children and young people to exit care earlier through more Special Guardianship Order and Child Arrangement Order placements.

We will build our relationships with private sector providers of both fostering and residential services. We will meet regularly with private sector fostering and residential services to understand their capacity and challenges and to share relevant policies and procedures.

We will have effective support for young people entering adulthood, including a range of appropriate semi-independent accommodation placements and high quality personal advisor support. This will assist them in exiting care early, if beneficial to their wellbeing. If we don't have this semi-independent accommodation available, these young people might be placed out-of-area.

### ***We will improve placement stability***

Evidence shows that having multiple care placements reduces children's opportunities to develop secure attachments. It may also worsen any existing behavioural and emotional difficulties.

Placement stability is an essential part of securing sufficient accommodation within the District. Having to move placements raises the risk that a child or young person will be placed outside the District. Also, not having the right kind of accommodation makes it more likely that a child or young person will have to move their placements, so placement stability is a measure of how appropriate our range of accommodation is. We will measure the success of this approach by the number of permanence plans, e.g. long-term fostering and long-term residential.

Our fostering service has a placement support team with a psychotherapist, psychologist, and a senior mental health practitioner. They advise foster carers and directly support children and young people living with emotional and mental health problems. This work helps improve placement stability as well as retain foster carers. We will continue this offer.

### ***We will consider education needs in making placement decisions***

For all of our children and young people in our care, when we can't get them into a school, they may have to be placed out-of-area to meet their educational needs. Finding a school place can be complicated for the small number of children and young people requiring specialist placements with on-site education, such as some of those living with disabilities, or those with complex emotional, behavioural, and social needs.

Kirklees Virtual School monitors the attendance and attainment of children and young people in Kirklees' care and flags difficulties children and young people may have. We will involve the Virtual School in all placement moves from the earliest possible stage so educational requirements are considered. This will help to improve placement stability, preventing placements breaking down because of a lack of appropriate school place.

The Virtual School will liaise with SENACT to ensure that children with special education needs are identified on the Placement Referral Form prior to commencing the placement

search. SENACT will be involved at all stages and always before any education package is purchased from a residential care provider.

We will strengthen our relationships with both mainstream and specialist education providers and look at ways to provide more bespoke education provision locally to meet our children and young people's educational needs.

### ***Accommodating young people leaving custody***

If a child or young person leaves custody following a criminal offence and they do not have a parent or guardian, cannot return home, or were previously in care, the local authority will be responsible for providing accommodation. We need the right kind of accommodation to support these people within the District. Without the specialist provision that some of them will require, we will have to place them out-of-area. We will develop the specialist provision required for these young people.

We will continue the good work of the dedicated Looked After Children team within the Young Offenders Team: since 2010/2011 we have seen a gradual year on year reduction in the percentage offending of LAC young people, from 12.8% (10/11) to 6% (15/16).

We will also continue the good restorative justice work, delivered by schools, partners, and the Council through the Youth Offenders Team and others.

### ***We will review our commissioning practices***

A key means to achieving this outcome of this strategy is securing the placements and services needed to meet need when a child or young person's wellbeing is better served in care. We need to ensure our placement offer is sustainable, so we will review and improve our arrangements for purchasing placements. These might include:

- Regional and/or sub-regional collaboration;
- framework contracts;
- block and/or spot purchasing;
- partnering with others, including another council or councils, businesses, and/or charities and voluntary organisations.

We will review our current placements service, examining the efficiency and effectiveness of current arrangements. The service will manage all placement referrals and use a robust quality assurance and contract management model to ensure good quality matches and sustainable investments.

We will consider developing a resource panel to ensure there is senior management oversight of all placements.

Quality assurance is a priority. There will be robust quality assurance and oversight. For children's homes, there are monthly Regulation 44 visits. There are also regular manager

reports. We are developing regular foster care business meetings, which will take place every 6 weeks. We are also creating new practice standards for our fostering service and a quality assurance officer role within the Placements Team to drive up standards in private sector residential and fostering provision.

