

## CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

### AGENDA

**Meeting to be held in the Civic Centre (Committee Room No.6) on Monday, 2 February 2015 at 5.30pm**

#### Part I

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## **Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006**

The following items are not for publication as the Board is likely to exclude the public during consideration thereof as they contain information relating to any individual, or information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1 and 2).

### **Part II**

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ELAINE WAUGH  
Head of Law and Governance

Civic Centre  
SUNDERLAND

22 January 2015

## Corporate Parenting Board

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 13 October, 2014 in Committee Room  
6, Civic Centre, Sunderland at 5.30 p.m.**

### **Present:**

Councillor P. Smith  
Councillor Lawson  
Councillor Macknight  
Councillor Williams

### **Members of the Board**

Silksworth Ward  
Shiney Row Ward  
Castle Ward  
Washington Central Ward

### **Young People**

Daniel Bensley  
Kieran Boyce

### **Also in Attendance**

Councillor Allan  
Councillor Farthing  
Councillor H. Trueman  
Councillor D. Trueman  
Councillor Davison

Sandhill Ward  
Washington South Ward  
Washington West Ward  
Washington West Ward  
Redhill Ward

### **All Supporting Officers**

Neil Revely  
Fiona Brown  
Fran Arnold  
Rosemary Pickering  
Lynne Goldsmith  
Lucy Pierson  
Dawn Shearsmith  
Sharon Willis

Executive Director of People Services  
Chief Operating Officer  
Head of Safeguarding  
Adoption Team  
Senior Safeguarding Manager  
Change Council  
Sunderland Virtual School  
Operational Manager for Children's Homes

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Shattock and Emerson.

## **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **Minutes**

9. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July, 2014 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

## **Work Plan for the Corporate Parenting Board**

The Board was referred to the Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan. Members would recall that in July 2014 they were invited to suggest issues that they would like the Board to discuss and include on the Work Plan.

No further discussion items were suggested for the Work Plan.

## **The Pledges**

Lucy Pierson from the Change Council advised the Board at the last two meetings of the Change Council they had been reviewing the Pledge.

The Board was advised that the young people had identified various issues that they felt required updating. They also considered that the current Pledge was too 'wordy'. This feedback had been passed to Fran Arnold, Head of Safeguarding who was scheduled to attend the next Change Council meeting.

Kieran Boyce from the Change Council stated that in their view some of the factual information contained within the Pledge was inaccurate.

Councillor Williams reported that a designated teacher and a governor was in place at the school where she was a governor and that it was a shame that this was not Kieran's experience.

Dawn Shearsmith reported that it was a statutory requirement for a young person in care to have a designated teacher and stated that she would share the message that this does not always happen.

The Executive Director of People Services stated that the purpose of the Pledge was to hold Members to account and support young people. The Pledge must be continuously monitored and young people ought to be encouraged to speak up about



issues that they feel strongly about in order that steps could be taken to rectify them and make things happen.

The Head of Safeguarding suggested that 'Gorilla', a new graphics company that the Council was dealing with could present the Pledge to the young people in a different way which Daniel Bensley and Kieran Boyce felt would be useful.

10. RESOLVED to note the update.

### **Accommodation Issues**

Alan Caddick, Head of Housing Support and Community Living delivered a presentation describing the Council's current position in relation to looked after children accommodation and the position going forward.

The LAC Strategy 2013-2016 set out the objective which was to "promote the well-being of looked after children by providing them with stable homes where they feel safe and secure and can form healthy attachments with adults".

The Board was advised that the current looked after children accommodation provision comprised 4 Children's Homes, namely Grasswell House, Colombia Road, Revelstoke Road and Monument View. All of which housed six young people.

Accommodation for 'Into Independence' comprised Burlington Close which housed 6 young people, Chester Road which housed 4 young people and Trainer Flats which could house up to 15 young people.

The Board was advised that the Council's intentions for future included:

- Reviewing the needs of LAC and existing provision
- Reduce external placements by considering accommodation options in the city
- Scope the number of young people who will be 'Staying Put' beyond 18 in order to determine demand for supported accommodation;
- Review the Council's two in-house supported accommodation units;
- Work with providers to raise the quality and improve the choice of appropriate accommodation for care leavers

A series of service user and carers' views was included within the presentation. An update was also provided in relation to supported living.

There were different ways of obtaining investment to get what the Council required. The Board was advised that there was a Gateway of assessment that would assist

the Council to place young people in the most suitable accommodation. Moving to independence was important and the Council were also required to consider the LAC Strategy and the wider contextual issues discussed at the this Board.

Councillor Lawson stated that the last time the Corporate Parenting Board discussed accommodation issues, the Members raised whether young people would have contacts nearby and be close to family. Councillor Lawson then enquired if Homewood was still in use. In response, the Head of Housing Support and Community Living stated that the Council's aspiration was to look across the entire City. It was confirmed that the Trainer Flats were all located within the City, however the Council did try to place young people where they required support. Homewood was a Gentoo property.

Councillor McClennan stated that based on the feedback she had received CentrePoint, the Salvation Army and the YMCA were not ideal places for young people to go.

Councillor McClennan also commented that there were a number of atrocious flats in the Redhill Ward which housed young people leaving care. It was Councillor McClennan's view that the Council did not do young people justice putting them in such places.

The Head of Housing Support and Community Living concurred with Councillor McClennan and stated that it was essential that officers engage with Members at a local level to seek views such as this.

Councillor Williams stated that it was also important not to house a disproportionate number of people who had been through the care system un one place, so as not to attach any sort of stigma with a area. Councillor Williams considered that care leavers should be placed within a mixed and balanced area, one which anyone would want for their own child.

The Head of Housing Support and Community Living agreed to take Councillor Williams' views into consideration. He stated that Glebe and Home Housing was improving and had reasonably strong managers. He stated that linkages also needed to be made with other areas.

Councillor Farthing enquired where care leavers tended to want to live. The Head of Housing Support and Community Living stated that the feedback he had received was that young people did not want to live Washington and would prefer to live in the City Centre. Young people wanted to live in properties where they would be close together.

Kieran Boyce from the Change Council commented that six children in each children's home was a very low number considering the high volume of young people in Sunderland.

Daniel Bensley enquired if support was provided to young people moving into independent care, such as budgeting. The Head of Housing Support and Community Living responded advising that support was indeed part of the overall approach and that it should be included in young person's Pathway Plan that was agreed for the young person by their social worker.

Lynne Goldsmith confirmed that Pathway Plans should be in place to support young people with issues such as budgeting and that if it wasn't, young people were able to influence what goes into their Pathway Plan and should raise this.

Lucy Pierson commented that the Change Council was in the process of changing the Pathway Plan and developing a practical tasks list.

Sharon Willis commented that children's homes did start a Pathway Plan, however it was often difficult to describe to young people how to budget and how emotionally isolating living alone could be. Children's homes were working on ideas to try to teach young people how to manage these issues.

The Chair stated that she had recently visited Chester Road and complimented how good the home was.

The Executive Director of People Services commented that the Council was aware of the needs of young people and that they each have different requirements. He agreed that Chester Road was good and that it was hopefully the start of something that the Council was aware it needed to accelerate. The Council also acknowledged that it needed a range of options for young people and provision for university/army.

Alan Caddick was thanked for his presentation.

## **CSE and Missing**

Fran Arnold, Head of Safeguarding provided a verbal update to the Board in relation to how child exploitation issues were dealt with in Sunderland. In doing so she explained that there was a regulatory board in place to focus on the issue, a Northeast Strategic Board was also in place, chaired by Northumbria Police. Beneath that, there was a CSE/Missing Group that worked on a more local level. An operational board was also in place to deliver an action plan. Furthermore, there was regular scrutiny and oversight to monitor issues affecting vulnerable people.

The Board was reassured that the Council had revisited its processes to ensure that they were fit for purpose. The Head of Safeguarding advised that 32 vulnerable people were identified as part of the review, 8 of which were classed as high risk whilst 20 were classed as medium risk. The remainder were categorised as being vulnerable to risk.

Councillor Farthing enquired how the Council determined whether a person was 'vulnerable'. The Head of Safeguarding responded advising that a risk assessment and screening tool was used, as well as the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). All of which helped to identify if someone was vulnerable.

Councillor Farthing reported that Northumbria Police had recently indicated their rape allegations, and enquired whether they would influence the Council's data. In response, the Executive Director of People Service advised that the police held a lot of intelligence in relation to rape and statistics in Sunderland. A variety of agencies had provided assurances that 32 vulnerable people was a reasonable reflection of the risk of the number of vulnerable people in Sunderland.

Councillor Williams enquired in relation to the 32 vulnerable people if there was a gender or geographic split. The Head of Safeguarding responded advising that the gender was mixed and that ages ranged between 15-17 years old. Those classed as high risk were aged between 14-17. All were from mixed backgrounds.

11. RESOLVED to note the update.

## **IRO Annual Report**

The Chief Operating Officer tabled the following report: -

Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report April 2013 – March 2014

The report provided information about the performance of the Children's Independent Reviewing Team in Sunderland and their assessment of the services offered to looked after children in Sunderland from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. The Board was advised that Sunderland was committed to delivering the best possible outcomes for its looked after children and the IRO Team had a key role in achieving this.

The role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) had developed since the Adoption and Children Act 2002. The IRO Handbook (2010) provided statutory guidance on the role and responsibilities of the IRO.

The Board was advised that in the summer of 2013, the Children's Safeguarding Service became part of the People Directorate which brought together a range of services including Adult social care and Housing. The Executive Director of People Services commissioned an independent consultancy, Core Assets, to undertake a review of the Children's Safeguarding Service in March 2014. Members were informed that the IRO Team made a significant contribution to the quality assurance of practice and would respond as necessary to the recommendations and action plan arising from the Core Asset review.

At 31 March 2014 the number of looked after children in Sunderland had risen to 491 which was an increase of 54 children or 9.3% over the year.

The Chief Operating Officer advised that 42% of the children looked after in Sunderland were voluntarily accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989. As this figure was deemed to be high it was to be the subject to further investigation.

The Board was advised that 177 children (36%) were the subject of either an interim or full care order, whilst 20% of looked after children were made subject to placement orders. It was confirmed that there were no children subject to freeing orders in Sunderland.

The data contained within the report was highlighted for Members. In particular statistics relating to placements for looked after children.

The role of the Independent Reviewing Officer was described within the report. Members were advised that there were 8.1 whole time equivalent IRO posts in Sunderland at 31 March 2014 and that the team of IROs in Sunderland was very experienced in terms of social work and management experience and undertaking the role of IRO.

The Board was advised that the Council recognised that looked after children in Sunderland received a good service from Viewpoint. A Viewpoint Co-ordinator visited children to help them to complete an online form to express their views and wishes and feelings about their care before their looked after reviews.

In terms of the timeliness of looked after children reviews, the Board was advised that 93.7% were conducted within the statutory timescales, which was an improvement on performance the previous year.

Priority areas for further development in 2014/2015 were highlighted within the report.

Councillor Lawson in referring to looked after children aged 18 and over stated that she would be interested to receive more information regarding how young people are prepared for independence. The Chair requested that something be submitted to a future Corporate Parenting Board to explain how young people are prepared for independence.

The Executive Director of People Services stated that an interactive session on this particular topic with participation from the young people themselves would be useful for a future meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board. He suggested that the Corporate Parenting Board may also be interested to receive some positive real life case studies.

Daniel Bensley commented that he felt young people should not need to leave care at age 18 and that it was too young.

Councillor McClennan agreed and suggested that the Corporate Parenting Board discuss this.

12. RESOLVED to note the update.

### **Performance Report for Quarter 1 and Adoption Scorecard**

The Executive Director of People Services submitted a report showing the current position of the Council as 'Corporate Parent'. The report also updated the Board on the current performance of the Council in meeting this responsibility.

The report included a position statement for Looked After Performance and the Looked After Children Performance Scorecard.

The Board was advised that the number of Looked After Children (LAC) had increased from 491 at 31 March 2014 to 523 at the end of June 2014, which was an increase of 6.5%.

The LAC short term stability indicator had slightly declined in 2013/14 for April to June 2014, although the indicator remained in the 'Very Good' band.

The long term stability indicator had also declined in performance from 68% in 2013/14 to 56% for April to June 2014, therefore it had not achieved the target of 73%. Current performance was also worse than the 2012/13 national average of 67%. The Board was advised that the Council's sustainable foster carers needed to be reviewed.

Sadly the timeliness of looked after reviews had declined significantly from 93% in 2013/14 to 61% for quarter 1 in 2014/15. The Council were aware that the target needed to be 100% which it was busy working towards.

11.3% of LAC were reported to have been placed outside the LA boundary and more than 20 miles away from where they used to live as at 30 June 2014. This had declined in performance compared to 9.2% as at 31 March 2014. It was noted that the Council needed to develop and grow more choice in terms of accommodation in Sunderland.

