

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

AGENDA

**Meeting to be held in the Civic Centre (Committee Room 2) on
Monday 20 January 2020 at 5.30pm**

Part I

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Contact: Gillian Kelly, Principal Governance Services Officer Tel: 0191 561 1041
Email: gillian.kelly@sunderland.gov.uk

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ELAINE WAUGH
Assistant Director of Law and Governance

Civic Centre
SUNDERLAND

10 January 2020

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 7 October 2019 in Committee Room 2,
Civic Centre, Sunderland at 5.30pm**

Part I

Present:

Members of the Board

Councillor L Farthing (in the Chair)	Washington South Ward
Councillor R Davison	Redhill Ward
Councillor C Marshall	Doxford Ward
Councillor J McKeith	St Peter's Ward

Other Councillors

Councillor D MacKnight	Castle Ward
Councillor L Williams	Washington Central Ward

All Supporting Officers

Jill Colbert	Chief Executive, TfC
Linda Mason	Head Teacher, Virtual School
Nikki Donaldson	Senior Youth Worker, TfC
Dylan Ritson	Change Council
Maurice Davis	Foster Carer
Stacy Hodgkinson	IRO Service, Together for Children
Gavin Taylor	IRO Service, Together for Children
Janet Thomson	NTW CYPS
Kelly Haslem	NTW CYPS
Dr Sarah Mills	Designated Doctor for Looked After Health
Gillian Kelly	Governance Services

In Attendance

James Harrison	Sunderland Echo
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Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Smith, Francis and N MacKnight, together with Kay Dixon and Martin Birch.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes

10. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

Change Council Update

Dylan presented the report of the Change Council and advised that the Young Achiever awards evening had been held on 1 July 2019 and ten young people had received an award.

A number of professionals from TfC, Gentoo, Health, Education and the Council had been invited to the Care Leavers lunch and cook book launch on 11 July 2019. All of the young people involved in the lunch had received a slow cooker and starter pack to recognise their hard work. The CCG had funded the packs and these would now be given to all young people who were moving into independent or semi-independent living from August 2019. Following the success of the lunch, two young people were interviewed for BBC Radio Newcastle to raise awareness of the limited budget which care leavers had for food and necessities.

A member of the Change Council had recently completed work experience with the Participation and Engagement Team and two members of the Council had been part of an arts exhibition, 'sixteen', which had travelled to different venues across the country. One member of the Change Council had also attended Washington Youth Council's open event which was raising awareness around the issues that children and young people faced in Washington.

The Participation and Engagement Team had started drop-in sessions at Next Steps, Grasswell House and Monument View children's homes for children looked after and young people to have more of a say. These sessions were informal and provided young people with a chance to raise any issues and have a say on the topics which the Change Council are currently working on. Drop-ins would soon be established at Revelstoke Road and Colombo Road children's homes.

Young people from Sunderland were working as part of the Regional Children in Care Council to plan the next regional conference. The event would be held at the Beacon of Light on 30 January 2020 with themes being Mental Health and post-18 support for care leavers.

Young people had suggested holding a 'get to know each other better' event following changes within the management of children's social care and this had become a 'speed networking' event with the opportunity for professionals to get to know the Change Council group better. The event was a huge success and feedback from young people and professional was extremely positive.

The older and younger members of the Change Council had decided that they would like to visit Alton Towers as a reward for all of their hard work and the away day had taken place on Sunday 15 September 2019.

The Change Council groups had been reviewing the 'Commitments' throughout the year to ensure that young people had the best possible outcomes. The younger group had been working on 'if you come into care, we will make sure that you are safe and properly cared for'. A survey had been developed for young people but unfortunately the response had not been great. Work had been undertaken with children's social care with a view to improving the response rate and results would be reviewed and fed back to the Senior Leadership Team and Corporate Parenting Board.

The involvement of children and young people in recruitment and selection was now embedded within children's social care and in the last few months young people had interviewed social workers and held their own panel for the recruitment of the last permanent service manager. Their observations were then fed back to the adult panel.

The Chair commented that she and Councillor Williams had attended the Regional Lead Members' event and Saul had been there to present the scorecard for Sunderland. There had been an area flagged as 'Red' and this was in relation to appropriate apprenticeships being achieved for children in care. It was the view that all young people leaving care should have access to apprenticeships and employment at the living wage. The other 'Red' item was the cost of transport and the Chair stated that she and Councillor Williams would work on that.

11. RESOLVED that the Change Council update be noted.

Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report 2018/2019

The Board received the Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Service and Stacy Hodgkinson and Gavin Taylor were in attendance to highlight the main elements of the report.

The Independent Reviewing Service had a number of functions including the chairing of child protection conferences, reviewing and scrutinising care plans, undertaking foster carer reviews, carrying out regulation 44 visits to registered Children's Homes and undertaking the Designated Officer role.

The service was also committed to ensuring that the voice of the child was heard and given appropriate weight within care planning and would invite children and young people in for a pre-meeting prior to a child protection conference and would also undertake pre-looked after visits. The MOMO app was used for young people to be able to communicate about services and the more detailed Viewpoint questionnaire was also used to obtain feedback.

At of 31 March 2019, there were 486 children in the city who were subject to a child protection plan which was a reduction of 2.6% from March 2018. A total of 1,062 conference had taken place during the reporting year; 79% of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPCs) were held within timescale (15 days from the date of a strategy) and 94% of Review Child Protection Conferences (RCPCs) were within timescale.