## Next steps

By late 2018 we know we will have better intelligence about our current and future cohort of young people and better understand their individual needs more accurately to support us in planning outcome based services for the following 5 years.

We will then develop:

- A comprehensive assessment of the needs of Kirklees' Looked After Children and their families.
- A 5-Year Sufficiency Plan
- Commissioning Options Papers
- A Commissioning Plan
- A Market Position Statement, to tell the market what outcomes we want to achieve and an indication on the type and volume of services.

Our Action Plan details how we will prepare to deliver the above.

## APPENDIX 1: Action Plan

**PLEASE NOTE: THE INDICATORS, BASELINES, AND TARGETS IN THIS ACTION PLAN ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FEEDBACK WELCOME.**

This Action Plan and services' progress against it will be monitored by the Corporate Parenting Board. It is not a list of everything we will be doing, but a statement of the key performance measures by which the success of our Strategy will be evaluated. It is therefore an accountability document in line with the Council's move towards Outcomes-Based Accountability. The progress against the performance measures will be monitored monthly and there will be six-monthly updates to the Corporate Parenting Board with commentary from those identified in the relevant column. Decisions about modifications to this Action Plan will be approved at Corporate Parenting Board. For example, as baselines become available, Corporate Parenting Board will need to approve measure targets and actions to achieve them.

Our key indicator is the proportion of looked after children placed outside Kirklees, which cuts across all three of our main outcomes:

Indicator (How we measure if anyone was better off, how much we have done, and how well [quickly, efficiently, etc.] we have done it)	Baseline (date)	Target (date)	Who will produce the commentary for the 6-monthly updates?	What will be done? (Who will do it?)
Proportion of Looked After Children placed outside Kirklees	17% (Feb. 2018)	TBC	Head of Corporate Parenting OR Head of Service (Sufficiency) – To be filled	Fill the currently vacant post of Head of Service for Sufficiency (Service Director)  Monitoring progress against the indicators (Corporate Parenting Board)

The key indicators and accountability information for the three main outcomes of this Strategy are set out in the following pages.

## Children and young people are confident our decisions more clearly reflect their needs and views

Indicator (How we measure if anyone was better off, how much we have done, and how well [quickly, efficiently, etc.] we have done it)	Baseline (date)	Target (date)	Who will produce the commentary for the 6-monthly updates?	What will be done? (Who will do it?)
Proportion of complainants satisfied with outcome of complaint	N/A (new)	50% (Sep. 2018)	Complaints Team	
Number of children in care that have three or more placements moves on a year	???	Reduction (???)	Service Manager Children in Care	<p>Create a quality assurance officer role within the Placements Team</p> <p>Collate good practice identified by children and young people (Children's Rights Team)</p> <p>Provide timely return interviews to every looked after child or young person returning from being missing</p> <p>Produce a comprehensive assessment of the needs of our children and young people</p>

## More children and young people can stay at home and more leave care early

Indicator (How we measure if anyone was better off, how much we have done, and how well [quickly, efficiently, etc.] we have done it)	Baseline (date)	Target (date)	Who will produce the commentary for the 6-monthly updates?	What will be done? (Who will do it?)
Proportion of partners who report improved satisfaction with partnership arrangements / joint working	N/A (new)	Baseline by Dec. 2018	Head of Corporate Parenting	Regular meetings with the CCG, Virtual School, and external placement providers on local health, education, and accommodation needs
Proportion of local partners reporting high levels of confidence with locality early help services	???	??? Increase	Head of Service for Assessment and Intervention	Regular meetings with the CCG, Virtual School, and external placement providers on early-help services
Proportion of care leavers that are in learning or work	51.5% (Q3 2017/18)	70% (Sep. 2019)	Head of Corporate Parenting	Involve all Care Leavers in agreeing up-to-date, high quality Pathway Plans  Identify sites convertible into semi-independent accommodation placements