There was a good representation of children and young people who gave their opinions to the Viewpoint project. The percentages needed unpicking and the Council needed to become sharper with technology.

The percentage of adopted children who were placed for adoption within a year of agency decision had improved in April to June 2014.

The average number of days in the adoption family finding process had also improved in quarter 1 2014/2015 to 197 days compared to 215 days in 2013/2014. This was a positive result for Sunderland and was beyond the national average.

The Board considered it worrying that 27.9% of 19, 20 and 21 year old care leavers were in suitable accommodation during quarter 1 2014/2015 as this had reduced from 65.3% in 2013/2014.

The Head of Safeguarding explained that the Council needed to ensure that data gathering was correct and that validation exercises were accurate.

Rosemary, in drawing attention to The Looked After Children Scorecard position at quarter 1, 2014/2015 explained that Government required the Council to report nationally. The Board was advised that Sunderland placed more older children nationally than anywhere else in the Country. Sunderland also consciously tried to place sibling groups keeping them together.

Councillor Farthing commented that it would be useful to receive statistics regarding the stability of placements within the performance report.

The Head of Safeguarding took the opportunity to thank Rosemary and her team for their excellent work.

13. RESOLVED to note the report.

## **Sunderland Virtual School**

The Executive Director of People Services submitted a report advising the Board of the provisional results from schools during the year 2013/2014.

Dawn Shearsmith tabled a revised copy of the report at the meeting. In doing so she advised that for the purposes of data analysis, only those pupils who were continuously looked after for 12 months, or more, had been included.

Key Stage 1 outcomes in relation to reading, writing and maths were outlined for children who had been continuously looked after for at least 12 months. Outcomes in writing had increased and the gap was closing. Outcomes in maths were also reported to be on the increase and schools had been commended for their efforts.

Trends in the data over the last five years were outlined on page 3 of the report. It was confirmed that children that had made less than expected progress had a special educational need.

Statistics regarding school moves were outlined and it was reported that there was a general concern regarding school moves as it set children back 6 months in their attainment each time they moved. The Board was advised that Sunderland Virtual School had undertaken some work with social care to try to limit the number of school moves.

In relation to Key Stage 2 outcomes, the Board was advised that children generally performed better at reading than writing. In maths there was one looked after child that achieved a level 6 which was secondary level attainment.

The Board was advised that at the time of writing the report there were no 2014 national averages available to compare outcomes.

Positive outcomes were reported to the Board in relation to achievements in English and maths and trends at Key Stage 2.

The Virtual School was grateful to schools for their hard work.

Dawn advised that it would be useful if the Virtual School could receive copies of looked after childrens' Pathway Plans to allow it to track progress of 16-19 year olds that continue in education.

Councillor Farthing commented that it was pleasing to see improvements at all key stages and enquired what effect pupil premium had on the education of looked after children. In response Dawn advised that information regarding how pupil premium



was spent was contained in individual PEPs and that the Virtual School was looking to secure a more sophisticated database to record how pupil premium was spent.

The Chair commended the Headteacher of Sunderland Virtual School for the excellent support that she provided to schools and congratulated her on obtaining all of the statistics contained within her informative report.

14. RESOLVED to note the report.

### **Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006**

At the instance of the Chair, it was:-

15. RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it was considered to involve a likely disclosure of information relating to an individual, or information which was likely to reveal the identity of an individual (including the Authority holding that information) (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1 and 2).

(Signed) P. SMITH  
Chairman

### **Note:-**

The above minutes relate only to items considered during the time which the meeting was open to the public.



**Corporate Parenting Board****2 January 2015****Annual Report of the Virtual Head Teacher for 2013 - 2014**

During the year 2013-14 we had a large number of young people coming into care. At the beginning of the academic year we had, according to our records, 290 LAC of school age (4-15), including 12 who had become looked after during the summer break. By the end of the year we had 348 LAC of school age, with 3 recently admitted into care. Most year groups had increased, with the exception of years 6, 7 and 9. The latter two year cohorts had actually decreased. The biggest rise was amongst the 15 year olds (Year 11), which rose by 15 during the year, from 45 to 60 young people.

School Year Group	Numbers on 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2013		Numbers on 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	
	Already in care	Recently LA	Already in care	Recently LA
Reception	28	0	30	1
1	17	2	25	1
2	17	1	21	0
3	19	1	26	0
4	14	0	25	0
5	16	1	19	0
6	15	0	15	0
7	27	2	23	0
8	25	0	37	0
9	29	3	28	1
10	38	1	39	0
11	45	1	60	0

**2014 Data outcomes**

For the purposes of data analysis, only those pupils who were continuously looked after for 12 months, or more, have been included.

Data from the Autumn Term was used to target those pupils in Years 6 and 11 who needed support. This, in part way, contributes to the rise in standards in Year 11 where staff from the Virtual School were mostly involved from January onwards.

Final year students from Sunderland University supported 13 children across Years 2 and 6 for an afternoon per week over the Spring Term to raise attainment through 1-1 and to learn about the social and emotional needs of some of our children. This was achieved through our good relationships with schools and with Sunderland University.

**2014– Key Stage 1 outcomes for children who have been continuously looked after for at least 12 months:**

This is a cohort of 18 pupils, 15 of whom had been in care for at least 12 months. 3 (20%) of these children had Special Educational Needs at School Action Plus/ School Action but all were educated in mainstream schools. Out of the 15, 3 children had moved schools 4 times since starting school; 1 child moved 3 times; and 9 children moved twice.

**Reading:**

Level 2+	Level 2B	Level 2A	Level 3	Sunderland Level 2+ all children	
87% (13 children)	47% (7 children)	14% (2 children)	7% (1 child)	88%	
90%	81%	Not reported	22%		National results for 2014

**Writing:**

Level 2+	Level 2B	Level 2A	Level 3	Sunderland Level 2+ all children	
67% (10 children)	7% (1 child)	20% (3 children)	0%	94%	
86%	70%	Not reported	16%		National results for 2014

**Maths:**

Level 2+	Level 2B	Level 2A	Level 3	Sunderland Level 2+ all children	
87% (13 children)	54% (8 children)	14% (2 children)	7% (1 child)	93%	
93%	80%	Not reported	24%		National results for 2014

- At level 2 plus, Sunderland LAC were only 3% below the national averages for all children in reading, and 6% below in writing.
- At level 2B, Sunderland LAC were significantly below the national average for all children.
- At level 3, one Sunderland LAC achieved a level 3 in reading and maths, for the first time in the last 3 years. However, overall percentage outcomes are below all children nationally.
- There were no national averages for LAC available for 2014 at the time of writing this report.

<b>Looked After Children: Key Stage 1 Trends over 5 years</b>					
Academic Year	Cohort Size	Level 2+ Reading	Level 2+ Writing	Level 2+ Maths	Statemented
2014	15	87%	67%	87%	0%
2013	10	70%	60%	60%	0%
2012	9	78%	56%	67%	11%
2011	7	86%	71%	86%	0%
2010	12	58%	50%	50%	17%
2009	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Key Stage 1 results for 2014 LAC have:

- increased from 70% to 87%, 2013 to 2014 which has stopped the downward trend in reading and is the highest result in 5 years.
- increased from 60% to 67%, 2013 to 2014 and shows an overall upward 5 year trend in writing
- increased from 60% to 87%, 2013 to 2014 and shows an upward 3 year trend in maths

<b>Progress from starting point provided</b>			
	<b>At Least Expected</b>	<b>Greater than expected</b>	<b>Less than expected</b>
Reading	93% (14 children)	66% (10 children)	7% (1 child)
Writing	87% (13 children)	53% (8 children)	14% (2 children)
Maths	100% (15 children)	66% (10 children)	0% (0 children)

### **2014 Key Stage 2 outcomes for children who have been continuously looked after for at least 12 months**

19 children were eligible for the Year 6 tests in 2014, of whom 15 were in care for 12 or more months. Of the 15, 2 (14%) had statements of SEN and 47% (7 children) were at School Action Plus.

2014 outcomes are above those for 2013 in English, largely owing to the increase of 7% in writing.

#### **Achieving Level 4+: English (Reading and Writing combined)**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland Average 2014	National Average 2014
60% (9 pupils)	88%	82%

#### **Achieving Level 4: Reading**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland Average 2014	National Average 2014
74% (11 pupils)	89%	89%

*4 children achieved a level 5 in reading, which is above the expected level for 11 year olds.*

#### **Achieving Level 4: Writing**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland Average 2014	National Average 2014
40% (6 pupils)	85%	85%

*4 children achieved a level 5 in writing*

#### **Achieving Level 4+ Mathematics**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland Average 2014	National Average 2014
47% ( 7 pupils)	87%	86%

*1 child achieved a level 5 in Maths and 1 child achieved a level 6*

#### **Achieving Level 4 English and Maths:**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland Average 2014	National Average 2014
34% (5 pupils)	84%	79%

- The number of Sunderland LAC achieving a level 5 in Reading was higher than in previous years, but at level 4, LAC performed below other children locally and nationally.
- Writing has improved by 7% 2013-2014, but is still well below local and national averages.
- For the first time, we had a child achieve a level 6 in Maths, although overall, the gap in maths has widened when compared with all children at level 4 and above.

## Trends at Key Stage 2

<b>Looked After Children: Key Stage 2 Trends over 5 years</b>				
Sunderland LAC:	English	Maths	English and Maths	Statemented
2014	60%	47%	34%	14%
2013	40%	54%	40%	20%
2012	36%	36%	36%	27%
2011	42%	25%	17%	17%
2010	64%	64%	64%	15%

Key Stage 2 results for LAC have:

- improved from 40% in 2013 to 60% in 2014 for level 4 English with an upward trend over the last 3 years
- declined by 6% at level 4 and above in both English and Maths combined
- declined from 54% in maths to 47% 2013 – 2014

<b>Progress from starting point provided</b>			
	At least Expected	Greater than expected	Less than expected
Reading	74% (11 children)	27% (4 children)	27% (4 children)
Writing	74% (11 children)	47% (7 children)	27% (4 children)
Maths	54% (8 children)	20% (3 children)	47% (7 children)

Out of the children who did not achieve in 2 or more areas, 2 had statements of special need for learning; 1 moved placements a number of times during his primary education.

- More children are making greater than expected progress in writing than in reading or maths
- Fewer children are making expected progress in Maths
- Percentages are below the Sunderland averages for all children at aged 11.

## Key Stage 2 – SEN

Level of SEN	Reading Level 4+		Writing Level 4+		Maths Level 4+	
	Sunderland LAC	National SEN 2013	Sunderland LAC	National SEN 2013	Sunderland LAC	National SEN 2013
<b>Statement (2 pupils)</b>	0	30%	0	18%	50% (1 pupil)	23%
<b>School Action Plus (6 pupils)</b>	33% (2 pupils)	57%	33% (2 pupils)	43%	16.5% (1 pupil)	53%
<b>School Action (4 pupils)</b>	25% (1 pupil)	69%	25% (1 pupil)	59%	0	65%

- One pupil at SA+ gained level 5s in all three subject areas
- Sunderland LAC with special needs are below the 2013 national average for special needs in all areas, but it is to be noted that numbers are very small.
- There are no 2014 data comparisons for SEN or for LAC at the time of writing this report.

## School moves

7 children out of 15 (47%) attended 2 primary schools, according to our records.

**2014 - Key Stage 4 pupils who have been looked after continuously for at least twelve months:**

The number of pupils eligible to sit GCSEs in this cohort was 41 where 17% of the cohort was statemented and 50% were at School Action / School Action Plus. This is the lowest percentage of pupils with SEN in the last 5 years.

- 73% (30 pupils) of this cohort achieved GCSE passes in English and Maths.
- 85% (35 pupils) achieved a qualification in English and Maths.
- Out of the remaining 6 pupils, 2 achieved a GCSE in Maths, 2 in English; 1 achieved a lower qualification in English and the remaining pupil was not in a position to take qualifications this year.

**The percentage of Sunderland LAC achieving 1 GCSE at grades A\*-G**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland All Pupils 2014	National 2014 (any passes)
95% (39 pupils)	98%	97.5%

*This was 16% higher than predicted from prior attainment*

**The percentage of Sunderland LAC achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\*-G:**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland All Pupils 2014	National 2014
80% (33 pupils)	93%	92%

*This was 31% higher than predicted outcomes from prior attainment*

**The percentage of Sunderland LAC achieving 5+ GCSEs, or equivalent at grades A\*- C:**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland All Pupils 2014	National 2014
25% (10 pupils)	62%	64.1%

*This was 5% higher than March predictions*

**The percentage of Sunderland pupils achieved 5+ GCSEs including English and Maths at grades A\*- C:**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland All Pupils 2014	National all pupils 2014
20% (8 pupils)	52%	55%

*This was 6% higher than predicted outcomes from prior attainment*

**The percentage of Sunderland pupils who achieved A\*-C in English:**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland All Pupils 2014	National All Pupils 2014
29% (12 pupils)	64%	Not available

**The percentage of Sunderland pupils who achieved A\*-C in Maths:**

Sunderland LAC	Sunderland All Pupils 2014	National All Pupils 2014
22% (9 pupils)	63%	Not available

**The percentage of Sunderland pupils making the expected progress in English\*:**

Sunderland LAC	National LAC 2013	National All Pupils 2014
66% (27 pupils)	32.6%	72.1%

**The percentage of Sunderland pupils making the expected progress in Maths\*:**

Sunderland LAC	National LAC 2013	National All Pupils 2014
49% (20 pupils)	29.2%	66.4%

\*Progress data is based on schools' judgements.