The reasons for Conferences being held out of timescale were usually related to insufficient notice, non-attendance of a significant person or professional and incorrectly migrated data. Mid-way reviews were a contact between a Conference Chair and allocated social worker which focused on the progression of the child protection plan. 620 of these had taken place during the year and were an important tool to monitor and review progress. The main area of categorisation for child protection plans was neglect, followed by emotional abuse and 724 plans in total had ended during 2018/2019.

There were 602 children looked after in Sunderland on 31 March 2019 which was a decrease from 2018 of 16 children. 94% of Children Looked After Reviews were held within timescales and the young people had participated in 96% of the reviews. 1,048 Pre-Looked After Review Visits had taken place, an 11% increase on the previous year and 1,107 mid-way reviews had been held during the year.

The Board were advised that in April 2018, the process for raising practice issues was combined with Social Care into one 'Dispute Resolution Procedure' (DRP). There were 140 DRPs raised in relation to Child Protection with 137 in total being closed during the period. 133 of these were closed at Stage 1 and two were elevated to Stage 2 and to Stage 3. The most common themes for DRPs were in relation to lack of progress, lack of information for the conference and late social worker reports.

There were also 140 DRPs raised in relation to children looked after with the main issues raised being a breach or delay in a care plan. 147 DRPs were closed during the period; 126 at Stage 1 and three, 11 and seven at Stages 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

The Independent Reviewing Service had completed 205 Foster Carer Reviews during the period and 97% of these were within timescale.

The Service had received 25 positive practice comments in the last year and it was noted that the views of parents were collected in relation to conferences, with 80% saying that they had a positive experience. Where issues had been raised then the parents had the opportunity to discuss this with the Conference Chair.

Councillor Williams referred to the child protection plans which had ended during the period and asked what the usual timeframe was for a young person to be subject to a Child Protection Plan. Gavin Taylor stated ideally that the plan would be worked through within 12 months and concerns would be raised about any plan which had extended beyond two years. Where this had been the case, it was noted that there were extenuating circumstances which had led to the extension of the Child Protection Plan.

Councillor Williams also asked at what age children were able to speak for themselves at a Conference. Gavin commented that the IRO Service would look at what was the best way to support a child and each case was taken on an individual basis with guidance and procedures from Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board. Generally, children aged from ten onwards would speak for themselves at a Conference.

It was noted that a recent Conference using the Signs of Safety Model had been observed and found to be very effective. Jill Colbert added that a social worker had recently used MOMO for a two year old and there were some very talented staff who could do this and pull the child's voice through to the Conference.

Linda Mason said that some of the city's schools were very competent in getting the child's voice heard through Personal Education Plans (PEPs). Gavin highlighted that the Service's strength lay in the pre-meetings for children looked after reviews and visits were carried out for all children, including babies. The aim was to support everyone's voice and a lot of information was gathered from observation.

Councillor MacKnight acknowledged the positive feedback which had been given, however felt it would have been useful to review any complaints and what had been done about them. She also asked about the management of the Independent Reviewing Service.

Jill Colbert advised that complaints about the IRO Service were presented to the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee as part of a general complaints report. The Independent Reviewing Service was part of Together for Children but had different directorship and management to Children's Social Care, giving a level of independence.

The Chair referred to the examples of positive practice and expressed the wish that teams used these to demonstrate good practice. She noted that the majority of issues which were raised with her by parents in the child protection system were around getting the agenda and minutes for meetings and she assumed that this was a business support issue.

Gavin explained that in all Child Protection Conferences, the agenda and threshold documents would be laid out with parents and the Conference Chair would meet parents half an hour before the start of the meeting. The move to Signs of Safety conferencing would alter the style of the minutes and would be a 'live' model with actions being agreed during the meeting.

Gavin went on to say that the Service had experienced reduced administration capacity due to sickness absence, which had impacted on the timeliness of minutes. More resources would be allocated to administration as part of the service restructure and it was aimed to reduce delays through this.

Councillor Davison made reference to the 'fluctuation in Social Care staffing arrangements' mentioned in the report and the impact this had on looked after reviews. Gavin said that when there were transitions and changeovers, sometimes

details could be lost but it was now the aim to plan for reviews at least two weeks before they were due to ensure that they were not overlooked.

Having thanked Stacy Hodgkinson and Gavin Taylor for their presentation of the report, it was: -

12. RESOLVED that the Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report be noted.

Health of Looked After Children

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

There had been an average of 595 children looked after in quarter 2 which was a decrease from the previous quarter. Compliance with Initial Health Assessments (IHA) being carried out within 20 working days of a child being looked after was good with 92% of IHAs taking place within statutory timescales.

166 Review Health Assessments had been carried out and this was 97% compliance with timescales. The compliance for out of area health assessments currently stood at 50%, however one young person had had a number of placements and consequentially was not seen within timescale in July. The compliance information for September was not yet available so the figures did not represent the whole quarter.

Five Health passports had been issued during the quarter which represented 100% compliance. The Health Passport would be revised in line with improved joint working between the next steps and Looked After Health teams.

A new administrator had been recruited to the Looked After Health team and work to align the services between Sunderland and South Tyneside had commenced.

The report also referred to the Care Leavers cooking event and the funding from Sunderland CCG to provide necessities boxes of ingredients. A service review identifying the pathways of information sharing for Looked After Children and young people with special educational needs, learning disabilities and Education and Health Care Plans, had been completed.

