

## **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

### **AGENDA**

**Meeting to be held on Monday 27 September 2021 at 5.30pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Sunderland**

#### **Part I**

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8. **Virtual School – Headteacher’s Report**

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Report of the Headteacher of the Virtual School (copy attached).

ELAINE WAUGH  
Assistant Director of Law and Governance

Civic Centre  
SUNDERLAND

17 September 2021

## **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 28 June 2021 at 4.00pm in the Council Chamber, Sunderland Civic Centre**

### **Present:**

#### **Members of the Board**

Councillor L Farthing (in the Chair)	Washington South Ward
Councillor J Blackburn	Hetton Ward
Councillor C Burnicle	St Chad's Ward
Councillor M Crosby	Sandhill Ward
Councillor J McKeith	St Peter's Ward
Councillor P Smith	Silksworth Ward
Councillor P Tye	Silksworth Ward
Catherine Hearne	Non-Exec Director, Together for Children

#### **All Supporting Officers**

Linda Mason	Headteacher, Virtual School
Wendy Coghlan	Participation and Engagement and Anti-Bullying Team Manager
Nikki Donaldson	Participation and Engagement Officer
Michael O'Brien	Change Council
Jo Morgan	Designated Nurse Looked After Children
Gillian Kelly	Governance Services

#### **In Attendance**

Chris Binding	Sunderland Echo
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#### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Jill Colbert, Gavin Taylor and Keith Munro.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **Minutes**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held remotely on 19 April 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

The Chair referred to the six themes which had been identified by the Regional Children in Care Council and suggested that the Corporate Parenting Board might like to consider one or two of the themes as discussion topics at future Board meetings.

In relation to a question which had been asked about oral health, Jo Morgan advised that 86% of young people known to the looked after health team had been seen by a dentist. If young people were being refused registration then this would be looked at on a case by case basis.

Linda Mason responded to a query raised in the Minutes about the young people accessing early years provision and stated that 57 out of 63 children looked after attended Early Years and the ones who did not tended to be two years old.

Councillor Smith referred to her enquiry about Regulation 44 visits and the Chair commented that it was unlikely that any progress would be made until after Covid regulations were lifted.

## **Change Council Update**

The new format of the Change Council report was tabled for the Board and was presented to Members by Michael. The revised format was based on the Signs of Safety model.

The Change Council had continued to meet face to face secure venue and both the 10-15 and 16+ group were meeting fortnightly.

Together for Children staff had begun to 'change their language' in line with the Change Council's campaign and work continued with partners and staff to embed this.

It had not been possible to have a big launch for the Cookbook due to Government restrictions and two mini celebrations had been held instead. The Next Steps Co-ordinator was using the cookbook when delivering a cooking session to care experienced young people. Unfortunately there were not many kitchen facilities available and the Change Council would like to extend this provision.

The Change Council had started to develop an introductory training workshop to be delivered to the Corporate Parenting Board alongside Tracy Jelfs. These sessions were to be delivered from July onwards and the training offer for Members and corporate parents would continue to be developed.

A meeting had been held with Gentoo to discuss issues raised by care experienced young people. The Change Council had yet to receive feedback on this, however

Gentoo were now meeting regularly with Next Steps to discuss issues and requirements for the young people living independently.

Change Council members had been taking part in a research project looking at the impact of Covid-19 on cared for children and information would be collated from different areas and shared with local authorities.

Members of the Change Council had continued to attend regional meetings virtually and a survey had been circulated for cared for and care experienced young people to vote on their top two issues. 59 young people from Sunderland had completed the survey and the results would provide the top two issues for the regional group to focus on. The Change Council had also been involved in the Culture House consultation and had commissioned thank you packs for foster carers for Foster Care Fortnight.

The planned work for July to September was as follows: -

- Launch the Change the Language campaign
- Create a training package to be rolled out to education about what it is like to be a cared for young person as it was felt that schools make presumptions and they want to break these barriers down.
- Engage young people in enriching holiday activities to celebrate their hard work and increase engagement.
- Corporate Parenting introduction training
- Young people to support the development of the corporate parenting strategy.

The Chair thanked Michael for presenting the report and accordingly it was: -

2. RESOLVED that the Change Council update be noted.

## **Health of Cared for Children**

The Designated Nurse for Looked After Children submitted a report providing an update on health activity for looked after children.

The purpose of the report was to: -

- Demonstrate the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children looked after
- Assure the Corporate Parenting Board that support and health services to children looked after were provided without undue delay or geographical prejudice
- Demonstrate the aim of the Looked After Health team for sustained improvement in the health and wellbeing of children looked after and care leavers
- Assure that the child's voice around health was included wherever possible
- Report on compliance with statutory targets from the Looked After Health Team for South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust

The data being presented was for Quarter 4, January, February and March 2021 and the Board were advised that the health team had recommenced face to face health assessments in April 2021. The team had had a number of cancelled appointments due to young people isolating but this was being managed well. 55% of young people were seen face to face over the pandemic period April 2020 to March 2021.