## More accommodation of the right kind for children and young people in need

Indicator (How we measure if anyone was better off, how much we have done, and how well [quickly, efficiently, etc.] we have done it)	Baseline (date)	Target (date)	Who will produce the commentary for the 6-monthly updates?	What will be done? (Who will do it?)
Net change in foster care households	???	Increase of 24 by end 2018/19.	Service Manager for Fostering	<p>Survey existing and former foster carers on their support needs and develop new training and support models that better meet those needs</p> <p>Meet with researchers from the <a href="#">Applied Childhood, Youth and Family Research, Centre for (ACYFR)</a> at Huddersfield University to discuss collaborative research into recruitment and retention of foster carers</p> <p>Bi-monthly meetings with the local Foster Care Association to identify good practice and challenges in our support and recruitment/retention of foster carers</p>
Number of children in care that have three	???	Reduction (???)	Service Manager	Ensure all our children and young

<p>or more placements moves on a year</p>			<p>Children in Care</p>	<p>people have an outcome-focussed care plan (Fostering Team)</p> <p>Create a quality assurance officer role within the Placements Team (Head of Corporate Parenting)</p> <p>We will develop a resource panel to ensure there is senior management oversight of all placements</p> <p>Consultation with young people on foster care recruitment and developing new residential homes</p>
<p>Percentage of placements within Kirklees that are provided by external partners</p>	<p>???</p>	<p>Decrease</p>	<p>Head of Corporate Parenting (Service Manager Sufficiency when appointed)</p>	<p>Identify the number of sites potentially convertible into children's homes</p> <p>Produce and publish a Identify new or more sustainable models for securing new accommodation assessed</p> <p>Produce Commissioning Options for more in-</p>

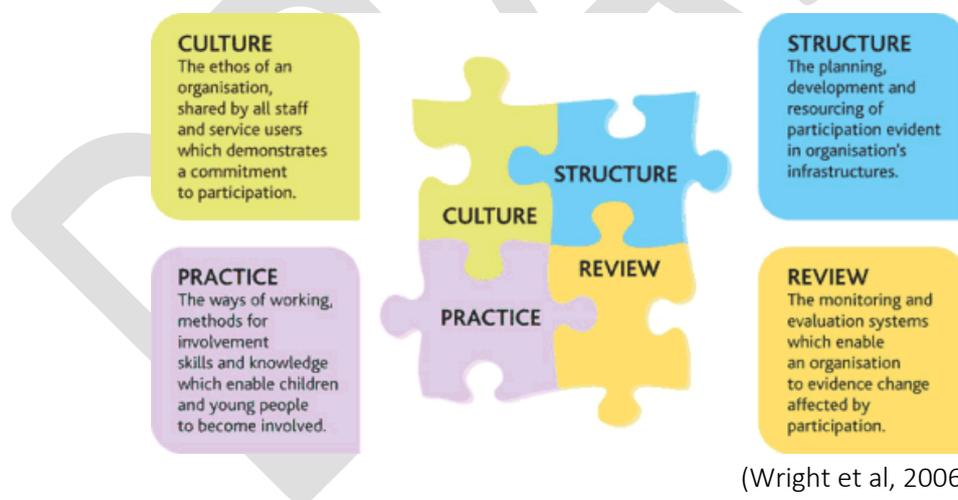
				house small children's homes  Regular meetings with external providers to understand their future plans and how they impact on our provision
Percentage of children leaving care through adoption, Special Guardianship, and Child Arrangement Orders	???	Increase	Placements	
Numbers of children and young people moved outside of Kirklees that have complex needs (emotional, behavioural, educational, and health)		Decrease	Virtual Headteacher (Virtual School)	Develop new services and resources for needs of complex children (education and health and wellbeing)  Involve the Virtual School in all placement decisions at the earliest possible stage

## APPENDIX 2: Our Approach to Commissioning

Improving commissioning is the primary way to deliver better outcomes. In delivering the outcomes set out in this Strategy, we will follow the four-stage commissioning model set out below:



Effective commissioning requires agreeing outcomes and strategic vision with partners and utilising our resources and assets in a more collaborative way. It also involves being clear about needs through comprehensive and high quality intelligence. It also requires us to involve children at each stage of the commissioning process. We will also adopting a whole system approach to designing our services:



The Council has an ambition to become an 'Outcomes-Led Commissioning Council'. Part of this means we will ensure our planning starts from outcomes (e.g. looked after children living in the District) and judge our success on the following:

- How much we have done (e.g. 20 more homes secured);
- How well we have done it (e.g. how long it took to secure the homes, how expensive it was);
- If anyone was better off (e.g. 60% improvement in placement stability).

Once our approach is agreed, future Sufficiency Strategies will implement this new approach.

## APPENDIX 3: Looked After Children in Kirklees in November 2017

### FIGURES TO BE UPDATED FOR FINAL DRAFT

#### *A Snapshot of Our Looked after Children*

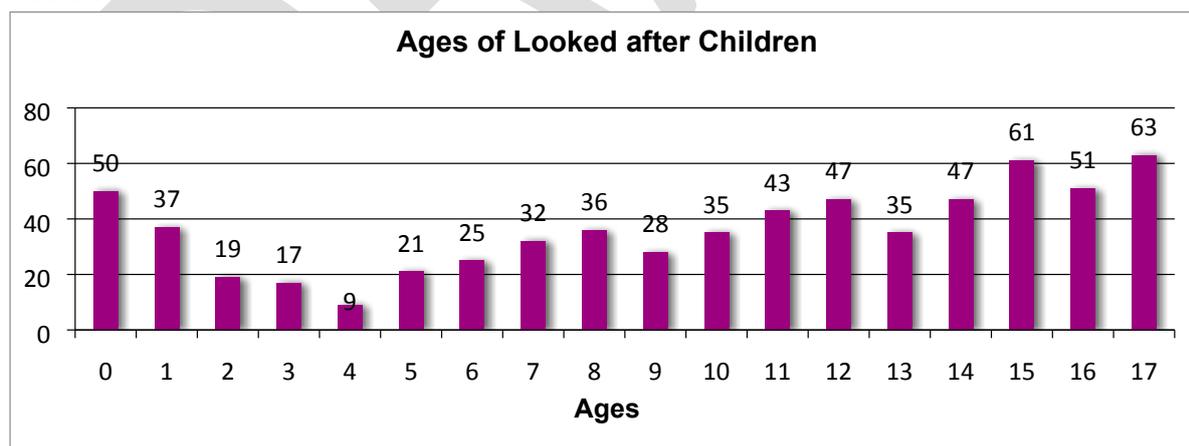
Our key aggregated needs assessment is our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment ([link](#)). Our Children's Rights Team also work with children to get their views and our Children in Care Council and Youth Council also work on this. We also monitor the needs of all children engaged with our services as part of our day-to-day work.

The number of looked after children has grown from just over 300 in 2005 to a peak of 705 in December 2016 and has since dropped.

The local population of all young people aged 0 -17 years living in Kirklees is increasing, and based on the current rate of Looked after Children which is 65.6 per 10,000 aged 0-17; this would mean that if we do nothing the looked after children's population could potentially increase to 708 by 2020 and to 745 by 2035.

Set out in this section is a snapshot of our current cohort of looked after children. Is CareFirst 11/17 the latest?