The annual Quality Assurance audit for Looked After Health Assessments had been completed in July 2019 and analysis had confirmed that the quality of the assessments was good and the voice of the child was consistently captured. The full audit was attached to the report and highlighted areas for development including having birth parents in attendance at health assessments.

Councillor Williams highlighted the subject of immunisation, as it was quite topical at the present time, and asked if a child came into care without having been immunised, what approach would be taken to vaccinations. Dr Mills explained that whilst parental responsibility was retained by birth parents then medical

professionals would not go against parental wishes, however it was found that some education did help with this. Immunisation issues within the looked after population were no greater than those in the general population and although rates might be lower when a child came into care, these did improve over time.

The Chair asked if there were any issues with oral and dental health for children looked after and Dr Mills stated that documentation for registration with a dentist was requested and also information on whether they had attended in the last year. Foster carers were well versed with the procedure and although children were often not registered with a dentist when they came into care, this was soon rectified.

Having considered the report, it was: -

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

NTW Sunderland Looked After Children Data

The Board received a report from NTW for the period May to July 2019. There had been a decreasing number of referrals during the period. 18 young people were referred in May with two being discharged unseen, there were 14 referrals in June and nine in July with one and two being discharged unseen respectively. Of the total referrals during the period, three of these were categorised as Urgent.

The Chair presumed that there was some liaison in relation to referrals to ensure that appropriate information was passed on and asked whether there was a referral template. The Board were advised that there was both an online and paper based referral and Jill Colbert stated that there would be always be some challenges around the information provided and this was being picked up as part of the transformational work.

Janet Thomson said that work was taking place on a single point of access which would be key in making sure that partners were referring matters to the correct place. Kelly Haslem added that referrals were reviewed on a daily basis and that CYPS Intensive Community Treatment Service would respond to urgent referrals.

CYPS continued to focus on waiting times and a range of initiatives were in place with commissioners and providers to offer earlier appointments. The clinical psychology time which had been established in care homes continued to work well and the group based intervention sessions for foster carers had recently begun. The aim of these sessions was to provide foster carers with training on attachment and how to support the children they care for using attachment focused strategies. Foster carers would then move on to a consultation focus aimed at supporting them to put the techniques into practice.

The total CYPS caseload as of July 2019 was 2,389 of which 131 were children looked after, representing 5.5% of the total.

Jill Colbert advised that, with the help of Dr McManus, a therapeutic dog had been procured for Colombo Road care home. Councillor MacKnight highlighted that local councillors had also supported the initiative.

Councillor Williams commented that she had received feedback in relation to CYPS referrals, that no action would be taken on cases if a member of staff was off sick. Janet Thomson stated that cases should be picked up but if there were a number of vacancies in the service then this could be a challenge. Kelly added that if a clinician was off sick then the family would be given the option to have a new worker or to wait until the allocated worker returned. It was protocol to offer alternatives and there was a duty team available to deal with any queries.

With reference to the average waiting time of 18 weeks, Councillor Davison asked if there were any children looked after who had waited longer than this time for treatment. Kelly said that this was possible but it was hoped that moving forward, no child would have to wait that long. Janet confirmed that it was the intention to prioritise any children looked after who had waited over 18 weeks for treatment as part of the waiting time initiative.

Dr Mills commented that the Looked After Health Team were seeing more children and young people who were ready to access therapy and CYPS which was a positive development. Linda Mason said that some work was being carried out with children who had been adopted or were subject to a Special Guardianship Order so had a post-children looked after status. She queried whether these children may also be seen as priority cases and Kelly noted that this was looked at with staff and could be shared as the pathway was developed.

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

Virtual School Headteacher's Report

Linda Mason, Headteacher of the Virtual School submitted a report providing the Board with an update on some key indicators and developments since July 2019.

The current cohort of children looked after was 575 of which 371 were school age; 162 primary and 209 secondary. There were 111 pre-school age children looked after and 93 were post-16.

The staffing for the Virtual School was set out within the report and the Board were advised that the final elements of the proposed restructure would be concluded during the Autumn Term. The post of Deputy Head was to be advertised externally. The governance review had now been concluded and new Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation agreed.

Members were directed towards Table 4.1 which showed a breakdown of the children looked after of school age and highlighted that the number of EHCPs recorded for children looked after increased in years 9, 10 and 11 but Linda expressed her wish for earlier recognition of SEND in the Early Years.

67.7% of children looked after were in good or outstanding schools which was a slight decrease from the previous report. It was the ambition of the Virtual School and Together for Children to have all children looked after in nothing less than good or outstanding schools but this needed to be carefully assessed. The Virtual School looked very carefully at the support available in a certain school and would not automatically remove vulnerable children. There were also social and emotional considerations in each case and any changes would be in the best interest of the child. Children looked after would not be moved into provision which was inadequate or required improvement.

The Chair commented that there had been some recent publicity suggesting that the discipline regime of the school came before the needs of the child. Jill Colbert stated that two particular schools had experienced a difficult year for behaviour management and Early Help staff had been appointed and significant changes were already being seen. The School Improvement Service had also been engaged and Linda stated that schools would alert her quite quickly if there were issues.

Attendance so far this term was 92.6% and 74% of the children in the cohort had achieved above 90% attendance. Good attendance would be rewarded with a certificate. Four children had attendance of below 50%; these were known and tracked with monthly scrutiny. These children often had complex needs and were supported by a variety of services.

Dr Mills noted that if complex health needs were involved with the children who had attendance below 50%, then this was potentially something where the Looked After Health Team could join up with the Virtual School.