There had been an average of 625 children cared for in quarter 4 which was a slight decrease from the previous quarter and represented 106 children per 10,000. This remained higher than the national average.

73 Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) had been carried out and there had been 86% compliance in the quarter and an average of 93% compliance over the year. No young people had refused IHAs throughout the year and there had been a steady rise in requests for assessments as the year progressed.

185 Review Health Assessments had been carried out in the quarter and this was 99% compliance with timescales; the yearly average was also 99%. Only four young people had their health assessment out of timescales during the year and 11 young people had refused.

There had been three out of area IHAs and ten RHAs required during the period, however performance had dipped in this area and only one of the IHAs and five RHAs had been completed within timescale. The main reason for the drop in compliance was lack of capacity in out of area health teams.

There was a quality assurance pathway in place for out of area health assessments and an audit had been completed to provide assurance that the health needs of young people placed out of area were being met. Nursing staff now shared a 'Medical Summary' when a child or young person moved out of the area to ensure that all health needs would be met without delay.

Nine Health Passports had been issued during the quarter which represented 100% compliance. The passport was a summary of all health records during the period when a young person was cared for and all young people were offered a health passport at their last health assessment. Jo Morgan advised that the team had applied for funding through the Integrated Care System to create an app for the passport and also to include health promotion information. This was in the early stages of development but it would sit within the NHS app so would be secure.

Dr Mills would shortly be going on maternity leave and Dr Emma Cadamy would be taking on some of her role during this period. The medical team were conducting an in-house audit of health assessments to identify areas of good practice and improvement.

The priorities for 2021/2022 were: -

- The Looked After Team would review the evidence and implement an agreed screening tool to assess children and young people's emotional wellbeing/mental health at each health assessment;

- The co-production and engagement of young people in service delivery and transformation and consider other alternative modes of communication with children and young people in completing health assessments;
- The Looked After Team would review regional and national best practice in completing health passports in an aligned approach; and
- The ACP trainee would be supported through the second year. A framework of supervised practice and governance would be developed to enable transition and independent practice once qualified.

Councillor Tye asked if there were statutory compliance targets in relation to health assessments and who would be responsible for corrective actions if the targets were not met.

Jo advised that the Looked After Health team reported to the Compliance Board at the CCG and issues around non-compliance had not really been related to the team's performance but more about Covid isolation for young people and their families.

Councillor Crosby noted that no young person had refused an Initial Health Assessment but there was reference to a refusal pathway if they did. Jo explained that a questionnaire was sent to the young person and carer to ask if they could complete a Health Care Plan if they refused an IHA. If an RHA was refused then the team would make sure that the young person's needs were being met and that their social worker and carer were aware of the position.

Having considered the report, it was: -

3. RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

### **Update on the Regional Adoption Agency, Adopt Coast to Coast**

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

### **Children's Independent Reviewing Service – Annual Report**

The Board received the Annual Report of the Children's Reviewing Service for April 2020 to March 2021.

Unfortunately no one from the Children's Independent Review Service was able to attend the meeting and the Chair directed Members to the highlight summary of the report beginning on page 18 of the agenda pack. She advised that she regularly met with the IRO Manager in her role as lead member for Children, Learning and Skills.

The annual report provided an overview of the work undertaken by the service in relation to child protection and cared for children, highlighted what was working well, what there were concerns about and what the priorities were for the next 12 months.

The report outlined the role of the IRO and that their primary responsibilities were: -

- Review and scrutinise care plans to ensure they are legally compliant and in the best interests of the children.
- Chair children cared for reviews.
- Ensure that the voice of the child is heard and given appropriate weight within care planning.
- Promote corporate parenting to enable positive outcomes for children in the cared for system.
- Chair placement order and adoptive placements, ensuring they are appropriate to the child's needs.
- Provide a quality assurance and scrutiny function, and where appropriate challenge to Children's Social Care in relation to practice.

The report provided further detail about the role of Conference Chairs and case studies which demonstrated the impact of the work of the IRO service. The voices of children played a key role in influencing the work and provided a vital grounding and reality check as to how things were working in practice. In 2021/2022 it was planned to: -

- Extend invitations to Regional Children in Care Councils so that the child voice will be heard at the proposed IRO conference in 2022 and influence regional practice.
- Look to develop practice so that the voice of the child is captured during our tracking discussions by them being contacted by their IRO following the tracking discussion with their social worker.
- Explore more clear options for children in how their cared for reviews can be held with the aim of seeking to improve the number of children chairing their own reviews.
- Think creatively of ways to influence Care Plans and Pathway Plans so they are clear, accessible, and understood by children and adults.
- Review child participation in child protection conferences with the aim of seeking to improve children's engagement when considered appropriate.

Full details of the performance of the team were set out in the report and the Chair noted that the service should be congratulated on their figures with regard to the timeliness of child protection conferences.

The Dispute Resolution Procedure had been reviewed in 2020/2021 and there had been 112 raised within the year, a reduction from 159 in the previous year. The numbers had reduced due to the positive impact of a more stable Social Care workforce.