- The percentage making expected progress in English, from their target set, was 34.6% above the national average for LAC (2013) and 6.1% below all pupils nationally.
- The percentage making expected progress in Maths, from their target set, was 20.2% above the national average for LAC (2013), but 18.4% below the national average for all pupils

**Trends at Key Stage 4**

Looked After Children: Key Stage 4 Results 2013							Pupil Context:	
Academic Year	Cohort Size	5+ A*-C (incl Eng&Maths)	5+ A*-C	5+ A*-G	1+ A*-G	Statemented	School Action/ SA Plus	Overall SEN
2014	42	20%	25%	80%	95%	17%	50%	67%
2013	25	20%	20%	40%	92%	40%	48%	88%
2012	33	12%	48%	79%	82%	36%	42%	78%
2011	31	7%	36%	52%	71%	35%	35%	70%
2010	31	7%	42%	65%	94%	32%	48%	80%
2009	40	11%	26%	n/a	90%	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Key Stage 4 results for LAC 2014:**

- % achieving 5+A\*-C including English and maths has remained at 20% in 2014. To date there are no national comparatives available for 2014.
- % achieving 5A-C grades has risen from 20% (2013) to 25% (2014)
- 5 A\*-G grades has doubled from 40% (2013) to 80% (2014).
- 95% achieved at least 1 GCSE pass, which is a 3% increase on 2013 results and shows an upward trend over 4 years.
- These outcomes are better than those predicted in March 2013, although 2 pupils who were LAC in March are no longer looked after.

We are grateful to Sunderland Secondary Schools/ Academies for their efforts and for working in partnership with us to achieve the above results.



## Key Stage 4 – SEN

Level of SEN	5+ A*- C / equivalent		5+ A*- C / equivalent including Eng & Math		A*- C in English and Maths GCSE	
	Sunderland LAC	National LAC 2013	Sunderland LAC	National LAC 2013	Sunderland LAC	National LAC 2013
<b>Statement (6 pupils)</b>	0 pupils	16%	0 pupils	3.1%	0 pupils	3.2%
<b>School Action Plus (16 pupils)</b>	12.5% (2 pupils)	51.4%	12.5% (2 pupils)	17.8%	12.5% (2 pupils)	18.8%
<b>School Action (6 pupils)</b>	50% (3 pupils)	61.5%	50% (3 pupils)	17.4%	50% (3 pupils)	18.1%

- In 2014 those pupils who had a statement of special need, or who were at School Action Plus, performed below their national counterparts in 2013
- The percentages for those pupils at School Action were higher than the national averages for 2013, where English and Maths are included in the results.
- It was the same pupils who achieved in all areas listed
- There were no 2014 national comparators for SEN or LAC at the time of writing this report.

### School moves

3 pupils moved school 4 times during their secondary education; 5 additional pupils attended 2 secondary schools. In total 8 pupils – 19.5% - changed schools during their secondary education.

### Exclusions September 2013 – July 2014

<b>Fixed term exclusions</b>	<b>No. of exclusions</b>	<b>No. of pupils</b>	<b>Total No. of days</b>
2013-14 Academic Year	118	44	288.5
2012- 13 Academic Year	136	47	282.5

- The number of pupils excluded in 2013-14 has reduced slightly, although the number of days they have been excluded for has risen by 6 days
- The Virtual School has asked for early notification of severe behaviour so that support can be provided or a transfer to alternative provision can be made rather than exclude.

<b>Permanent exclusions</b>	<b>No. of Pupils</b>
2013-14 Academic Year	0
2012- 13 Academic Year	0

- In 2014, 4 children had to be moved to alternative provisions for their own safety as well as the safety of others

**Numbers of looked after children on roll at each type of school for the academic year 2013-14 in Sunderland, as judged by Ofsted by the end of May 2014.**

Category of School / Academy	Good or Outstanding Schools	Schools requiring improvement	Schools requiring Special Measures
Secondary	83	16	1
Primary	105	13	2
Special	33		
PRU	14		
Free School		1	
Early Years	1		

- 88% of school age LAC attended good or outstanding schools at the time of analysis.
- Only 1.5% (4 children) were placed in one school which already required improvement and this was done without the knowledge, or involvement of the Virtual School.
- 11% were already in the schools prior to being placed in a category, or became a LAC after the judgement had been made. Conversations with the school improvement team led to no child being removed because of the Ofsted judgement.

#### Summary of numbers of pupils in Ofsted Rated Out of Area Schools, as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2014:

Category of School / Academy	Outstanding Schools		Good Schools		Schools requiring improvement		Schools requiring Special Measures	
	Number of schools	No. of pupils	Number of schools	No. of pupils	Number of schools	No. of pupils	Number of schools	No. of pupils
Secondary	5	17	8	44	2	7		0
Primary	4		15		2			
Special	3							
PRU			1					
Residential	1		3					
Free School								
Early Years					1			

- 68 pupils were placed out of area during the academic year 2013-14, including those placed for adoption.
- 61 of these pupils attended good or outstanding schools.
- The remaining 7 pupils were placed in the schools before they were judged to require improvements. On reading the Ofsted reports, it was not considered necessary to move any of them.

#### Pupils not in Full Time Education

At the time of writing this report, we have 24 pupils who are attending alternative or part time education. 14 of these pupils are now in year 11, and 3 pupils are still in primary education. This includes:

<b>Type of Provision</b>	<b>Full / Part time</b>	<b>Number of pupils</b>
Home Tuition	Part Time	3
PRU	7 FT & 8 PT	15
Residential	Full time	1
Vocational	Full time	1
Hospital	Part time	1
Secure	Full time	1
Not engaging / waiting for Statement review		2

It is becoming increasingly challenging to find appropriate provisions to meet the complex needs of some of our older pupils

We work closely with the PRU in order to ensure that education provision is offered to those pupils who find it hard to engage. Alternative learning provision or vocational learning is often a solution.

## **Post-16**

### **Year 12 Pupils**

Out of the 42 pupils currently in this cohort, only 4 (9.5%) are NEET at the time of writing this report.

The whereabouts of 3 pupils, in terms of education, employment or training, was being investigated at the time of writing this report. One pupil is currently in custody and a further pupil is in hospital longer term.

The remaining 33 pupils (78.5%) are in employment, education or training.

<b>Education</b>	5 are taking A Levels in school 6 <sup>th</sup> forms 4 are taking BTEC qualifications at a College
<b>Employment</b>	0
<b>Training</b>	24 are doing a variety of vocational courses
<b>Unknown</b>	3 are currently unknown and follow up is taking place
<b>NEET</b>	4
<b>Custody</b>	1

## **Personal Education Plans**

Much staff time is spent monitoring the timing of PEPs, ensuring they are written up and a copy is sent to us, and monitoring the quality of them. The percentage of up to date PEPs at any one time can vary considerably. In the 2013-14, percentages were lower than in the previous year, as follows:

Date	%	All current LAC	All eligible for a PEP (Aged between 4 - 16)	PEP in the last 12 months
25.09.2013	89.96%	421	259	233
30.09.2013	90.46%	477	283	256
07.10.2013	89.16%	477	286	255
11.10.2013	92.66%	478	286	265
12.11.2013	91.00%	487	300	273
22.11.2013	91.33%	491	300	274
20.12.2013	90.43%	489	303	274
07.01.2014	92.67%	489	300	278
17.01.2014	91.33%	497	300	274
24.01.2014	91.80%	497	305	280
31.01.2014	92.46%	499	305	282
07.02.2014	92.18%	497	307	283
14.02.2014	92.26%	510	310	286
21.02.2014	91.26%	503	309	282
28.02.2014	90.06%	499	312	281
07.03.2014	88.92%	494	316	281
14.03.2014	89.62%	499	318	285
21.03.2014	87.50%	490	320	280
28.03.2014	87.00%	489	323	281
04.04.2014	86.69%	490	323	280
09.05.2014	81.87%	506	331	271
16.05.2014	82.78%	503	331	274
06.06.2014	84.24%	505	330	278
16.06.2014	82.48%	508	331	273
20.06.2014	84.15%	519	328	276
27.06.2014	84.59%	520	331	280
04.07.2014	86.14%	517	333	286
11.07.2014	86.50%	516	326	282
21.07.2014	89.06%	522	329	293

The variability in the percentage of up to date PEPs is a result of:

- Increased numbers coming into care – an increase of 70 pupils during the year requiring PEPs - causing increased caseloads for all concerned
- The number of school moves requiring a PEP within the first 20 days of moving
- The lack of availability of social carers owing to ill health

#### **Actions taken**

As a team, we continue to remind schools that PEPs are due and try to establish the covering social workers so that they can take place.

The Virtual School has worked with Social Care to establish School Moves Protocol, in an attempt to limit the numbers of school moves.

The Virtual Head Teacher and Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) are encouraging Social Care staff to double up on meetings so that the Care Plan or Looked After Review can be done at the same meeting as the PEP. This is an area we will be pursuing in the next Academic Year to limit the number of meetings professionals, carers and young people need to attend; and thereby increasing the numbers of PEPs conducted within statutory timescales.

### **Pupil Premium**

In full consultation with all concerned, including head teachers, IROs and social workers, it was agreed, from April 2014, to retain £700 of the allocated £1900 per pupil to support:

- complementary and alternative provision
- temporary additional support in schools
- work with the most vulnerable (including those in Children's Homes, in non-mainstream provision and complex cases recent to care)
- professional development in supporting looked after children and young people with complex needs
- support for schools in achieving 'attachment friendly' status.

From September 2014 we have used retained pupil premium to employ 2 additional staff on a supply basis at £25 per hour (plus on-costs) to target:

- our current Year 11s who are still in Sunderland and capable of improving their grades at GCSE level – 11 pupils
- 5 pupils who are exhibiting challenging behaviour and require some additional support to engage in school

### **Celebration of Achievement**

In July 2014 we held the second of our Celebrating Achievement events. One of our Primary schools kindly agreed to host this for us at their Sports Hall in Southwick. The Executive Director of People Services opened the proceedings and presented certificates. The Associate Director (Education) also addressed those present.

There were 4 categories of achievement:

- Progress and attainment
- Good school citizen
- Personal achievement
- Special recognition.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Numbers of Pupils Gaining Certificates</b>
Progress and attainment	18
Good school citizen	5
Personal achievement	17
Special recognition	14

In total, 54 pupils of all ages were nominated by teachers, social workers and staff at the Virtual School for awards.

3 Special Awards were given for outstanding actions or effort and staff came from schools in Sunderland and in other Local Authorities to either speak about their achievements or, in one case, read out a poem written by the child.

One of the Sunderland Behaviour Support Team spoke about her story of being brought up in care and her dreams. This accumulated in all present being invited to express their dreams on stars, with carers joining in the activity.

Two LAC in a Primary school sang a song with actions. One secondary boy, at very short notice, sang a duet with another member of our Behaviour Support Team. All displayed great talent.

This is an event we will repeat in 2015.

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**2 February 2015**

**SCHOOL MOVES 2013-14**

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES**

**Summary of position as at January 2015**

1. There are currently 546 children in the care of Sunderland Local Authority. Based on the number of Looked After Children (LAC) pupils on the Virtual School Roll in July 2014, 146 children out of a possible 380 of school age had changed schools other than at the end of a key phase, (i.e. nursery to mainstream; infant to junior; junior to secondary)

The numbers shown below are provisional but the request has highlighted the need to undertake some further analysis of the reasons for these moves, particularly for the 70 children who move between Sunderland schools as a result of the change of placement. It is also proposed to benchmark the position in Sunderland with other councils and also against the number of moves undertaken by the wider school population. It is proposed to undertake this analysis in order to provide a fuller and more detailed report to the Corporate Parenting Board at its meeting after Easter. Resource has been allocated to undertake this task.

\*70 school moves were within Sunderland, often as a result of change of placement.

36 pupils moved to out of area placements, including 15 moves within the NE, so schools changed

3 moved as a result of adoption placements specifically

7 moved as a result of receiving a Statement of SEN, to a special school

7 were moved to residential special schools out of area to meet their needs

13 were moved to residential provision with on-site education, for their own safety

9 changed schools/ ALP, including 4 to KS4, PRU owing to behaviour difficulties / exclusions

1 child moved as a result of significant self –harm

2. Looking at numbers within primary and secondary phases, there are higher numbers moving schools in Year 1, where the majority of children who are placed for adoption sit. However, the highest number of school moves was within the second year at secondary school (Yr 8), when many children enter the Care System as a result of breakdown in relationships at home.. It is often necessary to give these young people a fresh start by moving the area of placement and of school.