Turning to exclusion, it was reported that 52 children looked after had received a total of 246.5 days of fixed term exclusions and seven children had accumulated 90 days between them. There were no permanent exclusions for children looked after.

Councillor Davison asked if the exclusions were from any schools which were inadequate or required improvement and Linda undertook to check this.

The Chair referred to an LGA event which she had attended with Councillor Williams and there had been a session on children who had experienced trauma in the womb and how this could result in difficulty regulating behaviour. Linda noted that a good school and a good designated teacher should make staff aware of triggers.

The level of compliance with Personal Education Plans (PEPs) had been 92% but this currently stood at 62%. All schools would be using the electronic PEP this term and these were to be updated on a termly rather than six monthly basis. The EPEPs would be completed during the last two weeks of term and the compliance would increase significantly at this point.

The change in the timing of the EPEPs would fit better with the school processes and social workers were due to be trained on this before Christmas. There would always be a live PEP on Welfare Call and they had to be signed off as being of good quality by the Virtual School.

Initial unvalidated data showed that good progress has been against all key indicators and this would be presented as part of the Annual Report of the Virtual School in January 2020.

The Virtual School team had moved into their new accommodation at the old Springwell Dene School on 22 July 2019 and the staff were delighted with their new surroundings.

The report set out the key areas of focus for the next six months and Linda advised that she was due to present her development plan to the Governing Body the following day.

Having thanked Linda for her update, it was: -

15. RESOLVED that the information be noted.

Fostering Recruitment Update

The Director of Children's Social Care submitted a report updating the Board on recruitment activity within Together for Children Fostering Sunderland.

Following a comprehensive review and consultation period, a new Training, Support and Fee Scheme had been implemented on 1 April 2019 with a view to improving the recruitment and retention of foster carers.

In the year ending March 2019, Together for Children had approved six mainstream foster carers in total, in the current year to September 2019, seven mainstreams foster carers had been approved, showing a considerable increase in recruitment.

In relation to retention of carers, in the year 2018-2019 Together for Children had considered 21 resignations and two de-registrations. Up until the end of September 2019, seven resignations and two de-registrations had been considered which also demonstrated increased retention of carers.

The Chair noted that it was pleasing to see the positive progress being made and Jill stated that specific groups, such as younger people, had been targeted.

Councillor McKeith welcomed the positive recruitment figures and asked what had gone well this year to achieve this progress. Jill stated that this was probably based on the remodelling of fees and an increased level of training and support. Maurice Davis agreed that the changes to fees was a correct assumption as it was expecting a lot for people to give up work in order to take on a fostering role. He said that the training was excellent and carers were much more on board with this.

The Chair highlighted that foster caring was a profession and should be rewarded appropriately and also emphasised that skills needed to be supported by good training.

16. RESOLVED that the information be noted.

Provisional Work Programme 2019/2020

The Board received a report setting out the proposed work programme for the municipal year and were asked to consider any additional topics for discussion at a future meeting.

Linda Mason suggested that the Board might like to see an electronic PEP at a future meeting and possibly visit the new Virtual School premises.

17. RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

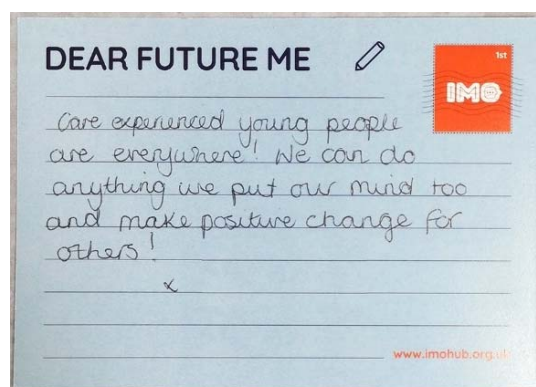
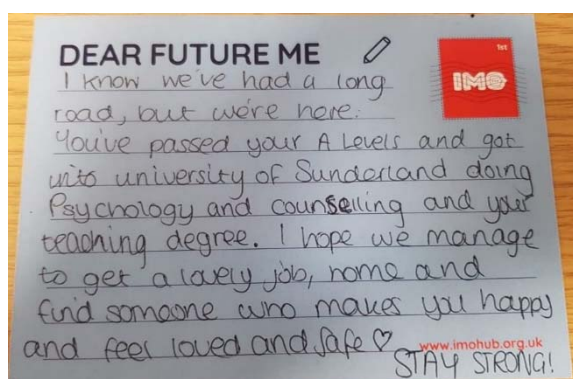
(Signed) L FARTHING
Chair



REPORT AUTHOR:	Loren Nergaard (Business Admin Apprentice – Participation and Engagement Team)
SUBJECT:	Change Council Update
PURPOSE:	To update members on Change Council activities from October-December 2019

1. IMO (In My Opinion)

Following on from the success of our [#dearyoungeme](#) campaign, IMO shared replies from teens in care and care leavers all over the country during national care leavers week (28th October – 3rd November 2019) from their new [#dearfuturme](#) campaign. Many of our children and young people looked after and leaving care wrote a postcard, this created discussions around what they think the future holds and how they can achieve what they want in life. IMO collected these cards nationally and publicised them, they can be seen on IMO's website and also on our own Together for Children social media sites.



2. Interviewing of Social Workers

Involving children and young people in recruitment and selection is embedded within Childrens Social Care. There is a clear expectation that 'our' children and young people should be very much part of the recruitment and selection process. In the past few months, children and young people have interviewed social workers as part of an adult panel. Young people are very much part of the decision-making process.