The report concluded with the service's priorities for 2021/2022 as follows: -

- Move towards having two teams; 'Cared for' and 'Child Protection' to further strengthen skills and practice for children.
- In line with the government 'roadmap out of lockdown', engage in more face to face meetings with children and their families to ensure the child is at the centre of practice and to support each other in our shared understanding of the needs of individual children.



- Embed newly developed engagement tools to encourage children to contribute their views, wishes and feelings in their reviews.
- Establish meaningful options for children to help chair their cared for reviews.
- Evolve practice to support and empower survivors of domestic abuse through the delivery of child protection conferences and reviews.
- Strengthen how plans were recorded so that they were SMART to help parents, carers and professionals understand clearly what is required to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.
- Continue to embed signs of safety/ success into our day to day practice.
- Continue to work with Social Care and partners to explore different ways of working with teenagers.
- Use performance data more intelligently to produce greater insight and evidence regarding the impact that our work is having on children.
- Further improve the quality of recording so that the impact of work was fully demonstrated from the child's perspective.
- Continue to work with agencies and social care to improve the timeliness of child protection conference reports.
- Use the position as conference chairs/IROs within the wider Together for Children agenda to help to improve practice and outcomes for children.
- Seek to strengthen how the service could impact upon more timely decisions regarding permanence at the second review.

Councillor Smith referred to the service liaising with local partners and asked how this was going with the Liquid Logic Operational Group. She also noted that the number of children subject to a plan under the category of emotional abuse had increased. The Chair commented that 'Neglect' was a catch all category and could be changed to 'Emotional Abuse' when more information was obtained and this was part of the more therapeutic approach which was being adopted.

4. RESOLVED that the Annual Report be noted.

### **Regulation 44 Visits – November 2020 – April 2021**

The Board received a report summarising the Regulation 44 visits to homes during the period November 2020 to April 2021. As no officers had been able to attend the meeting, it was agreed that any questions raised would be noted and passed on to the relevant members of staff.

Colombo Road provided care for up to six young people and had an Ofsted judgement of Outstanding. The home had received three recommendations in the reporting period. There had been seven missing incidents in the period compared to one in the previous but none of these had been for over 24 hours. There had been two critical incidents compared to three in the previous period.

Grasswell House cared for up to six young people and was judged to be Good with improved effectiveness. There had been three recommendations made as result of Regulation 44 visits and 16 missing episodes compared to 21 in the previous period. There had been 11 critical incidents which had been appropriately documented and

responded to in accordance with procedures; four notifications had been made to Ofsted.

Revelstoke Road also provided care for up to six young people and was judged to be Good. There had been a significant increase in missing episodes in the home during the period and two young people had been discharged from the home due to concerns regarding their behaviour and the impact this was having on other young people. The home was now more settled and the young people in the home had developed positive relationships with team members.

Nook Lodge was a newly registered home for up to three young people; the home had not yet had an Ofsted inspection but had received a positive monitoring visit. All three young people currently in the home presented as settled and happy and were developing a relationship with each other and the staff. There had been four recommendations within the reporting period.

Monument View provided care for up to six young people and was judged to be Good. There had been 14 missing incidents reported to the Police in the period, two of which were over 24 hours. A large majority of the episodes related to one young person with significant learning difficulties and staff had been provided with information on how to ensure that this young person received clear boundaries and support.

The Chair asked about notifications made to Ofsted where a young person had made threats to staff and damaged the home and whether restorative justice was employed when such incidents had taken place.

Councillor Blackburn noted earlier comments about area committees being involved with children's homes in their area and asked if Area Officers could be kept informed of any developments regarding homes in their locality,

The Chair commented on the reference made by a young person about his concerns regarding moving on from the home and felt that this was something which should be looked at; it was important that everything possible was done to prevent young people having these concerns.

Councillor McKeith asked if all of the missing incidents at Revelstoke Road were in relation to one young person and Councillor Crosby asked what would be classed as a 'critical incident'.

The Chair queried if all of the Regulation 44 reports were shared with all home managers for their information.

5. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

### **Virtual School – Headteacher's Report**

Linda Mason, Headteacher of the Virtual School submitted a report providing information about cared for children since the last report to the Board in April 2021.

At the current time there were 593 cared for children in the city, a reduction since April and the report highlighted that the cared for population was dynamic. Within the cared for school age population, 223 (43%) had an identified SEND, with 138 receiving SEND support in school, and 16% of the total had an EHCP. Of those children, 78% attended a specialist education provision. The report set out the primary need for those who had been identified as having SEND with the majority (32%) having primary need in relation to Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), followed by mild learning disabilities (MLD) and Communication and Interaction.

It was highlighted that there were a lot more boys who had an EHCP than girls and it needed to be considered if girls were having their needs fully met. Work was also being done on how the identification of need correlated with children becoming cared for and the period leading up to that decision.

The Virtual School had been looking very closely at these young people and planning for their needs with designated teachers and SENCos talking to each other about the plans for individual young people. A number of Early Years practitioners were pushing for identification of need at the early education stage and professionals were working collectively to identify SEND as soon as was possible. The cared for population in Sunderland with SEND generally did very well but outcomes in Maths was worthy of further exploration.