3. Since the Virtual Head's provisional data report to Corporate Parents in October, a number of steps have been taken to reduce the number of school moves where these are not in the best interest of the child or young person. These include:
  - i. A Protocol has been implemented that stipulates that a member of the Virtual School and Independent Reviewing Team should attend a care planning meeting to discuss any placement move that may involve the need for a change of school. This protocol has been shared with all social workers and this has led to the prevention of some moves and delay to others until placements are secure. The protocol has been shared with all schools and the council's Admissions Team. This has resulted in increased communications from schools notifying of requests to move a child's school. Admissions also now email the Virtual Head copies of all transfer requests for LAC and this prompts a conversation with the social worker.
  - ii. Education has a much higher profile in all multi agency strategic meetings and other agencies are now realising the importance of considering education in any planned placement move.
  
4. As a result of higher numbers in care, the need for more carers and the increase in the complexity of need there will always be a requirement for some children to move school on entering a new placement. Specialist places cannot always be provided locally and there is a significant financial cost in terms of transport if the foster placement is at a distance from the child or young person's current school. However every endeavour has to be made to ensure that any move of school is in the best interests of the child, Through implementation of the protocol, the number of unnecessary school moves are being reduced. It is proposed that the data analysis will evidence this trend over time.



## **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**2 FEBRUARY 2015**

### **PERFORMANCE REPORT UPDATE**

#### **REPORT OF HEAD OF SERVICE: SAFEGUARDING**

##### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the Corporate Parenting Board with an updated position on performance data for Looked After Children in Sunderland.
- 1.2 The performance report informs members of the current position of the Council as 'Corporate Parent' and demonstrates that elected members are aware of their role as corporate parents. It updates members on the current performance of the Council in meeting this responsibility, and on action taking place to further improve outcomes for those children and young people for whom the Council has a parenting responsibility.

##### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 When a child becomes looked after, he or she enters a system in which their care and upbringing is managed by professionals and paid carers. This has two major consequences for the child. Firstly, in addition to the problems of needing to re-form attachments, he/she moves into a world of paid, and sometimes changing, carers, where life is managed through formal and legal processes. Secondly, in addition to learning to cope with this world, they have lost the continuity of parental management of their access to services and opportunities.
- 2.2 The Corporate Parenting responsibility is shared by the Council as a whole. All members, not just those with an interest in Children's Services, are 'Corporate Parents'.
- 2.3 For 'Corporate Parenting' to replicate the quality of care afforded by a 'good parent', each agency and professional involved needs to consider how they can be proactive, within their own remit, on behalf of looked after children, and for all agencies to strive for ever stronger collaborative working so that the whole of the 'corporate parent' can be greater than the sum of its parts.

##### **3. CURRENT POSITION**

- 3.1 The Quarter 3 scorecard is attached at annex 1.
- 3.2 The number of Looked After Children has increased from 539 at 30 September 2014 to 561 at the end of December 2014 (4.1% increase).
- 3.3 One of the five former National Indicators for Looked After Children are within the locally set 'Very Good' banding; two as 'Ask Questions'; and two as 'Investigate' as detailed within Annex 1.

3.4 The bandings are:

- **Stability of placements of looked after children: number of moves.** The LAC Short term stability indicator (of those children looked after at the end of the period, the number of children with 3 or moves in the year) has remained stable end of June 2014 (11.7%) to end of September 2014 (11.9%). This indicator has remained in the 'Very Good' band.

- **Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement.** The Long term stability indicator (children looked after for more than 2 and a half years at the end of the period, who have been in the same placement for 2 years or more) has improved in performance from 59% at end September 2014 to 67% at end of December 2014 although does not achieve the target of 73% for 2014/2015. Current performance is in line with the 2013/14 national average of 67% and higher than the regional average of 64.9%. This indicator has moved from the 'Investigate' band to 'Ask Questions'.

- **Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescale.** The number of Looked After Reviews within timescales has decreased from 88.5% as at end of September 2014 to 75.7% at the end of December 2014. The indicator has moved from the 'Acceptable' band and is now rated within the 'Investigate' band.

- **Timeliness of Looked after children adopted following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption.** The percentage of adopted children who were placed for adoption within a year of agency decision has declined from 76.0% for April to September 2014 to 71.1% for April to December 2014; the latter is based on a cohort of 27 adopted children. This indicator remains in the 'Ask Questions' band.

The percentage of children who ceased to be Looked After who were Adopted remained steady at 23% end of June 2014 to end of September 2014. This is an increase on the 17% for 2013/14. Current performance is higher than the 2013/14 national average (17%) and regional average (20%).

The average number of days in adoption process (length of time from child becoming Looked After to being placed for Adoption) has declined during quarter 3 2014/15 to 515 days although this is an improvement compared to the 2013/14 outturn (599 days). This is within the 2014/15 target of 600 days. Current performance is better than the 2013/14 national average of 628 days (3 year average) and the regional average of 581 days (3 year average).

- **Care leavers in suitable accommodation.** 43.2% (38 care leavers) of 19, 20 & 21 year old care leavers were in suitable accommodation during 1 April 2014 to 31 December 2014, this has improved from 34.9% in quarter 1 2014/15. Of the 88 care leavers who should have been contacted between April and December 2014, 47 have been recorded as contacted. This indicator remains in the 'Investigate' band.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to consider and comment on the performance data for quarter 3.

	Ref	Definition	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15			Number of Children	Direction of Travel	Local Banding	2013/14 National Avg	2013/14 North East Avg
			Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Target	Q1	Q2					
Placements		Number of Looked After Children <sup>S</sup>	393	392	411	388 (71 per 10k)	437 (77.9 per 10k)	491 (89.8 per 10k)	-	523	539	561	102.8 per 10k		-	60 per 10k	81 per 10k
		Percentage of looked after children placed outside LA boundary and more than 20 miles from where they used to live <sup>S</sup>	-	2.0%	4.9%	7.0%	8.6%	7.1%	-	7.8%	8.9%	10.2%	57/561	↓	-	13%	7.9%
	NI 62	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of moves <sup>S</sup>	10.2%	7.9%	10.2%	11.9%	11.7%	12.0%	-	13.4%	11.7%	11.9%	67/561	↓	Very Good	11%	10.5%
	NI 63	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement <sup>S</sup>	67.3%	68.2%	72.5%	68.5%	68.1%	68.0%	73%	62.9%	59.3%	67.0%	75/112	↑	Ask Questions	67%	64.9%
Reviews	NI 66	Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales <sup>C</sup>	96.8%	95.1%	97.2%	96.5%	87.0%	93.7%	100%	61.0%	88.5%	75.7%	386/510	↓	Investigate	-	
Adoption	NI 61	Timeliness of looked after children adopted following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption <sup>C</sup>	67.6%	76.9%	45.8%	75.6%	65.6%	64.9%	-	87.5%	76.0%	71.1%	27/38	↓	Ask Questions	-	
		Percentage of Children who Ceased to be Looked After who were Adopted <sup>C</sup>	26.8%	19.9%	15.1%	27.4%	19.0%	17.1%	18%	27.6%	23.1%	23.3%	38/163	↑	-	17%	20%
		Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days) <sup>C</sup>	789	717	686	687	671	599	600	475	510	515	-	↓	-	628 (3 year average)	581 (3 year average)
		Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days) <sup>C</sup>	225	221	231	236	279	215	250	197	208	232	-	↓	-	217 (3 year average)	204 (3 year average)
Care Leavers		The proportion of children leaving care over the age of 16 who remained looked after until their 18th birthday <sup>C</sup>	69.7%	66.7%	54.5%	60.9%	52.1%	62.5%	-	41.7%	46.4%	43.6%	17/39	↓	-	67%	51%
	NI 147	Care leavers in suitable accommodation <sup>C</sup> <small>2013/14 onwards includes 19, 20 &amp; 21 year olds</small>	88%	89.3%	94.5%	97.5%	93.3%	65.3%	95%	34.9%	37.5%	43.2%	38/88	↑	Investigate	78%	84%
	NI 148	Care leavers Not in employment, education or training (NEET) <sup>C</sup> <small>2013/14 onwards includes 19, 20 &amp; 21 year olds</small>	** Data up to the end of 2012/13 shows 19 year olds in EET** 73%	82.1%	61.1%	67.5%	66.7%	56.5%	40%	79.1%	76.6%	75.0%	66/88	↑	-	55%	51%
		Percentage of Care Leavers who are in Higher Education <sup>C</sup> <small>2013/14 onwards includes 19, 20 &amp; 21 year olds</small>	** Data up to the end of 2012/13 shows 19 year olds in higher education** 3.8%	3.4%	8.3%	7.5%	4.4%	6.1%	-	4.7%	3.1%	2.3%	2/88	↓	-	6%	7%
Offending		Offences whilst looked after - ratio of the percentage of all children aged 10-17 given a youth caution or convicted <sup>C</sup>	2.6	1.2	2.0	2.8	2.7	2.5	-	2.8	1.7	2.1	16/34		-		

Notes: Direction of Travel: Improvement shown by ↑

<sup>1</sup> Warning: Ofsted Profile rating based on latest available financial year data, highlighted ac/to four quartiles: upper, upper middle, lower middle, lower

<sup>2</sup> Targets: current performance compared to end of year targets has been traffic lighted: >5% below target is Not on Target (N); within 5% of target or better than target is On Target (Y)

<sup>R</sup> Rolling year data

<sup>S</sup> quarter end Snapshot data

<sup>C</sup> Cumulative data for financial year

**Not for publication as the minutes contain exempt information relating to an individual, or information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (including the Authority holding that information) (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1 and 2).**

## **Corporate Parenting Board**

**14 October, 2014**

### **Minutes**

#### **Part II**

### **Minutes**

Board Members referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2014.

16. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2014 – Part II be agreed as a correct record.

## **Ofsted Reports for Childrens Homes 2013**

The Executive Director of People's Services submitted a report informing the Board of the outcomes of Ofsted inspections of the City's children's homes.

At the time of writing the report, Monument View, Grasswell House and Sea View Road had received their full inspections for the year.

Overall judgements were graded as follows: -

Monument View	- Good
Grasswell House	- Adequate
Sea View Road	- Good

It was confirmed that there were detailed Action Plans in place as a result of the requirements and recommendations made with all Ofsted Inspection reports. In addition, a Children's Homes Improvement Plan had been produced identifying which actions would take place to address some of the common concerns and issues across the City's children's homes.

Copies of the Ofsted inspection reports for Monument View and Grasswell House were attached to the report for Members' information.

Councillor McClennan stated that it was pleasing to see that improvements had been made, however an 'adequate' judgement was not a satisfactory judgement and that it evidenced that there was still work to be done.

Daniel Bensley reported that sometimes an 'adequate' judgement was not accurate.

Sharon Willis clarified that 'good' meant that the children's home was exceeding so that was infact a very good result for Sunderland. Grasswell House had remained 'adequate' for every judgement area and this was due to issues concerning partners rather than the home itself.

17. RESOLVED to note the report.

(Signed) P. Smith  
Chairman.

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**2 February 2015**

**CHILDREN'S HOMES: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (2014) SUNDERLAND**

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES**

1. During 1 April to 30 April 2014, Ofsted carried out an online questionnaire nationally with children and young people placed in children's homes. Ofsted sought the views of users and key stakeholders in Sunderland Children's Services.

The findings from the questionnaire helped to inform Ofsted of any future inspections of these services. Children and young people completed a multiple choice questionnaire. Any written comments from children and young people were not included to ensure anonymity.

2. The children's home summary is an amalgamation of all the responses from children and young people living in Sunderland's children's homes. This includes children and young people living in children's home provided by other local authorities or private and voluntary providers.
3. The summary report will be shared with Sunderland's children's home staff and the Independent Reviewing Officers to enable them to monitor practice through the audit and statutory review process. This will enable the Strategic Service Manager to monitor the outcomes for children and young people. The Commissioning Team will forward the Ofsted summary report to the local authorities who have placed their children and young people in Sunderland City Council.
4. Some of the overall indicators in the report show the following:
  - 71% of children and young people feel safe living in the City
  - Children and young people feel that 79% of their cultural and 71% religious belief are respected and supported
  - 63% of children and young people said that staff helped them to deal with things they are worried about
  - 63 % children and young people who go missing felt that staff welcome them back and help them understand why this happened
  - 15% children and young people were not supported to understand why they could not live with their families
  - 75 % children and young people are supported with preparing for independence
5. Children's Services have implemented a work plan to support children and young people living in Sunderland City Council children's home. This

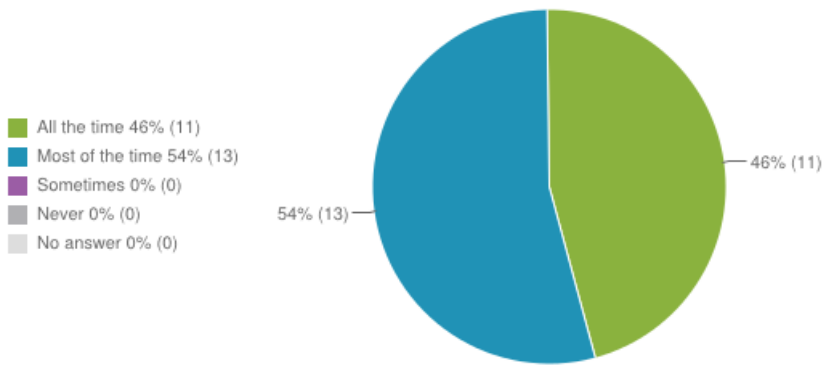
includes, anti-bullying training and the renewal of the children's home Anti Bullying Charter Mark, roll out the Total Respect Training, Back 2 Basic workshop for staff, Young Inspectors inspection, Exit Placement Interviews, Life History/Memory Box, Getting 2 Good Meetings ,introduction of the Family Group Conference, reunification plans and "My Plan".