3. IRO Conference

Young people from Change Council and the Regional Children in Care Council group attended the IRO conference in October. Young people ran activities in the morning around permanence detailing their moves and the effect this has had. In the afternoon Change Council young people ran a workshop around life story work and raising awareness of the importance of this. Young people used a life story book about a kitten that had been adopted and the amount of information that was in the kitten's life story book. IRO's really valued the input of the sessions.

4. Annual Regional Children in Care Council Conference

Young people have been working very hard to prepare for the annual Regional Children in Care Council conference. This year's conference is at the Beacon of Light on the 30th of January. The two themes this year are mental health and post 18 support. As usual the whole conference will be run by young people. The day includes workshops run by young people, information stands, and several young people will be speaking and sharing their stories.

5. Drop in opportunities

The Participation and Engagement team have been running several drop-in sessions at Next Steps and within Sunderland's Childrens Homes on a monthly basis to capture the voice of those young people who don't feel comfortable or can't attend a regular Change Council meeting. Monument View has invited the team for breakfast on a Saturday morning where the team get the opportunity to sit with the young people on an informal basis, allowing young people to raise any issues/suggestions. One of the sessions focussed on wanting to make their sensory room better. Nikki and Loren are arranging to take the young people from Monument View shopping for some sensory decorations to do up their room. The engagement team are currently in consultation with Next Steps to improve their drop in.

6. Innovation unit

Perrie from the Innovation Unit returned to Change Council in November to feedback on their March visit. Perrie created a document containing 11 main themes and a brief description of what has been discussed;

- **Mental health-** Mental health is a key concern. Waiting lists are long and thresholds are high. Some children and young people feel they need to get more emotionally unwell and to be in a crisis for support to be extended, and when they are in a crisis intervention are rarely helpful. "there is no help for mental health. Its impossible to get help. I have had metal health workers tell me there is nothing they can do for you" (YP Aged 14)
- **Better support in school-** support and understanding is something that most people said they would like more of in order to feel happy, safe and able to participate fully in learning. Key issues included teachers not knowing enough about how being in care might affect mood, Concentration and behaviour; as well ad bullying and school responses to bullying. "I was badly bullied for being in care, we need teachers to respond to bullying" (YP Aged 15)
- **Consistent, Relationally-Capable Social workers-** though experiences with social workers vary, most people emphasise the difference a 'Good' or 'Bad' social worker could make in their lives. This is a Profoundly important role and relationship. Consistency, Stability and good relational practice that builds trust matter hugely. "Social worker after social worker, Placement after placement. It messes with your head. You don't get stability

or a chance to build a relationship, and they wonder why I won't engage anymore" (YP Aged 18)

- **Honest communication and greater involvement-** People spoke to us about not always feeling "in the loop" of decision making. Decisions as crucial as being taken into care or moving placements could happen without warning and at great speed, leaving people frustrated and distressed. Honest, clear dialogue, the opportunity for explanation, and greater involvement in key decisions were all things that children and young people talked about wanting. "I wanted to be treated with respect and dignity and I didn't feel like I was. I had to pack all of my stuff in bin bags. I couldn't even save the game I was playing. No idea why I'd been taken out of the foster placement" (YP, Aged 15)
- **Everyone has aspirations-** Every young person Perrie spoke to had ambitions such as, getting a good job, having their own family, a car, good friendships. In terms of careers a lot of young people wanted to use their own personal experiences to help others. "I've always wanted to be a primary school teacher and I am in the process of getting the qualifications. My childhood is gone, but theirs has just started, and I want to make theirs better than mine was" (YP, Aged 19)
- **Simple things can get in the way-** Everyone who was looking for work or starting out in employment felt like it was tough to find work in Sunderland. They identified a range of things that made it difficult and could get in the way. These ranged from simple things like not having money to buy the right clothes for interviews, and costs of travelling next steps help you with this but only till a certain age. The other things that get in the way are behavioural factors such as lack of confidence and the challenges of sticking with something. "it's tough finding jobs. I am trying to get a job at Sainsburys but it's hard"- (YP Aged 17)
- **Apprenticeships are valued-** People had great things to say about apprenticeships offered by TFC, it was evident that being in a supportive work environment, where you are understood can genuinely use your experience to benefit others, was very rewarding for people. it also seems to be helping people build confidence and aspirations. "I am currently doing an apprenticeship with TFC. If you told me that when I was 14 I wouldn't believe you, it's been a really hard journey and I still continue to struggle with personal issues but if my work place weren't understanding I would have fell at the first hurdle and added to the statistic of care leavers that are jobless and on benefits" (YP Aged 20)
- **Continued Personal support matters-** We heard that leaving care can feel like a cliff edge, where lots of things change at once. Some people we spoke to said keeping some key relationships constant would be beneficial (a popular idea was keeping your social worker until the age of 25 or having a similarly consistent supporter who can actively help you navigate education, employment, relationships and everyday challenges.)
- **Stable housing can be hard to achieve-** some people we spoke with are setting themselves up in independent living and are doing well. Others were struggling in independent living with isolation. Other young people were struggling to find stable homes and keep themselves out of a crisis. There is clearly more to learn and understand about those who are struggling, and what could help them build more stable and independent lives. "I left care and it all went downhill from there. I have been through CentrePoint, and several supported living arrangements/Hostels, I was kicked out of all of them" (YP Aged 19)
- **More support for health and wellbeing and managing money-** We heard about a range of other issues that young people leaving care are finding challenging. Some said they would like more support managing money. Some said they wanted more support for health and wellbeing. Some young people are struggling to keep them self out of a crisis. There is clearly more to learn about and understand in order to better support care leavers. "More support around staying away from drinking, Drugs, Gambling and help to stay healthy" (YP aged 19).