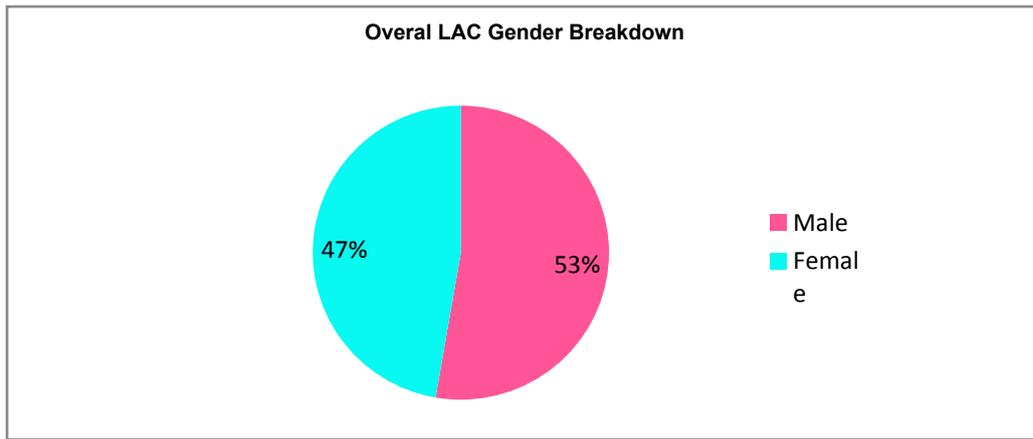
Table 1



Data from Carefirst 22.11.17

Table 1 tells us that 20% of looked after children in Kirklees are aged 4 and below, this is above the English average of 13%. Kirklees have 58% of looked after children aged 10 years and above this is lower than the English which is 62%.

Diagram 2

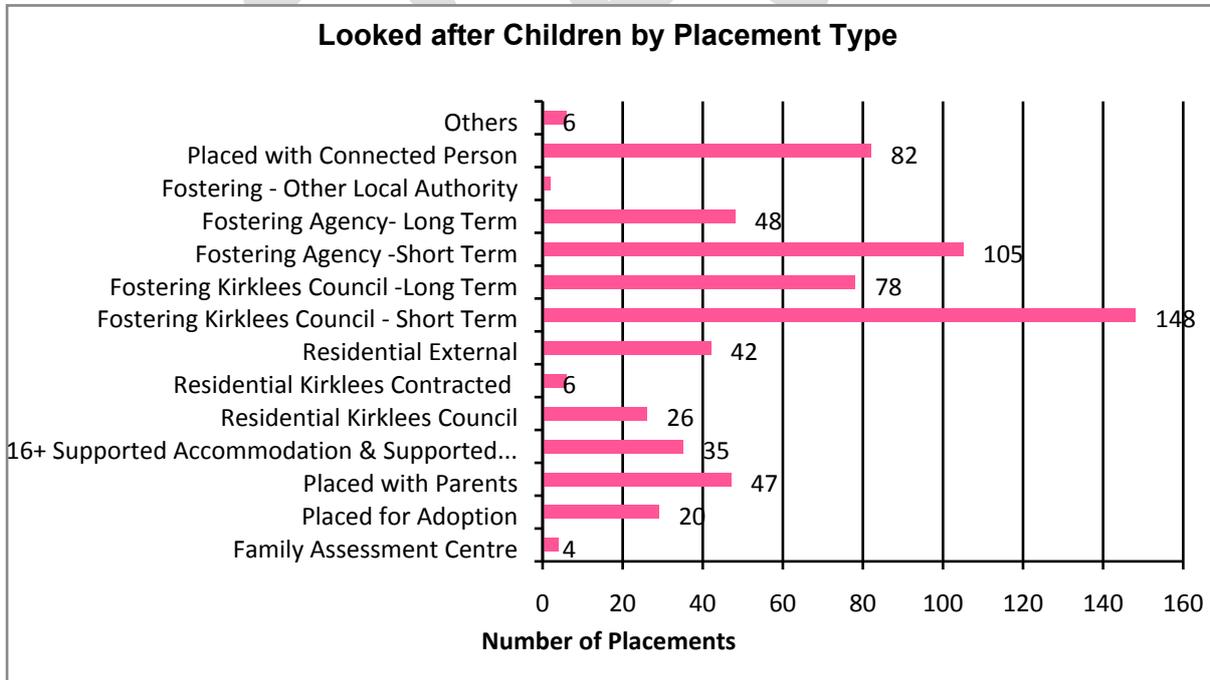


Data from Carefirst 22.11.17

The overall gender split of looked after children is 47% female and 53% male. This tells us that we need around 40 more placements for boys and young men than for girls and young women.