Shirley Gounder (Interim Deputy Head of Children's Safeguarding)

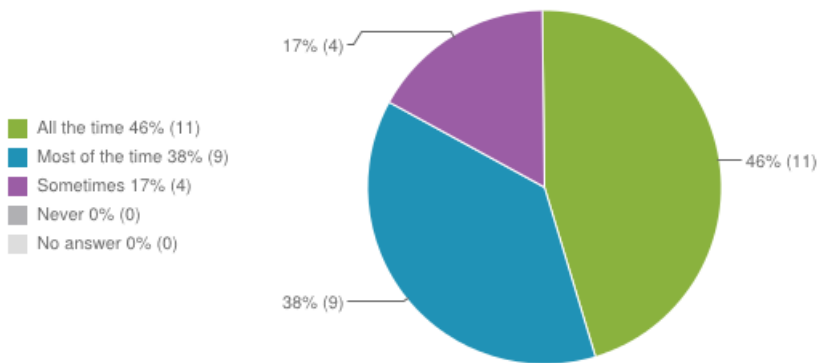
Sunderland City Council



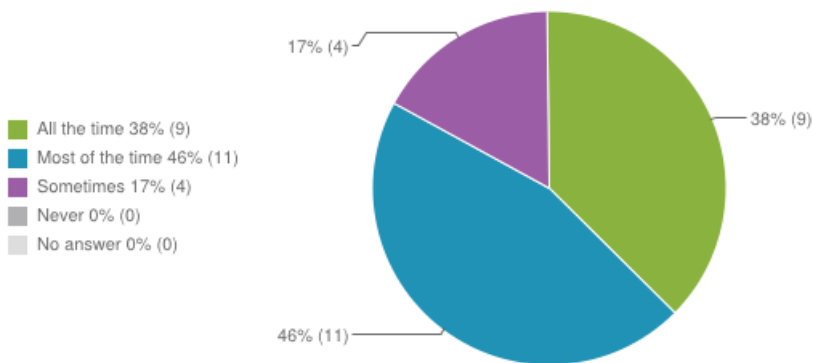
**1 The care and support I get from staff at my children's home is very good**



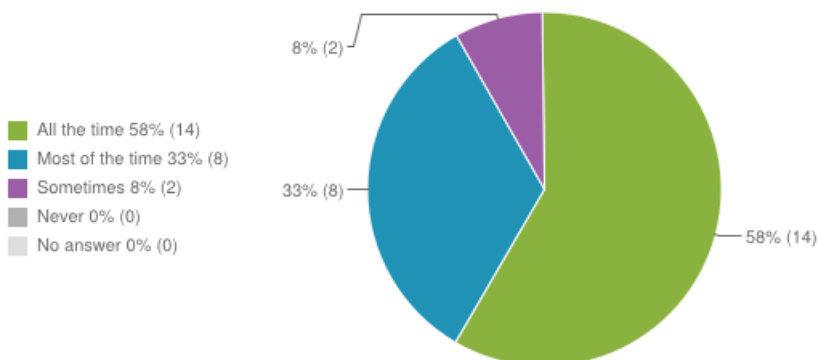
**2 Staff spend time with me when I am at home**



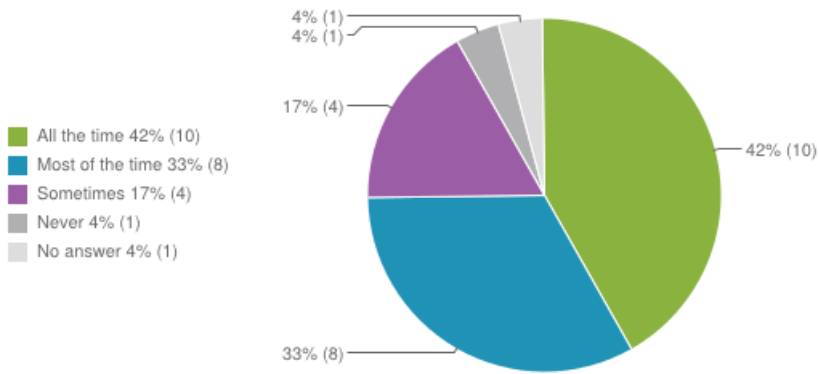
**3 Staff help me to feel good about myself**



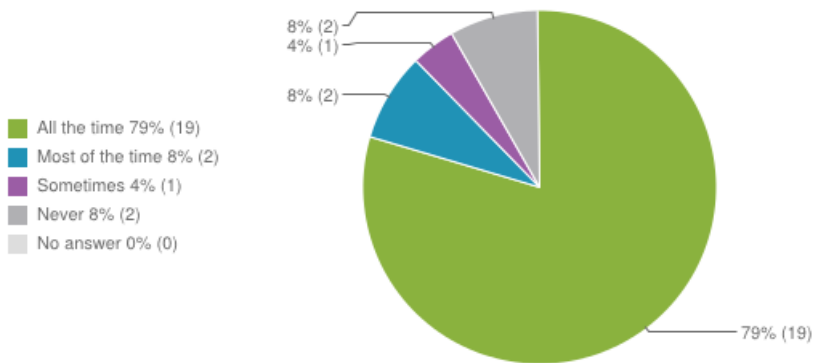
**4 Staff listen to what I have to say**



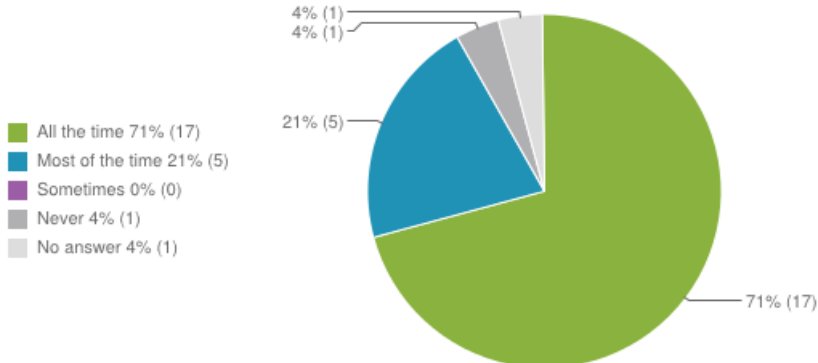
**5 Staff make changes to my care because of what I say or explain to me why this cannot happen**



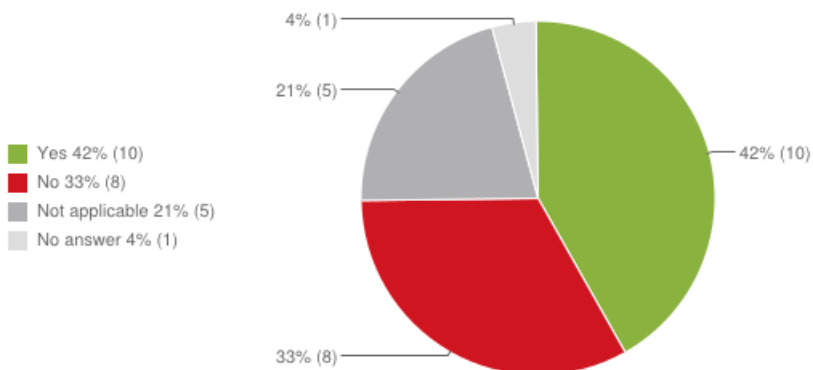
**6 My culture is respected and supported**



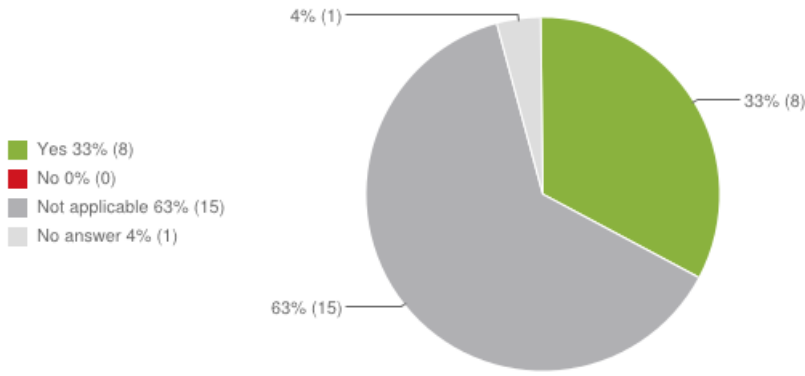
**7 My religious beliefs are respected and supported**



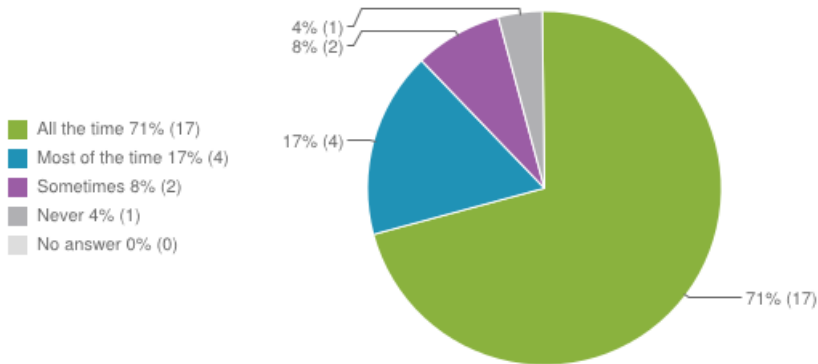
**8 I was able to find out lots of useful things about the children's home before I moved in**



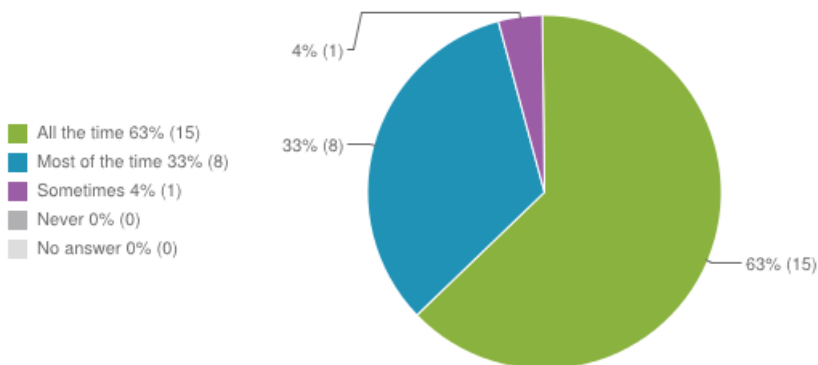
### 9 Staff helped me when I was bullied



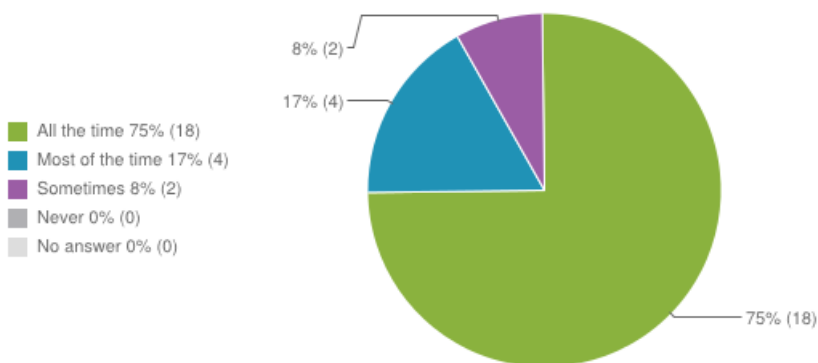
### 10 I feel safe at the children's home