Perrie has passed this information onto our Chief Executive and Together for Children are working on supporting the improving of these services.

7. Luxury Christmas Hampers for Care Leavers

Young people from Change Council's 16+ group mentioned that Christmas can be hard for those that live in their own accommodation as a lot of them do not have family to stay with and often don't receive presents or a Christmas dinner. Together for Children decided that they would like to ensure our Care Leavers all received a luxury hamper so set about to raise money with the support of Hopespring who said they would gift aid the donations and create the hampers. £925 was raised in a space of two weeks which was amazing. Hopespring set away making the hampers which contained luxury food items and a few little surprises including a Hot chocolate set and fluffy socks. Next Steps PA's gave the hampers to their young people and the young people were over the moon and really appreciated them. Hopespring also provided a Christmas Eve buffet for our Care Leavers and Mark Head, Manager of TfC Supported Accommodation said there would be a Christmas Dinner provided for on Christmas Day for any Care Leaver who had nowhere to go.



8. CLA Christmas Celebration Event

The Christmas Celebration and Awards evening for children looked after and leaving care was another hit this year with many activities including a disco, bouncy castle, bungee run, Elsa, Ana and Olaf, a donut wall, lots of arts and crafts, nail art, glitter tattoos, mirror booth and of course Santa! 227 Children Looked After and Care Leavers attended this year.

The awards element of the evening again was another huge success with 31 children and young people receiving awards in categories including education, inspiration to others and sports. We received over 100 nominations from social workers, foster carers, teachers and support workers, and the judges found it incredibly difficult to choose as they all deserve to win. The overall Mayor's Award this year went to our very own Change Council for all the hard work they had done over the past year.



CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

20 January 2020

Looked After Health Team, City Hospitals Sunderland

1. Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the activity of the Looked After Health Team (South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust).

In Quarter 3 there were of 579 children looked after, a decreased from the previous quarter. Current rate 107 per 10,000 (Children's Services Analysis Tool, ChAT. April 2019).

2. Compliance data for health assessments - Quarter 3

2.1 Initial Health Assessments (IHA)

Local Authorities are responsible for a health assessment of physical, emotional and mental health needs is carried out for every child they look after within 20 working days of the child becoming looked after.

Table 1 – Initial Health Assessments

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
Number	58	58	48
Compliance (target 100%)	93%	92%	98%*

* 2% differentiation is related to one child that did not attend their appointment on two occasions but was seen the following month.

2.2 Review Health Assessments (RHA)

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

Table 2 – Review Health Assessments

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
Number	122	166	141
Compliance (target 100%)	100%	98%	99%*

*42 children were not brought/did not attend the booked appointment; 3 young people declined their health assessment.

2.3 Out of Area Health Assessments

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

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
Total number	9	3	5
Total Compliance (target 100%)	100%	50%	50%*
Number IHA	1	0	1
Compliance IHA (target 100%)	100%	-	0%
Number RHA	8	3	4
Compliance RHA (target 100%)	100%	100%	50%

***IHA** One child moved out of area urgently before 20 days. **RHA:** One not completed in timely manner the second was delayed due to an urgent placement.

Sunderland CCG are quality assuring all IHA and RHAs for external placements and monitoring compliance.

3. Health Passports

Table 3 – Health Passports Issued

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3
Number	8	5	10
Compliance	100%	100%	100%

3.1 The Health passport will be revised in line with improved joint working between the Next Steps, Looked After Health teams and South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Trust.

4. Looked After Health Team

4.1 Work is ongoing to support and improve looked after health services across South Tyneside and Sunderland within the provider sites. The voice of the child is being sought in relation to any changes.