Progress and attainment was reported annually and the Key Stage 4 data would be collated when published. The Virtual School had been working on the Year 6 to Year 7 transition and summer school activity along with nursery to Reception and Year 11s.

School attendance in the Autumn term had been 94.9% and during the Spring term 60.9% of cared for children were actually in school with 38.4% accessing remote learning. Since the return to school on 8 March 2021, 99% of primary children had returned to school and 96% of secondary children. Overall attendance was 77.1% for the Spring Term but this took into account lockdown three attendance and authorised absence in this period.

There had been no expulsions of cared for children from school in the last three years and there had been 27 suspensions in the Spring term, totalling 51.5 days. The report showed a breakdown analysis of cared for children who had received multiple suspensions and it was highlighted that some young people may receive an EHCP as a result of challenging behaviour. Linda reassured the Board that the school would contact her directly if they were contemplating suspension and certainly if an expulsion was being considered. The Virtual School worked closely with schools to reduce exclusions and this figure should continue to lower.

Compliance with production of EPEPs within six months stood at 99% and these were currently produced termly and within 20 days of coming into care. EPEPS for early years had begun to be produced in January 2021 and it was hoped to increase compliance with this over the next term.

Quality assurance had been a key focus through the year and where EPEPs were rated 'amber', schools were asked to consider the Virtual School's comments. There was a lot of training available for designated teachers, IROs and social workers.

80.3% of cared for young people were in good or outstanding schools. The Board had previously been advised that children would not automatically be removed from a school if it was judged to Require Improvement or was Inadequate, there were many factors which would be considered in relation to whether it would be in the young person's best interests to remove them from the school.

Partnership working was very important to the Virtual School and the support of the National Association had been critical during the pandemic.

The Pupil Premium Grant would be fully utilised in support of improving educational outcomes as expected by the DfE Grant conditions. The local authority received £2,345 per cared for child and schools received £1,900 annually with the Virtual School retaining £445 per child. Centrally retained funding was used for services such as tutors, alternative provision, 1-2-1 tuition, Welfare Call and Education Psychology reports.

Linda advised that there was an upcoming CPD event on 9 November which would be focused on trauma, recovery and resilience and would be open to cross agency partners.

Councillor Tye asked about the young people who were in alternative provision and Linda advised that this could be somewhere like The Springboard Trust. Councillor Tye commented that the attendance data was very impressive and this should be recognised widely.

In relation to Ofsted categories, Councillor Tye enquired if the high numbers at Good or Outstanding schools could be because Ofsted had not carried out inspections for some time. Linda said that would have to be analysed but highlighted that the Inadequate schools were predominantly secondary and the young people had probably been in attendance there since Year 7.

Councillor Burnicle asked for further information about the Pupil Premium Grant and Linda advised that this came into the Virtual School annually as a specific grant as the Government had felt that there would be more accountability if it passed through the Virtual School. The grant was paid from the day a child came into care and would be used to make sure that a child was making good educational progress over the school year. The grant was paid to nurseries in a different way and had to be applied for by each setting.

Upon consideration of the report, it was: -

6. RESOLVED that the Virtual School – Headteacher's Report be noted.

(Signed) L FARTHING  
Chair







REPORT AUTHOR:	<b>Nikki Donaldson, Participation and Engagement Officer</b>
SUBJECT:	<b>Together for Children's Change Council Report for Corporate Parenting Board 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021</b>
PURPOSE:	<b>To report on the activity of both Change Council 10-15 group and Change Council 16+ group (Jul - Sept 2021)</b>

Change Council have continued to meet regularly face to face throughout July – Sept 2021. Change Council are meeting in a Covid secure venue, both Change Council's 10-15 and 16+ group are meeting fortnightly.

Activity	What's Working Well?	What's Not Working So Well?	What needs to happen?
<b>Change the Language</b> This is a campaign ran by us to change the language we use in line with what we prefer.	TfC staff are starting to Change their language in line with our campaign.  We are working on an event to re-launch the campaign and have a date for the re-launch. 27.10.2021  We chaired our first working group 29.06.21.  We feel empowered and listened too.	Old language is still being used in reports etc.        Working group is only TfC staff currently.	Encourage all professionals to change the language   Any extra funding to support the event.    Once the working group is more established within TfC, this can be expanded to include external organisations.