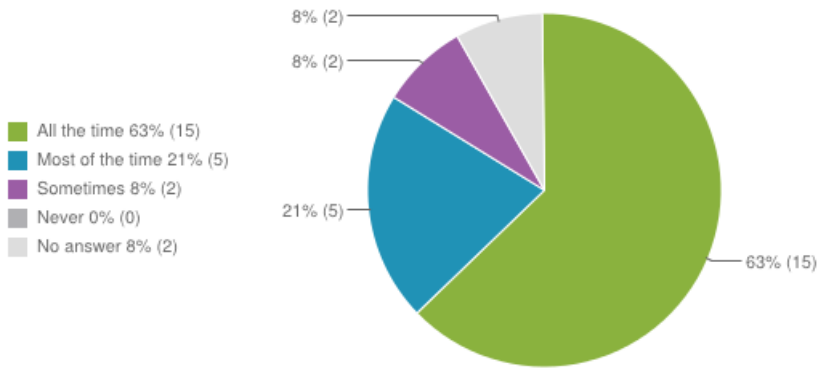
### 11 Staff help me to deal with things that I worry about



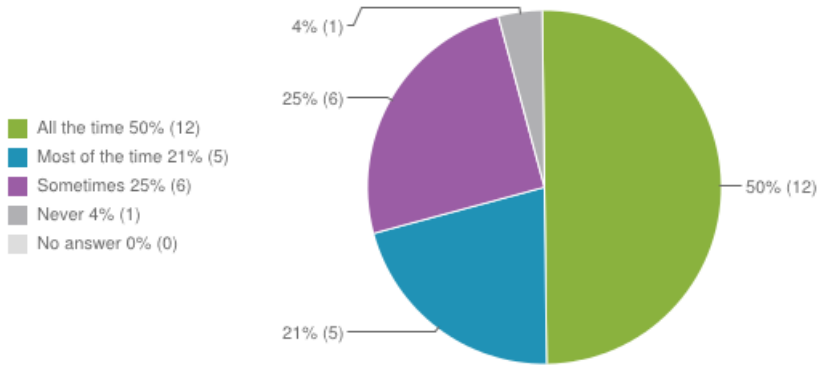
### 12 I take part in activities I like



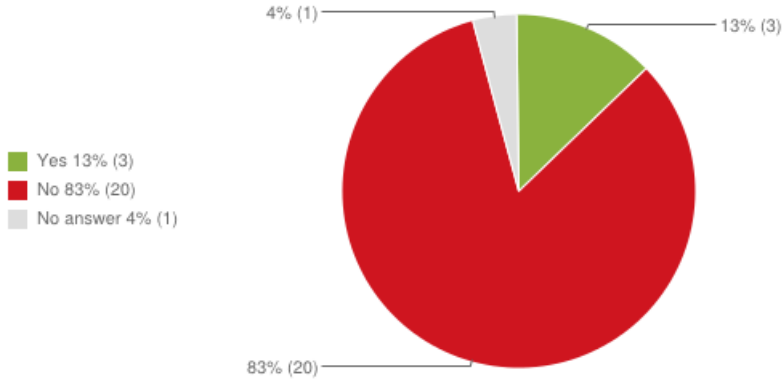
**13 If I go missing, I am welcomed back by staff who try to understand why this happened**



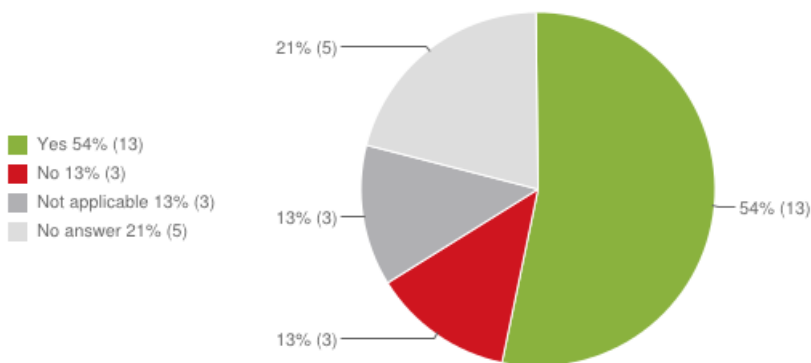
**14 I have a say about how the home is run**



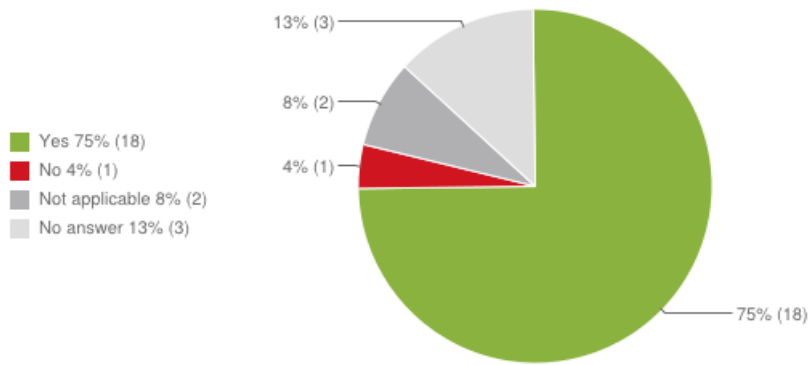
**15 Do you get a short breaks service (respite care)?**



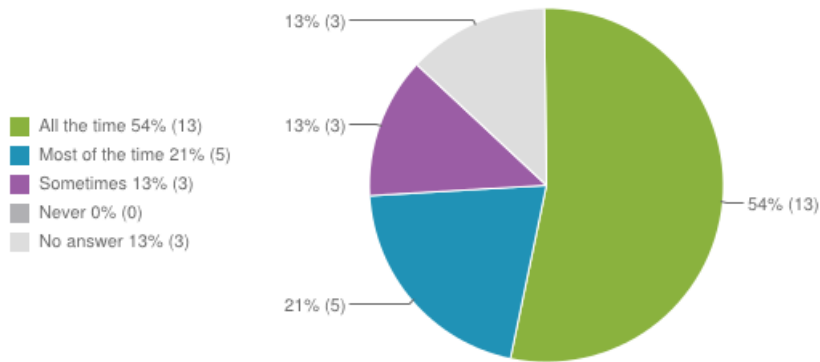
**16 Staff help me to understand what has happened to me and why I am not able to live with my family**



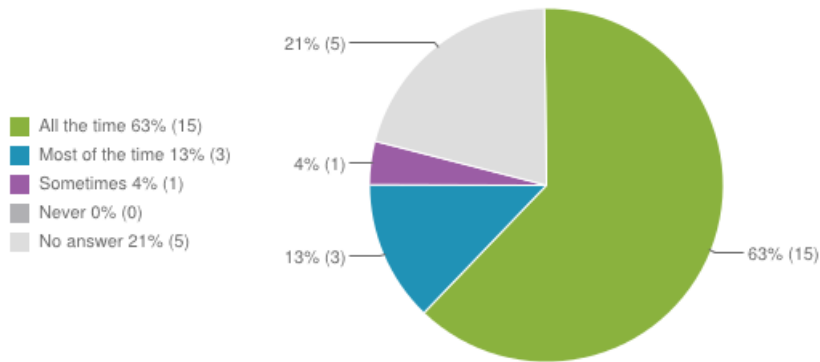
**17 Staff help me to prepare for when I will live independently. Things like paying bills, cooking and keeping a house clean**



**18 I am doing well at school, college, university, in home education or another place that provides education, such as a pupil referral unit**



**19 Staff help me to manage my behaviour if it is getting me into trouble**





**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**2 February 2015**

**OFSTED REPORTS OF CHILDREN'S HOMES 2014**

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES**

**1 Why has this report come to the Committee**

- 1.1 In their role as corporate parents, members need to be informed of the outcomes of Ofsted inspections of the City's children's homes.

**2 Ofsted Inspections of Children's Homes**

- 2.1 Children's Homes receive two unannounced inspections per year, the inspection year running from April to March. The first is a full or key inspection, and the second an interim or monitoring inspection.
- 2.2 At the time of this report, all of the Children's Homes have had their full inspections and Grasswell House has had its interim inspection.
- 2.3 This report will cover those inspection reports that have been received since the last meeting of the Board.

Colombo Road was inspected on 29.7.14. This was a full inspection and the report is attached.

Revelstoke Road was inspected on 15.9.14. This was a full inspection and the report is attached.

Grasswell House was inspected on 29.10.14. This was an interim inspection and the report is attached.

- 2.4 Colombo Road. Inspected on 29.7.14

<b>Judgement area</b>	<b>Judgement grade</b>
Quality of care	Good
Keeping Children and Young People Safe	Good
Outcomes for Children and Young People	Good
Leadership and Management	Good
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>

- 2.5 Revelstoke Road. Inspected on 15.9.14

<b>Judgement area</b>	<b>Judgement grade</b>
Quality of care	Good
Keeping Children and Young People Safe	Good
Outcomes for Children and Young People	Good
Leadership and Management	Good
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>

2.6 Grasswell House. Inspected on 29.10.14

Judgement: Declined in effectiveness.

### **3 Action Plans**

3.1 Each home provides a detailed action plan for Ofsted outlining the actions they have undertaken or will undertake as a result of statutory requirements and recommendations made. Progress with regards to these actions are monitored by Ofsted at their next inspection.

### **4 Background papers**

4.1 The detailed Ofsted inspection reports for Colombo Road, Revelstoke Road and Grasswell House are attached.

4.2 Further details can be obtained from Strategic Service Manager, Lynne Goldsmith.

Contact Officer: Sharon Willis,  
Operational Manager for Children's Homes  
0191 553 5443  
Sharon.willis@sunderland.gov.uk



## Colombo Road

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC032725
<b>Inspector</b>	Bill Drumm
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Setting address</b>	7 Colombo Road, Hylton Castle, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR5 3SD
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 553 5443 or 5 (RM)
<b>Email</b>	michael.more@sunderland.gov.uk
<b>Registered person</b>	Sunderland City Council
<b>Registered person address</b>	Sunderland City Council PO Box 102 SUNDERLAND SR2 7DN
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Fiona Brown
<b>Registered manager</b>	Sharon Morag Willis / Michael Patrick More
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	09/01/2014

# Colombo Road

<b>Inspection date</b>	29/07/2014
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Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>good</b>
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

## Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	<b>good</b>
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The home provides very good levels of care and support to young people, some of whom are very vulnerable and have complex needs. The management of the home is good. The trusting relationships that exist between the management team and staff combine to help keep young people safe from abuse or exploitation. The patience and commitment of staff has helped young people to make very good progress since admission. They continue to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves safe and their self-confidence and self-esteem are improving. The atmosphere within the home is very friendly, warm and relaxed. The young people display a great sense of humour, and are helpful, friendly and polite.

Young people are fully supported to attend school, college or training. Staff have high aspirations for young people. They are committed to ensuring young people attend regularly, take exams and are enabled to follow a chosen career. Young people have access to a wide variety of leisure activities, some of which challenge them physically, improve their awareness of other cultures or provide a recreational break. This helps them to learn new things, to develop their self-confidence and to take pleasure in their achievements.

Where appropriate, contact with friends, family and relatives is actively encouraged. This helps young people to remain in touch with those who are important to them.

Areas identified for improvement relate to: ensuring young people are fully aware of the content of their placement plan; reviewing the content of the children's guide to make sure it can be understood by all young people living at the home; ensuring that all young people who are old enough have a comprehensive pathway plan in place; and the development and review of home's development plan. These have not directly impacted on the safety and welfare of young people.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is provided by a local authority and is registered to care for up to six young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/01/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
17/09/2013	Full	adequate
21/02/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
30/10/2012	Full	good

### What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

#### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the contents of the home's Children's Guide is explained to the young person in a way that is accessible (NMS 13.4)
- ensure that each young person understands, within the level of their understanding, the purpose and content of their plan and the reasoning behind any decisions about their care (NMS 25.1)
- work collaboratively with the young person's social worker or personal adviser developing and implementing a pathway plan for eligible care leavers (NMS 15.1)
- ensure that the home has a development plan in place that is reviewed annually (NMS 15.2)

## **Inspection judgements**

### **Outcomes for children and young people    good**

Young people benefit a great deal from the help, advice and support given to them by staff. Regular discussions between staff and young people help to build positive working relationships based on mutual respect. These relationships help young people to understand more about their backgrounds, how to keep themselves safe and what placement at the home is meant to achieve.

The overall health of young people is improved by living at the home. Young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own health care appointments and to attend for treatment where this is necessary. For some, this is the first time they have received regular and consistent health care oversight. In addition, staff work hard to explain the health risks associated with smoking and drug or alcohol use. As a result, young people now have a good understanding of these risks and are able to make informed choices about things that can affect their health and well-being.

At the time of their admission to the home, young peoples' involvement in education or school is often irregular. Some young people have often had long periods of time outside of the education system and have become disengaged from the education process. Staff have high aspirations for the young people they look after and, as a result of their active support and commitment, all young people now attend education. Some have returned to take exams whilst others have aspirations to attend college and to follow a chosen career.