For Kirklees young people in residential care the gender split shifts to 34% female and 66% male. This tells us we need one third of residential placements suitable for the specific needs of girls and two thirds for boys.

Table 3



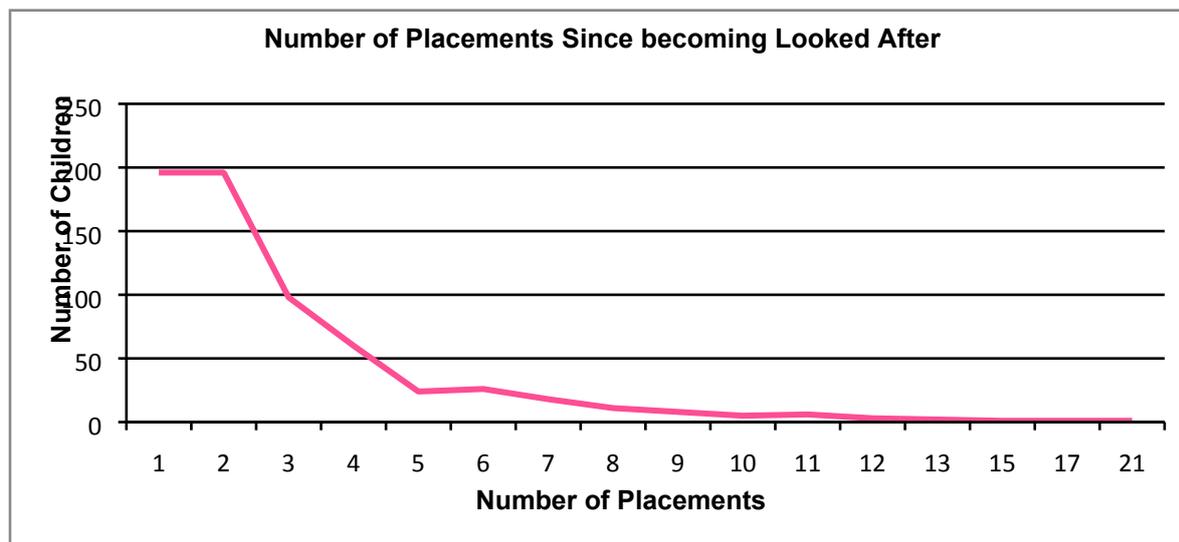
Data from CareFirst 22.11.17

Kirklees have more young people (11%) in residential care than our statistical neighbours and comparators (8%).

Kirklees have a total 58% of children in foster care. Kirklees have 34% of our total looked after children placed with our own foster carers compared to our comparators who have on 43.8%.

### *Number of Placements since becoming Looked After*

Table 4



Carefirst 22.11.17

The table above sets out the number of placements each young person has had since coming into care.

- 70% have had 3 placements or less
- 147 have had between 4 and 9 placements since coming into care
- 19 children have had 10 or more placements since coming into care

Evidence shows that having multiple care placements reduces children’s opportunities to develop secure attachments. It may also worsen any existing behavioural and emotional difficulties. Therefore placement stability is something we will continue to strive to improve.

### **Age**

In Kirklees 58% of looked after children are aged 10 or above. Children at this age are far more likely to be placed in out of area, specialist residential placements, which are costly. There is currently little or no choice in placement availability for this age group. Links to family and education placements frequently disrupted through lack of placement choice. Looking at new entrants into the care system we can see that 10-15 year olds make up 22% of new entrants.

### **Children and young people living with disabilities in Kirklees**



Around 2,500 Disabled Children and Young People in Kirklees

630 Disabled Children and Young People have an Education Health and Care Plan (making them eligible for Adult Social Care Services)

434 Disabled Children and Young People known to the Kirklees All Age Disability Service

Looked After Disabled Children and Young People

DRAFT