<p><b>Change the Language</b> </p> <p>We hear "Placement/Unit"... we prefer 'Home/House'</p> <p>We hear "Children Looked After"... we prefer 'Cared For'</p> <p>We hear "Care Leavers"... we prefer 'Care Experienced'</p> <p>We hear "Contact"... we prefer 'Family Time'</p> 	<p>We are comfortable challenging the language with professionals.</p>		
<p><b>Cookbook</b> We launched our Cookbook for Care Experienced young people to help when living independently.</p> 	<p>Cookbook is continuing to be promoted and sold.</p> <p>32 care experienced young people have received a cookbook.</p>	<p>Identifying the difference made to care experienced young people as too early to see outcomes.</p>	<p>Corporate Parent Board Members to highlight book within their own services.</p> <p>Feedback from other Care Experienced Young People re the book – what difference has it made?</p>
<p><b>Corporate Parenting Training</b> We have started to design some training around Corporate Parenting and what it is.</p>	<p>We have started to develop an introductory workshop to be delivered to the Corporate Parenting Board along with Tracy Jelfs.</p> <p>We will continue to develop a training offer for elected members and corporate parents.</p>	<p>A date has not yet been arranged.</p>	<p>Plan a number of sessions to be delivered to elected members.</p>

			
<p><b>Regional meetings</b> Sunderland hosted the first face to face regional meeting, to discuss Foster Care for the Independent Fostering Service Contract.</p> 	<p>We really enjoyed face to face regional meetings again and have agreed they want to continue face to face meetings moving forward</p> <p>A survey has been created and circulated to encourage Cared for and Care Experienced young people to vote on their top 2 issues. This will be discussed at the next regional meeting.</p>	<p>Not every region could attend, going to look at holding smaller regional groups that can feed into the large regional group.</p> <p>This has not been discussed at a regional meeting yet.</p>	<p>Agreement on which Local Authorities will work together and dates to be set.</p> <p>Survey closed end of June 21. Top 2 priorities will be the focus for the regional group.</p> <p>Find out what came out top in Sunderland.</p>

<p><b>Key Application</b> We submitted a key application to create a more young person friendly environment where they meet.</p> 	<p>We feel comfortable in our meeting space and are happy with the changes.</p>		<p>We would like to create a small sensory space to give us a space to take time out if needed during meetings.</p>
<p><b>Workshop – Anti bullying</b></p>	<p>We have been working on creating a workshop to be delivered in schools to young people around being Cared for with the aim to challenge stereotypes.</p>		<p>Workshop to be ready to deliver at Anti-bullying Conference week.</p>
<p><b>Holiday Activities and Food Programme –</b> Young people took part in a number of activities over the Summer.</p> 	<p>We enjoyed activities over the holidays to celebrate our hard work, spend time getting to know each other and building relationships outside of our Change Council meetings.</p> <p>We had new experiences trying new activities.</p>	<p>Not everyone could attend every activity as there are quite a few of us and we have different availability.</p>	<p>We would like to continue to try new experiences and activities as a group.</p>



**Planned work for Oct – Dec:**

- Re-Launch the Change the Language campaign.
- Workshop created by young people to be delivered during Anti-Bullying Conferences week about being Cared for with the aim to educate others to reduce stereotypes and assumptions.
- Plan and hold the Cared for and Care experienced Christmas Event.
- Engage young people in enriching activities to celebrate their hard work and increase engagement.
- Corporate Parenting Introduction training
- Support the development of the corporate parenting strategy.
- Support with update of the Bramble Centre
- Attend Regional meetings
- Create packs for Afghanistan refugees



CCG Sunderland Update  
**Report to Corporate Parenting Board**  
27 September 2021

**1.0 Purpose of the report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Demonstrate our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in care
- To assure the corporate parenting board that health services to children in care are provided without undue delay or geographical prejudice
- To demonstrate the aim of the Looked After Health team is for sustained improvement in the health and wellbeing of children in care and those leaving care
- To assure the child's voice around health issues are included wherever possible
- Report on compliance to statutory targets from the Looked After Health Team for South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust

Please note that data reported within this report is Q1 data (April, May and June). This is due to the time of this meeting.

**1.2 COVID-19**

- 1.2.1 The health team continue to offer face to face health assessment appointments.
- 1.2.2 The health team have not had any staff absences due to covid 19.
- 1.2.3 The team continue to be challenged due to isolating Carers and Young People, this has caused numerous cancelled appointments and re-booking of appointments.

**2.0 Compliance data for health assessments - Quarter 4**

In Quarter 1 there were, on average, 591 cared for children, this is a slight decrease from the previous quarter.

**2.1 Initial Health Assessments (IHA)**

- 2.1.1 Local Authorities are responsible for ensuring a health assessment of physical, emotional and mental health needs is completed for every child within 20 working days of becoming looked after.

Table 1 - Initial Health Assessments

Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Number	41				
Compliance	93%				

\*Compliance not related to appointment availability but to Covid self isolation, delay in consent and 5 YP not being brought/ refusing to attend (2 refusal pathway followed). YP x 3 offered further appts OOT. 1x recently seen and summary completed.

- The Health Team have been able to demonstrate that they continue to offer appointments within timescales and external factors have impacted on the compliance towards the end of this financial year.
- Number of IHAs remain at 13-14 per month

## 2.2 Review Health Assessments (RHA)

- 2.2.1 The RHA must happen at least every six months before a child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday and at least once every 12 months after the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday within the month they became looked after.

Table 2 - Review Health Assessments

Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Number	144				
Compliance	98%				

\* 3 appointments out of timescale

- 18 children were not brought (12.5%), and appointments rearranged.
- 3 young people refused to attend and refusal pathway was followed.