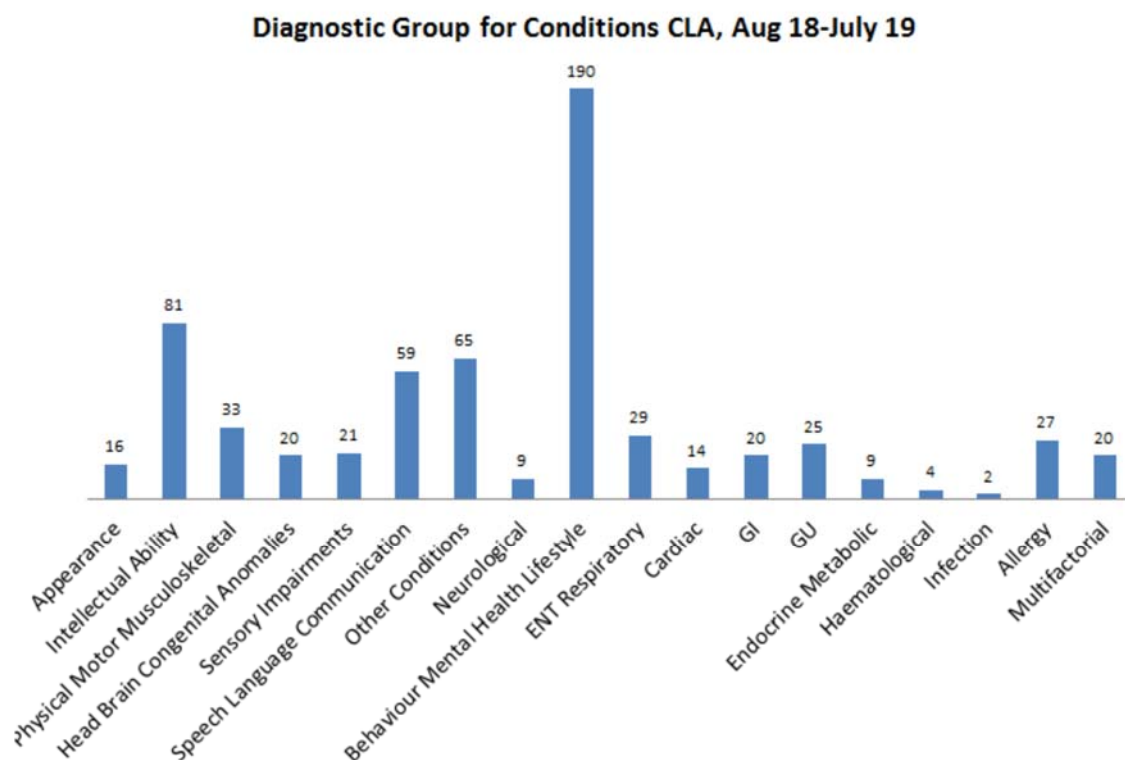
4.2 The Named Doctor for South Tyneside is now co-located with the Looked After Health team in the offices at the Children's Centre, Durham Road.

4.3 A part time Band 6 Nurse has been recruited in a fixed term contract to support Review Health Assessments (RHA) being carried out across the provider sites.

4.4 The Designated Doctor role has been filled under a temporary contract; Interviews for the permanent position will take place in February 2020.

5. Health Profile Data

5.1 The Health Profile Data (Sunderland Looked After Health team, Data Launchpad) below, plots the diagnoses Children Looked After presented with during health assessments carried out between August 2018 and July 2019:



5.2 In depth projects looking at Asthma, Weight and Epilepsy have commenced.

5.3 Behaviour, mental health and lifestyle is the largest group where issues are recorded (190) Emotional wellbeing and mental health is a great concern to our children and young people and ourselves, as Corporate parents. Further work is being explored to look at how to support and reduce this between commissioners, CNTW and South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Trust.

5.4 The rates of special education need (SEN), Learning Disability (LD) and Education and health care plans (EHCP) can now be reported:

Table 4 – SEN, LD and EHCP rates, CLA Sunderland by quarter:

N=217	Quarter 3
SEN	35 (16%)
Learning Disability	11 (5%)
EHCP	24 (11%)

6. Developments

6.1 A service review identifying the pathways of information sharing for Looked after Children and Young people with Special educational needs, Learning Disability and Education and Health care plans (EHCPs) has been completed. The report is shared as part of this report.

6.2 Sunderland CCG provided £3,000 of funding towards the Annual Celebration event for Children looked after.

7. Recommendations

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

Signed



Dr Sarah Mills
Locum Paediatric Consultant
Designated Doctor for Looked After Children

Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and /or Disabilities (SEN/D). A review of Sunderland looked after health practice 2019

Aim of review

Sunderland CCG Designated Children Looked After (CLA) professionals aim to establish if the needs of children looked after who have a SEN/D are met according to the SEN/D code of practice and Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Looked after Children (2015)¹.

Background

The Children and Families Act (2014) reformed the provision for children and young people (YP) with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEN/D), publishing the SEN/D Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and the DoH, 2014)². The code recommended the non-statutory roles of Designated Medical Officer (DMO) or Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) to support the CCG in meeting its statutory responsibilities for children and young people with SEN/D, these roles must have appropriate expertise in this field and links with other professionals. Sunderland have the service of a DMO.

Ofsted and the CQC are reviewing local authority (LA) areas to gain an understanding on how agencies connect to meet the needs and improve the life chances of children with SEN/D in accordance with the legislation. Whilst the DMO/DCO roles are non-statutory, the inspections have shown there are implications for an area that cannot evidence how it has oversight and assurance that the health system is fully engaged in SEN/D.

As of June 2019 there have been 93 inspections with 85 reports published. Half the Local Authority areas inspected received written statements of action where Ofsted and CQC judged that there were aspects of significant concern, many of these are in the North. The inspection programme aims to finish in March 2021; Sunderland remains in the uninspected cohort.

SEN/D and Children Looked After Children

Nationally CLA are four times more likely to have a SEN/D and are nine times more likely to have an education, health and care plan (EHCP); a plan which ensures that

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-health-and-wellbeing-of-looked-after-children--2>

²

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

their identified needs are met within education. In 2018, 55.5% of CLA had a SEN/D with the most common reason for CLA to require an EHCP is social, emotional and mental health needs (CLA.STATS DfE / National Statistics 2019).

The number of CLA in Sunderland in 2018/19 consistently exceeds 600 and is a national outlier for the rate of looked after children. This is in contrast to the number of CLA identified with SEN/D 140 (September 2019), with only 81 requiring support in education with an EHCP. This is below the national average.

Promoting the Health and Well-Being of Looked after Children states that LAs and health professionals should:

- Follow the requirements within the *SEN/D code of practice*.
- Ensure that the EHCP 'works in harmony' with their looked after care plan to tell a coherent and comprehensive story about how the child's health needs in relation to accessing education are being met.
- Health and education professionals should consider how to co-ordinate assessments and reviews of the child's care plan and EHCP to ensure that together, they meet the child's needs without duplicating information unnecessarily.