Where appropriate, young people benefit from clear contact arrangements with significant people in their lives. This helps them to settle into the routine of the home quickly and to enjoy seeing their families and friends. The facilitation of contact is done well. Staff work very hard and proactively with parents, family members and placing social workers to promote positive outcomes. Relationships between young people and those close to them has generally improved since coming to live at the home.

Young people are able to participate in and enjoy a diverse range of activities, hobbies and interests. For example, by going on camping trips, mountain biking, enjoying holidays away and by making their own music. Young peoples' achievements, no matter how small are celebrated. This helps to improve their self-confidence and self-esteem. Young people spoken to said: 'this home is class, the staff are always there for you.'

**Quality of care**

**good**

Young people are looked after by an experienced and caring staff team, and staff are passionate about helping them improve their life chances. One staff member said: 'even when the young people are angry we'll listen to them; we just don't give up.' Young people enjoy warm, caring relationships with staff. One young person said: 'living here is like living with brothers and sisters in a normal family environment.' Another young person said: 'there's been a lot of improvement for me. The staff have helped me control my temper, because it was the first time people had been there to listen to what I had to say.'

The home has some good systems in place for seeking the views of young people about the way the home is run. Staff provide opportunities for group discussions, through regular house meetings, during activities such as mealtimes or whilst on holiday. Each young person also has one-to-one key worker sessions. These regular meetings help young people to focus on important issues such as how to keep themselves safe, as well as helping them understand when they have achieved success. One young person said: 'my key worker has the patience to help me through things.' Notes of these sessions are retained and demonstrate clearly the interactions between staff and young people. This helps to ensure that young people feel fully listened to.

Young people were observed to be friendly, relaxed and confident around staff and visitors. They said they are confident to complain if they need to, and understand how to do so. There has been one complaint at the home since the last inspection. Records show that this complaint was investigated thoroughly and the outcome fed back to the complainant. This helps young people to feel confident about raising any concerns they have and that those concerns will be taken seriously.

Admissions to the home are carefully planned and, where possible, the opinions and welfare of existing residents is fully considered before new young people are introduced into the home. Additionally, and where possible, young people are encouraged to visit the home prior to being admitted. These introductions and visits help the home's manager and staff find out about young people's differences, routines, likes and dislikes prior to admission. Staff have clear written care plans for each young person that outline what their needs are and how they will be met. This helps to ensure that all staff understands the needs of each young person and what services are required to meet those needs. However, placement plans from placing social workers are not always provided in a timely fashion to the home's manager and staff. This means that some aspects of what a placement at the home is meant to achieve may not be fully known by the staff team.

Organised activities, such as mountain biking, camping trips to the home's yurt and learning forest skills help to keep young people fit and healthy. Each young person enjoys a balanced, healthy diet. They are encouraged to become involved in planning, shopping for and cooking meals. One young person who completed a leaver's questionnaire said: 'they prepared me a lot to move on. I learned how to keep a clean and tidy house and to value what I have.' Another young person said:



'working on the life-skills book has helped me with cooking, budgeting and changing plugs.' This means young people are helped to learn daily living skills in a structured manner and are able to build on past success.

Staff support and encourage young people to attend all routine appointments with dentists, doctors and opticians. In addition, and where needed, young people have access to drug and alcohol professionals and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), which promotes their emotional well-being. Arrangements for dealing with day-to-day prescribed medication are safe and all staff have received up-to-date first aid training to help ensure that young people can receive emergency treatment.

The staff are fully committed to ensuring young people's attendance at education improves and that they are fully supported to achieve their maximum potential. One staff member said: 'we had a young person here who was nervous about attending college. We did three dummy runs just to get them to enrol on the course. They eventually did and they managed to achieve a level one.' Another staff member said: 'we have high expectations for our young people. So many other people don't have any expectations for them but we do. We do everything we can to get them to go to school to sit their exams.' A young person who completed a leaver's questionnaire said: 'my education definitely improved because I was encouraged and supported to attend. I found I learned to get on with people better.' Close communication with professionals working in education and the young people themselves helps to ensure they attend school regularly and are able to develop socially as well as academically.

The home is located near to shops, leisure and education opportunities. The interior and exterior of the home are in a very good state of structural and decorative repair. There are several spacious and well-furnished communal areas where young people can relax and enjoy watching television, use the computer or play with music equipment. The home also has a dining area where members of staff and young people enjoy meals together. Young people are encouraged to take a pride in the quality of their living accommodation by helping to keep the home clean and tidy and by personalising their own rooms. There are numerous photographs on the walls that reflect the events and activities that young people have enjoyed with staff, such as trips to the countryside and theme parks. There is an excellent maintenance and repair programme for the building. The garden is well maintained and safe. The home is very clean and there are homely touches throughout.

Young people are able to learn daily living skills. Staff have developed a structured format for learning these skills that records both the starting point of the young person and the progress they are making. This helps to prepare young people for adulthood and independent living. However, not all young people who are old enough have a comprehensive pathway plan written by their social worker in place. Young people may not be fully aware of what the plans are for their future and what services or help they can expect to receive. As a result they will not be fully supported into adulthood.

## **Keeping children and young people safe    good**

Young people spoken to said they feel safe living at the home. Where particular risks are identified, risk assessments are recorded to help the staff understand what action to take to minimise the identified risks. This in turn helps to develop young people's understanding of the reasons why adults are concerned about them. One staff member said: 'we try our best to minimise the risks in everything we do because we want the young people to enjoy as much as they possibly can.' Young people say that they feel cared for.

The home has good safeguarding systems and procedures for staff to follow in the event of any allegation or suspicion of abuse. The manager and staff have received child protection training. Staff are able to demonstrate a very sound knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding procedures to promote and protect young people's safety. As a result, young people are kept safe from potential abuse or exploitation.

There is good written guidance for staff to follow in the event of a young person going missing, and there is evidence that the frequency with which children and young people go missing is minimised. Young people who do go missing are supported to understand the risk they put themselves at and the harm they might face. Where young people regularly go missing the home's manager and staff are proactive in arranging strategy meetings with the local police and social workers. During these meetings options are discussed and strategies considered that can be used to help the young person change their behaviour. Partnership working in this manner helps to promote the welfare of young people and to keep them safe.

Sanctions are rarely used at the home to help young people modify their behaviour. When they are used they are relevant and reflect the age and understanding of the young person concerned. Any sanctions imposed are reviewed regularly for appropriateness and effectiveness. Behaviour management plans are used which contain details for staff to follow when managing young people's behaviour. It is very rare that physical restraint is used to manage behaviour at the home. Staff are fully trained in the appropriate and safe use of restraint and de-escalation techniques, and this training is kept up-to-date. Record keeping is good and is regularly monitored by the home's manager and independent visitor. One young person said: 'every member of staff has had a positive impact on me; they are all mint.' Another young person said: 'my key-worker helped me to understand my emotions, which has helped me to calm down.' Regular monitoring of written records helps to identify patterns or trends that can be used to support young people further in managing their behaviour.

Regular fire safety checks, general checks and maintenance arrangements ensure the home is physically safe and is kept safe. All staff have received up-to-date fire safety training to enable them to minimise the risks to young people in the event of a fire at



the home.

All staff are appropriately recruited and undergo suitable checks to ensure that they are safe to work with young people. This helps to protect young people from potential abuse or exploitation.

### **Leadership and management**

**good**

The home has two Registered Managers who job share. One has been registered since June 2010 and the other since February 2013. Both have the appropriate experience to be a Registered Manager of a children's home as well as holding a suitable management qualification.

The home has a Statement of Purpose which is made available to all relevant parties to inform them about how care is provided at the home. The Statement of Purpose is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up to date and accurate. Additionally, the home has an up to date children's guide. The children's guide is both informative and colourful. However, the guide is presented in one particular format and is not written in plain English. This means that young people who experience difficulties with their literacy may not be fully aware of what the home offers, what their rights are and how they can be fully safeguarded.

The staff team is passionate about improving the life chances of the young people in their care. They have the skills and competencies necessary to meet the complex and challenging needs of the young people living at the home. One staff member said, 'a lot of our job is about creating safety and good memories for young people.' Management support and supervision are described as 'really good.' One member of staff said: 'when we have an incident we have a de-briefing. We're confident that if we're feeling stressed we can offload our shift on the manager and he'll listen, which is good.'

The young people are cared for by a staff team that are appropriately trained to meet their needs. All staff receive training in a wide variety of safety and childcare subjects. An ongoing programme of regular refresher training is provided to enhance the staff team's competency and to ensure they retain the skills necessary to meet the needs of the young people.

The home's manager has systems in place to regularly monitor practice and evaluate the administration of the home. The monitoring systems are supported by unannounced visits from a person independent of the home. One staff member said: 'this monitoring is really good; it helps us to improve the quality of care and we look at it as positive support. It's like getting a third pair of eyes looking at a situation from outside.'

The home's manager also has a development plan in place. The home's development

plan does not include specific deadlines for meeting targets or review dates to help monitor progress. This means that proposed developments within the home may not be robustly pursued.

## What inspection judgements mean

### Judgement Description

Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

## Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.

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# Revelstoke Road

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC032715
<b>Inspector</b>	Bill Drumm
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Setting address</b>	18 Revelstoke Road, SUNDERLAND, SR5 5EP
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<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 553 5435
<b>Email</b>	william.anderson@sunderland.gov.uk
<b>Registered person</b>	Sunderland City Council
<b>Registered person address</b>	Sunderland City Council PO Box 102 SUNDERLAND SR2 7DN

<b>Responsible individual</b>	Fiona Brown
<b>Registered manager</b>	Mark Alan Christie
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	13/01/2014

# Revelstoke Road

<b>Inspection date</b>	15/09/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>good</b>
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

## Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	<b>good</b>
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The home provides good levels of care and support to young people who have complex needs and can sometimes display challenging behaviour. The home's management team provides consistent leadership and support to an experienced and committed staff team. This combination of consistency and experience helps young people to live in a safe, secure and supportive environment. Consequently, young people have made, and continue to make, good progress since their admission.

Through the active support of all staff, all young people have completed their formal education and have undertaken exams before leaving school. They are all now engaged in further education or training. Staff have high aspirations for the young people in their care and offer daily encouragement to continue with their education or training. This helps to motivate them to achieve their full potential and to have the best possible life chances. One young person said, 'I really enjoy living here. I've really made progress and now I have a career to follow. I can talk to all the staff and I know they'll listen, I know they'll help me and will always be there for me.'

Additionally, young people have developed an understanding of their own health care needs and how to keep themselves safe. They are encouraged to understand how their behaviour impacts upon others and to take responsibility for their actions.

The atmosphere within the home is warm, caring and relaxed. Generally, young people are both friendly and polite.

Young people are able to enjoy a range of activities, from visits to famous landmarks to different sporting challenges. Participating in new activities provides them with opportunities to enjoy new experiences and to take pleasure in their achievements. This in turn helps to build their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Areas identified for improvement relate to: the accurate recording of all medication dispensed to young people, the home's missing from home procedures and the young people's guide. None of these currently affect the welfare or safety of young people.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is provided by a local authority and is registered to care for up to six young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/01/2014	Interim	good progress
15/05/2013	Full	adequate
19/02/2013	Interim	inadequate progress
04/07/2012	Full	adequate

### What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

#### Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
11 (2001)	ensure that any medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed. (Regulation 11 (1)(b))	28/11/2014

#### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the home's procedures for reporting when a child is missing from the home are compatible with, and have regard to Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols and procedures



maintained and managed by the police or by the local authority for the area where the home is located (NMS 5.6)

- ensure that the young people's guide to the home is available when appropriate through suitable alternative methods of communication. (NMS 13.6)

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people living at the home make good progress. Their self-confidence and self-esteem increases and they become more emotionally resilient. One young person's social worker said, 'My young person has a good relationship with members of staff and he's really 'bought into' the provision.' Additionally, one young person said, 'I get on well with all the staff they've helped me so much. As for the other young people, we sometimes fall out but it's never anything really serious. Anyway, I can always take myself off to my room if I want to be alone and away from it all.' Young people have developed strong relationships with the staff team. They have learned how to relate to one another in a positive manner and to tolerate each other's shortcomings.

The physical and emotional health of young people improves while they are at the home. All young people have access to primary health care services as well as any specialist support services they may require, for instance drug and alcohol advisers or mental health support services. Young people have developed the confidence to arrange and attend their own health care appointments and to accept prescribed treatment or advice. This is something they may have refused or been unable to do previously.

Despite some young people having inconsistent school attendance in the past, they have all made good progress in their education. All have completed their formal education and have returned to take exams. Additionally, all are now either enrolled into college, attending training schemes or have secured full-time employment opportunities. Young people's motivation to succeed improves while they live at the home. Staff offer on-going help, support and encouragement. As a direct result of this, young people make good progress from their starting points at the time of their admission, which in turn helps to improve their life chances.

Young people are fully involved in their own care. One member of staff said, 'We try and involve the young people in all the decisions about their care. Sometimes that's a bit difficult but we do persevere and encourage them.' Additionally, one young person said, 'Staff listen to what I have to say. They've helped me to get where I am today and I'll always be grateful for that.' The excellent relationships young people have with staff members, who understand them well, means that young people are central to all decisions made in the home.