## 2.3 Out of Area Health Assessments

Table 3 – Health assessments performed on behalf of Sunderland for children and young people placed outside of area

Assessment	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
IHA	0				
RHA	14 (93%)				

\*1 health assessment completed out of time scale.

## 3.0 Health Passports

Table 4 - Health Passports Issued

Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Number	16				
Compliance	71%				

- 3.1 4 passports were not completed at the point of the Young Persons 18<sup>th</sup> birthday but will be completed and shared.

#### **4.0 Looked After Health Team**

- 4.1 The Looked After Health team continue to be able to meet compliance timeframes with appointment slots.

#### **5.0 Service improvements**

- 5.1 The medical team are completing an in-house audit of health assessments, to identify areas of good practice and improvement. this is going through internal governance –(the summary maybe available for CPB meeting).
- 5.2 Obesity project completed by registrar and healthy eating advice leaflet for co-produced with carers for carers. Leaflet to proceed through Trust Governance before use.
- 5.3 The funding application was successful with NHS England, this was for the development of a Health Passport App for cared for and cared experienced young people. It will be a regional project across the ICS footprint.
- 5.4 [Health Passport North East and North Cumbria ICS - YouTube](http://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=ZZTBEYSsHfY)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=ZZTBEYSsHfY>

#### **6.0 Recommendations and Actions**

The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to note the content of the report.

**Jo Morgan**  
**Designated Nurse Looked After Children**  
**Sunderland CCG**



# Cumbria, Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS Trust Sunderland Children Cared for Report

October 2021 (June 2021 – August 2021)







## **Sunderland Children Cared for Report. June 2021 – August 2021**

### **1. Activity**

	Jun	Jul	Aug
Referrals	9	6	2
Referrals discharged unseen	1	1	0

#### **Referrals discharged unseen**

The following provides narrative in relation to reasons why the young people were not seen by the service.

#### **June**

1 referral received and not accepted due to no mental health concerns, the issues addressed within referral were relating to education.

#### **July**

1 referral received and appointment was offered, young person and foster care did not feel CYPs was required and were unaware the GP had made a referral, family advised to contact CPYS should services be required in the future.

### **2. Referral Urgency**

All cases referred to CYPs either by phone, fax, and email or in written format are reviewed on a daily basis by members of the clinical team. The purpose of this initial review is in order to signpost any cases that have been inappropriately referred and to ensure any cases that require an emergency or urgent response are highlighted and actioned immediately.

CYPs Intensive Community Treatment Service (ICTS) offer a 24/7 service 365 days per year. ICTS will respond to the young person via telephone to offer a telephone triage within 1 hour. Young person requiring an emergency appointment will be offered an appointment within 4 hours of referral being received and for urgent referrals the young person will be offered an appointment within 24 hours.

	Jun	Jul	Aug
Emergency	0	0	0
Urgent	2	0	0
Total	2	0	0

### 3. Waiting Times (All Referrals)

Current Waiting Times to Treatment are detailed below. (Treatment is defined as second attended contact)

	Jun (Weeks)	Jul (Weeks)	Aug (Weeks)
Wait to Treatment	4	6	6

### Referrals

During the COVID pandemic the service has continued to accept all referrals and complete assessments and interventions. New Ways of Working have been fully embraced by the Team to facilitate contact with young people and their families / carers such as online consultation and phone contact. Face to face contact continues to be offered within a secure COVID environment. Home visits and school appointments are offered to young people to support engagement and attendance at appointments.

### Children who are Cared for Pathway

This Pathway specifically focusses on 2 areas, direct work therapeutic work with the young people and non direct work with Foster Carers, which includes Psychoeducational Group Interventions, Consultation and Training to Foster Families in conjunction with Together for Children and continued dedicated scaffolding support to Residential Homes in Sunderland.

Young People are offered priority appointments within CYPS and following assessment will access treatment in a timely manner. The Pathway is a multi disciplinary team consisting of nursing, psychology, child psychotherapy and psychiatry. The team have all completed specific formal training to deliver psychological therapies to meet the needs of the young people and their carers.

### 4.Current Caseload

	Jun	Jul	Aug
Total Children Looked After	103	102	103
Total CYPS Caseload	1742	1724	1702
Total % Children Looked After	5.9%	5.9%	6.1%

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**27 September 2021**

**Update on Regional Adoption Agency, Adopt Coast to Coast**

**Report of Paula Gibbons, Head of Service, Adopt Coast to Coast**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

To update Together for Children's Corporate Parenting Board on the progress of the Regional Adoption Agency, Adopt Coast to Coast since its virtual launch on the 1<sup>st</sup> April.

**2. Background**

Together for Children and Adopt Coast to Coast are working in partnership as a regional adoption agency alongside Cumbria and Durham County Council's to provide adoption services in their geographical footprint through a hub and spoke model. Though Together for Children/Sunderland continue to have statutory responsibility for their adoption service (as do the other spokes), the Head of Service is accountable for the performance, service improvements and delivery of the agreed outcomes across the 3 spokes as detailed under the partnership arrangements. As lead for quality assurance across all aspects of adoption practice the Head of Service is ensuring the development of consistent practice to achieve our vision:

**Children will achieve their full potential within a loving and secure family, and everyone affected by adoption will receive a high-quality innovative and sustainable service.**

**3. Responsibilities in Adopt Coast to Coast**

**Hub**

The Head of Service has responsibility for the day to day coordination of Together for Children's Adoption Service to ensure the implementation of the agreed joint plans, policies and strategies approved by the Governance Board.

Communications and Marketing Officer – lead for centralised recruitment activity. Year 1 budget is £40K. Supported by new website, Facebook and Instagram.

The new enquiries and outcome system records interests in adoption and automatically allocates to relevant spoke.

Telephone number hosted by Durham.

## **Spokes**

The 3 spokes, Together for Children, Cumbria and Durham continue to provide their current adoption services from first contact.

### **4. Performance**

Spokes combined performance in 2020/21

- 78 Prospective adopters approved
- 24 Prospective adopters in stage 1\*
- 23 Prospective adopters in stage 2\*
- 18 Prospective adopters approved and not linked\*
- 57 Children with ADM/SHOPA\*
- 36 Children with Placement Order and no link/match\*
- 11 Children with Placement Order for 6 months or longer\*
- 20 Children who were placed via FfA/Concurrency
- 130 Children matched
- 60 Children placed via interagency agreement

\*as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

### **5. Recruitment Activity**

- A range of pre and post launch activity has been undertaken to raise awareness of the Adopt Coast to Coast branding as distinct from that of the spokes. The Adopt Coast to Coast website, Facebook and Instagram accounts have had reasonable footfall. In the month of April there were 4624 page views to the website and 986 new users. By mid-June Facebook had 275 followers and Instagram had 105 followers.
- By 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021, 100 enquiries had been reached.
- The telephone number has had 60 calls and the reasons for these calls are being monitored to improve service delivery.
- Recruitment that has focused on actual children with a plan of adoption (though anonymised) has been incredibly well received and a campaign for a group of 3 brothers with plan of adoption agreed by Together for Children had a reach of 14,607 people via Facebook and it was shared by 117 people.

### **6. Key priority areas for 2021/22**

- To establish Adopt Coast to Coast as the 'go to' agency for those interested in adopting
- To continue to monitor brand recognition to ensure it is recognisable alongside and separately to the LA partners
- To continually review the outcome of marketing activity to ensure best value and best return on investment
- To ensure the prospective adopters' journey is reviewed and streamlined through review and sharing of best practice
- To establish a regional adopter engagement group
- To establish early linking and matching
- To work across the partnership to develop the after adoption support offer

### **7. Recommendation**

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to note the contents of this update.

## TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

DATE:	<b>27<sup>th</sup> September 2021</b>
REPORT AUTHOR:	<b>Linda Mason HEAD TEACHER Virtual School</b>
SUBJECT:	<b>Head Teacher's Report</b>
PURPOSE:	<b>FOR INFORMATION</b>

### 1. SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide the Corporate Parenting Board with updated information about cared for children since the last report in 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021, a period of 3 school weeks. Therefore, this is a short update report

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

**The Board is requested to receive the report for information**

### 3. Context - Cohort and Characteristics

Currently as of 16 September 2021 (report written) we have 586 Cared for Children a reduction of 7 compared to 593 Cared for Children in June 2021.

Historical cohorts (when report written)

September 2021	586
June 2021	593
April 2021	625
January 2021	633
July 2020	578

### 3.1 COHORT CHANGES

Source Virtual School Data September 2021

The data below shows how there can be significant change during the summer months.

#### Changes since 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021

50 new to care		
PRE	23	4 in Reception 4 in Nursery
KS1	4	
KS2	5	
KS3	6	
KS4	5	
KS5	7	

66 Ceased to be cared for		
PRE	2	
KS1	13	
KS2	5	
KS3	3	
KS4	2	
KS5	10	8 became 18 yrs of age

All new to care require an EPEP within 20 school days. As schools are closed during the Summer holidays and would be unable to meet this expectation we introduced an Interim EPEP which is created immediately and then a PEP meeting is held with schools as soon as they return in September. This enables us to maintain 99% compliance with the statutory expectations for EPEPs.

## 4 Progress and Achievement

There will be no nationally reported data for any of the key stages in 2021.

### 4.1 Key Stage 4 2021 Highlights (36 student in the cohort)

65% of cohort have SEND

31% have an EHCP

41% are in specialist provision

We have had some really good outcomes in year 11 this year.

3 students achieved 6 GCSEs at grade 4 and above

1 student achieved 7 GCSEs at grade 4 and above

3 students achieved 8 GCSEs at Grade 4 and above

1 student achieved 9 GCSEs at grade 4 and above.

Progress and achievement at individual child level is monitored termly through the EPEP.

## **5 Attendance and Absence monitoring**

Current attendance since returning to school is 94%.

75% of the current cohort have 100% attendance.