Where appropriate, young people benefit from positive contact with their relatives, friends and families. They receive very good support to ensure that contact is both maintained and a positive experience for them. This helps young people retain links with those who are important to them and to build on existing relationships.

## Quality of care

good

The environment within the home is both warm and relaxed. Staff adopt a patient and calm approach to looking after young people, who can sometimes display challenging behaviour. This approach is non-threatening and allows young people to feel comfortable in their surroundings. The parent of one young person said, 'The home's really clean, the staff are brilliant and they do a really good job.' Each young person has an effective care plan in place that highlights their individual needs and how they are to be met. Care plans are underpinned by clear risk assessments. Effective care plans and good risk assessments help staff to understand the needs of the young people in their care and to minimise any risks they might face in their daily lives. One young person's social worker said, 'Where possible, staff put in place relevant risk management strategies. I am sure my young person is safe and well supported.' Young people living at the home are clear about what is expected of them, how they can be helped and what living at the home is meant to achieve.

Staff regularly monitor and review the care they provide to young people. This enables them to evaluate the strategies they use to help young people overcome their specific difficulties in a pro-active manner. One young person's social worker said, 'staff regularly contact me to discuss my young person's care and how they want to try different approaches to helping them.' Written records of all statutory reviews and care team meetings are available within the home. The changing needs of young people are met in a prompt and timely fashion.

Young people's files are detailed and well ordered. Written information retained within the home provides an extensive record of each young person's life there as well as the help and support carried out by staff. Young people enjoy open and honest dialogue with staff and are able to discuss how the home is run as well as helping to identify any improvements that can be made. One young person said, 'We're always talking about things and I know I get listened to.' One staff member said, 'Every effort is made to involve the young people in decision making.' Staff actively promote each young person's rights and ensure they are able to participate in a wide range of activities. This helps young people to develop their confidence and self-esteem.

Where possible, admissions to the home are well planned and young people have the opportunity to visit prior to moving in. However, in some circumstances this is not always possible. Where this is the case, staff make every effort to consult with the existing residents about any new admissions and to make the new young person feel welcome. Staff are committed to ensuring each young person enjoys a positive experience while living at the home and that they are fully supported to overcome their difficulties. One member of staff said, 'We want what's best for the young people here. We try to involve them in everything we possibly can.' The support given by staff helps young people to overcome any anxieties they may have.

Young people enjoy living in an urban area. Each young person has their own

bedroom and they are encouraged to make them as comfortable and personal as possible. Young people have access to a computer and computer gaming equipment. There is a television in the lounge where young people can relax. The home also has a dining area where members of staff and young people can socialise and enjoy a meal together. Overall, the home provides a comfortable, pleasant and well maintained environment for young people to enjoy.

Young people are encouraged to enjoy a healthy lifestyle, to eat well and to take regular exercise. Some young people have been prescribed medication by their doctor to help moderate their mood and behaviour. Written records show that, in some cases, the young person has refused to take the prescribed dose on a regular basis. Staff at the home have recorded these occasions fully. However, the relevant doctor has not been kept informed of the young person's actions, particularly where this has occurred for several weeks. This means that the medication may not have the desired effect for which it has been prescribed and the doctor is not able to consider alternative treatment.

Staff encourage young people to become more independent and to undertake activities for daily living. The home has an organised training package in place that young people can follow. This helps to prepare young people for independent living and adulthood.

### **Keeping children and young people safe    good**

The home has clear systems in place that help to promote and safeguard the welfare of young people. One young person said, 'This is my home, of course I feel safe' and the parent of one young person said, 'I'm very happy where my child is.' There have been several occasions since the last inspection when a young person has been reported as missing even though their whereabouts have been known. Written records show that staff have acted very quickly in confirming the location of the young person concerned and in determining who they are with. However, reporting them missing when their whereabouts are known is not in line with the local, Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols and procedures. Reporting a young person as missing from home means the Police have to visit the home to check on the young person's welfare once they have returned. The unnecessary involvement of the Police in this manner may result in the young person, and the home, becoming stigmatised.

There have been no incidents of bullying reported in the home since the last inspection. One young person said, 'Staff are really good at making us feel safe and dealing with any arguments quickly. They wouldn't let bullying happen.' All members of staff are fully trained in safeguarding and receive refresher training to keep their skills and knowledge up to date. This helps to ensure they are all confident and competent in dealing with any safeguarding issues should they arise.



member said, 'We discuss things at staff meetings and at handovers to work out what works best. I feel confident in my practice and if there was anything I was not sure of I have good support systems that I can use within the home.' As a result, staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the needs of the young people in their care.

The home's manager and senior staff have demonstrated a capacity for, and commitment to, further improvement. Requirements and recommendations raised at the previous inspection have been fully met. Additionally, the manager has a development plan in place for the home. The manager and staff know what the strengths and weaknesses of the home are and what improvements they wish to make.

The local authority demonstrates a commitment to staff development by ensuring their training is kept up to date. This helps to ensure staff members retain the skills and competencies they have and encourages them to develop new ones.

The home's manager has systems in place to ensure that the quality of care is regularly monitored. Problem areas which may be identified are quickly highlighted and swift action is taken. Monitoring visits from someone independent of the home take place every month. The person undertaking these visits talks, where possible, to staff and young people. In addition, and where possible, the independent visitor also talks to the parents or relatives of young people. These visits help to ensure that the home is run properly and that young people are well cared for.



## What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
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Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
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Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
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Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
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Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.
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## Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.

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# Grasswell House

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC062644
<b>Inspector</b>	Vicky Johnson
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Interim
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Setting address</b>	Grasswell House, Blind Lane, HOUGHTON le SPRING, Tyne and Wear, DH4 5HX
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 553 6340 (6341)
<b>Email</b>	sue.metcalfe@sunderland.gov.uk
<b>Registered person</b>	Sunderland City Council
<b>Registered person address</b>	Sunderland City Council PO Box 102 SUNDERLAND SR2 7DN
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Fiona Brown
<b>Registered manager</b>	Suzanne Metcalfe
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	30/06/2014

# Grasswell House

Inspection date	29/10/2014
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since last inspection.

## This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **declined in effectiveness**.

The home's overall effectiveness at the last inspection in June 2014 was judged to be adequate. The Registered Manager has addressed some of the statutory requirements and recommendations made at that inspection, developing some areas of practice. The home's statement of purpose now accurately describes its role and function to provide emergency and short-term care for young people. This guarantees that placing social workers, parents and young people are clear about the home's remit and the timescale that a young person may stay there. It also clarifies the staff's role to assist and prepare young people to move to different placements or return home within an agreed timeframe.

Staff records now reflect the training they have completed. The home's development plan is also more detailed. This includes a review period and timescales for specific areas of developmental work such as appraisals, supervision, eLearning training and key working sessions. Following the revised developmental plan, the Registered Manager took steps to change the management arrangements for supervision. This was implemented to enhance managerial oversight of training needs and provide better scrutiny of staff recording practice.

On admission, there are now clear written records in place of young people's valuables and belongings. In addition, the home took further action to provide the young people with a 'Keeping your property safe' guide. This information highlights the help available from staff should they have problems with the safety of their belongings while living in the home. This ensures young people are aware of the support on offer and reduces the possibility of conflict arising between young people if problems do arise.

The derelict building close to the home is scheduled for demolition in the near

future. Along with senior management, the Registered Manager made enquiries to attempt to progress this action. Since the last inspection, young people have not ventured near the building and there are no reported incidences of anti-social behaviour from community members.

Some young people feel they are making progress while living at the home. Their risk taking has reduced and they have become more reflective about their behaviour. One young person said, 'I don't do drugs anymore' and 'I'm nicer, more polite than I was'. Young people also speak positively about the relationships they have developed with staff. One young person said, 'I'm settled here and close with all the staff'. Another commented they have, 'all got respect for us and I have with them'. The Leavers Questionnaires introduced by the Registered Manager following the last inspection endorse these comments. Some young people clearly feel they have benefitted from living in the home; learning to better manage their behaviour and become more mature. When asked about how the home had helped, one young person wrote, they 'feel more grown up'.

Shortfalls in the quality of documentation, including comprehensive risk assessments, combined with an inadequate admissions process is having an impact on the home's ability to improve. Some of the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection have not been met and additional requirements have been made.

The home recently changed its function from an assessment unit to provide emergency care for young people. Young people who have complex needs and behaviours are frequently admitted to the home, often at very short notice. Since the last inspection, the home has cared for fourteen young people. Staff need to be fully informed about their needs and the level of risk they are required to manage. While social workers provide information at the point of placement, this does not include sufficient detail for the staff to manage specific behaviours. Staff confirm the quality of the information provided continues to be brief and unclear.

The home lacks a formal admission process where individual risks factors for each young person are adequately assessed. Evaluation of referrals and acceptance of admissions does not give due weight to the views of the Registered Manager and staff. The home also accepts young people with social workers' risk assessments that are not always up to date. Moreover, staff do not compile their own risk assessments prior to admission. The home therefore does not effectively consider the impact of the behaviour and character of the prospective young people upon those currently living there. This lack of adequate consideration increases the risk of harm to young people and reduces the likelihood of good outcomes. It also has the potential to make their experience of living there less fulfilling and positive.

The home updated their risk assessment format following the last inspection, but the assessments themselves are not current. Additionally, in one instance where the placement information indicated a young person's behaviour as high risk, the home

had not undertaken a risk assessment or compiled a care plan. This shortcoming impacts upon the staff's capacity to keep the young person and those living within the home safe.

Young people go missing from the home and place themselves at risk whilst living there. Staff take the necessary steps to report them missing to the police, but there is lack of robust and individualised risk assessments to safeguard their welfare. This means individual triggers for behaviours and control measures are absent. In addition, risk assessments do not detail when a young person will be considered as missing from home rather than returning late. These deficits mean that staff responses and recording may not always be consistent. Subsequently, the approach of staff may vary and on occasions not fully address the young person's needs.

There are also shortfalls in recording when young people go missing for longer periods. In one instance, when a young person was missing for a number of days, the missing from home record was incomplete and it was unclear whether a social worker had visited to talk with the young person on their return. The missing from home incident report was also missing from the young person's file. Individual young people are at an increased risk when they go missing. This is due to the absence of clear recording of the actions taken by staff and professionals to ensure the young person's safety and welfare.

Young people report they have someone to talk to should they need support or have a problem. However, the Registered Manager has not taken the necessary steps to improve the way young people are informed of the outcome of individual complaints. As a result, young people may feel that any complaint they raise may remain unresolved.

The updated development plan notes a lack of commitment to supervision by the staff team. Only the Registered Manager has completed the relevant training in supervision and appraisal. There is the potential that staff will not fully appreciate and understand the importance of such arrangements to keep the young people safeguarded. There is also scope for the staff to not fully consider their responsibility to develop their own professional practice in order to meet the young people's needs.

## Information about this children's home

The home is provided by a local authority and is registered to care for up to six young people who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/06/2014	Full	adequate
30/12/2013	Interim	inadequate progress
02/05/2013	Full	adequate
28/01/2013	Interim	good progress

## What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

### Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
9 (2001)	ensure that having regard to the size of the children's home, its statement of purpose, and the number and needs (including any needs arising from any disability) of the children accommodated there, carry on or manage the home (as the case may be) with sufficient care, competence, and skill specifically evaluating referrals and accepting admissions (Regulation 9 (1))	10/12/2014
12B (2001)	prepare in consultation with the child's placing authority a placement plan for the child setting out, in particular how, on a day to day basis, he will be cared for, and his welfare safeguarded and promoted by the home. In particular this means maintaining clear and informative risk assessments, residential placement plans and leaving care plans (Regulation 12(1B)(a))	10/12/2014

24 (2001)	ensure that a written record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response and the outcome of the investigation. (Regulation 24(5))	10/12/2014
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there, specifically that detailed risk assessments are completed, including missing from home, which take account of the impact of any individual child's behaviour on the children and young people living in the home, (Regulation 11(1)(a))	10/12/2014

## Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that each young person's placement is underpinned by an up to date assessment of the young person's needs and family circumstances (Children's Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 5: Children's Homes; paragraph 3.2)
- ensure each child's placement plan is monitored by a key worker within the home who ensures that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of that child (NMS 25.2)
- ensure staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of children and the purpose of the setting, and training keeps them up to date with professional, legal and practice developments, and reflects the policies, legal obligations and business needs to the home, specifically that they undertake supervision and appraisal training (NMS 18.1)
- maintain an up to date record of the recruitment and vetting checks which have been carried out on those working in the children's home. This should include the checks described in this standard. If documents supplied by individual members of staff are not kept on site, the home should maintain an up to date summary confirming that each necessary check has taken place. (NMS 16.3)



## **What inspection judgements mean**

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

## **Information about this inspection**

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