The Virtual School monitors attendance daily through Welfare Call and contacts carers to ensure attendance at school is a key priority if concerns arise. Analysis of the detail behind the data occurs termly and virtual school staff work closely with schools, carers and social workers to ensure attendance is improved.

## **6 Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions**

Summer Term 2021			
Permanent Exclusions	0	0	0
Fixed Term (Suspensions)	24 episodes	65 days	20 children

3 Cared for Children received more than 1 suspension

4 are in residential homes

5 live out of area

5 have an EHCP

8 receive SEN support

The Virtual School works closely with schools, carers and social workers when suspensions occur to understand the antecedents and to ensure appropriate support and plans are put in place to prevent further suspensions. This includes the use of the SEND ranges to ensure needs are identified and resources are put in place, but also referrals to other agencies are aligned such as CYPS, CAMHS for example. The EPEP should include targets related to any social and emotional or mental health needs.

## **7 EPEPS**

Quality assurance has been a key area of focus this year. Each section of the EPEP is assessed and this is fed back to schools using a RAG rating. If there are concerns about the quality of the EPEP a meeting is held to consider how it can be improved. Virtual School staff are also involved in moderation exercises to ensure a consistency

of judgements. This will be expanded in future training with Designated Teachers. We maintained 99% compliance in the Summer Term 2021

## 8 VIRTUAL SCHOOL TEAM

The Team moved into the Bunny Hill Centre on Hylton Lane at the end of the Summer Term to join colleagues from Education School Improvement. The team continue to work in an agile way both in the office and at home.

## 9 ADDITIONAL CIN RESPONSIBILITIES

From September 2021 Virtual School Heads are being asked to become strategic leaders for the cohort of children who have been assessed as being in need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 and currently have a social worker and those who have previously had a social worker.

The responsibility covers all children who were assessed as needing a social worker at any time due to safeguarding and/or welfare reasons, which includes all those subject to a Child in Need plan or a Child Protection plan. This includes children aged from 0 up to 18 in all education settings. This cohort has been identified as a group of children who face significant barriers to education as a result of experiences of adversity and trauma, most commonly abuse and neglect.

Virtual School Head Teachers will use their knowledge and expertise from promoting the educational outcomes of looked-after/cared for and previously looked-after/cared for children and will become the strategic leader who champions the educational attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker.

This means that they will help to:

- make visible the disadvantages that children with a social worker can experience, enhancing partnerships between education settings and local authorities to help all agencies hold high aspirations for these children.
- promote practice that supports children's engagement in education, recognising that attending an education setting can be an important factor in helping to keep children safe from harm.
- level up children's outcomes and narrow the attainment gap so every child can reach their potential. This will include helping to make sure that children with a social worker benefit from support to recover from the impact of COVID-19.

Virtual School Heads are **NOT** being asked to:

- work with individual children and their families - including tracking and monitoring educational progress of individual children or providing academic or other interventions.
- respond to requests from parents or carers to offer advice, intervention and support in relation to individual children with a social worker.
- take responsibility for children with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) who do not require or need a social worker



## NEXT STEPS

Initial discussions with colleagues, service leads and schools across Sunderland will take place this term to support the development of this new Strategy.

## 10 OFSTED ILACS

The ILACS inspection took place between 28 June and 9 July 2021, the Virtual School's effectiveness was a key area of scrutiny. The report was published on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021. Sunderland is the first local authority nationally to have moved from an inadequate to outstanding judgement. Specific comments about the Virtual School. Include:

- The virtual head and virtual school are extremely tenacious and ambitious advocates of cared for children, reflected in academic targets and the support to children's well-being.
- Leaders from the virtual school provide clear guidance and expectations to all of those working with the children.
- Personal education plans are ambitious.
- Cared for children's attendance at school has improved and there is evidence of good and improving outcomes for many young people
- The proportion of young people remaining in education, employment and training is improving, although it remains an ongoing challenge to maintain this in respect of those who are over 17 years old
- There are now 27 care experienced young people at university, which is a high proportion of these young people and once again reflects the ambition of TfC and the council.

## 11 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### 11.1 We have a Conference planned with support from Sunderland University:

9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 9.00 – 4.30 pm

**Trauma and Attachment**

**Practical Strategies to Improve Outcome for Cared for Children**

Facilitated by Lisa Cherry

Sunderland University

### 11.2 Governor Training

This will be available for Chairs of Governors and Governors with responsibilities for Cared for Children throughout 2021/22 with a key focus on:

Improving Education Progress and Achievement for Cared for Children

### **11.3 Designated Teacher Training**

We have re-established face to face Area Network meetings. Joint Designated Teacher and Social Worker and IRO training is being planned.

### **11.4 EPEP Training**

This continues each term and is in place for new to post Designated Teachers and Social Workers and IROs.

Refresher training is also available for all colleagues.

### **11.4 Foster Carers, Adoptive parents and Connected Carers**

A number of initial meeting have been held with various groups and training designed according to needs identified.

## **11 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**None**

## **12 CONTACT**

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