Method of review

1. To benchmark local practice against regional practice by a review of the SEN/D inspection findings of neighbouring areas.
2. Discussion with the Sunderland Looked After Health (LAH) team to identify current practice/ process and their understanding of SEN/D agenda.
3. To conduct a dip audit of the LAH team records of children with an EHCP to identify the presence of the plan within their records.

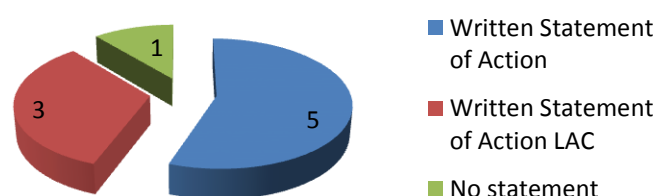
Review Findings

1. The Benchmarking of inspections

A desktop search was completed on neighbouring localities who have received a SEN/D inspection; Durham, Newcastle and Hartlepool have since 2015 been inspected twice. Their findings were;

- Gateshead (2017) received no written statement of action.
- Durham (2017), Hartlepool (2017) Northumbria (2018), Stockton (2019) and South Tyneside (2019) all received statements in relation to multiagency practice however no actions directly related to CLA health care.

Figure 1 Areas inspected and statements issued



In relation to CLA Middlesbrough (2017), Newcastle (2018) and Redcar and Cleveland (2018) all received written statements which identified areas of improvement around CLA practice;

- a. The Newcastle inspection found that the healthcare service for CLA 'does not effectively identify children and YP who have SEN/D. Awareness of children and YP with continuing care needs who become CLA is from across agencies is weak. This reduces the visibility of these children and YP'.
- b. Within Newcastle and Middlesbrough the CLA initial and review health assessments are not completed in a timely way. 'This hinders the early identification and review of this group of children's healthcare needs.'
- c. In Newcastle the results of strengths and difficulties questionnaires undertaken by social care are not always shared or completed in a timely manner so that they can inform health assessments for CLA. This limits their accuracy and, as a result, the emotional and mental health needs of children and young people may not be fully known. Some practitioners do not use any tools other than their own professional judgement to assess the mental health of children looked after. Consequently, children and young people do not have the opportunity to participate fully in these important assessments.
- d. In Redcar and Cleveland there has been a long standing vacancy in South Tees CCG for the designated doctor for CLA. The Designated Medical Officer (DMO) does not have oversight of the effectiveness of arrangements for CLA who have SEN/D.

2. SEN/D practice discussion with the LAH team

Designated Professional conversations regarding SEN/D practice in Named supervision and LAH team meetings confirmed that the team had awareness of the SEN/D agenda and that staff recognised that CLA with SEN/D's vulnerabilities yet;

- The Sunderland health assessment document prompted the recording of children with SEN/D, a Learning Disability and /or EHCP.
- The team had begun to request information from the virtual school to provide information around EHCP and SEN/D to inform the child's health assessment.
- Numerical Data is being collected from the health assessment on the number of children with SEN/D however the team could not recall individual children from this data.
- The LAH team did not have a formalised operational process for SEN/D and CLA.
- The team do not connect the health assessment and EHCP processes. Equally the LA EHCP team do not request or receive a copy of the CLA health assessment to incorporate within the EHC plan.
- There are links with the DMO however these are informal and have not influenced SEN/D practice within the LAH team.

3. **Audit**

In view of the LAH team being unable to identify SEN/D patient level data, the sample of 47 children was identified from the DMO's neurodisability database. These records were reviewed and confirmed that all (100%) contained a contemporary copy of their EHCP in their records.

The number identified on this database seemed unrepresentative of the CLA population and a request for data from Sunderland's virtual school confirmed that 81 CLA have an EHCP with 140 requiring additional educational support. This indicated that only 58% of the Sunderland CLA SEN/D population was known to the LAH team.

Summary of Findings

The aim was for CCG Designated CLA professionals to establish if the LAH team were able to identify and meet the needs of the CLA with SEN/D as specified within national SEN/D / CLA guidance. It also aimed to benchmark local practice against the inspection findings of neighbouring areas.

The findings evidenced both good practice and gaps in relation to CLA and SEN/D practice and are as follows:

Good practice

- Sunderland LAH team do effectively identify children with disabilities and those requiring/ or with an EHCP through the initial and review health assessments. Children have their health needs met through the health assessment action plan and this is shared with their care team and health colleagues.
- The compliance of the Sunderland LAH team in completing health assessments within the statutory timescale averages above the national level of 89.5% as indicated in the table below.

Sunderland Health assessments 2018/19	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Initial	91%	76%	93%	100%
Review	95%	95%	95%	98%

- The LAH team collate the prevalence of CLA/ SEN/D from the health assessments. Once sufficient data is accumulated this will be included within the Sunderland health profile for CLA. The LAH team, designate professionals and the Corporate Parenting Board could consider the use of this information to assist in service design and delivery in the city.

Gaps / area for improvement

- The numbers of CLA with SEN/D and or EHCP are disproportionately low in Sunderland in relation to the National average; further understanding is required of this.
- The LAH team do need to formalise the SEN/D operational process to ensure consistency in operational practice.
- The LAH team require the ability to 'run' reports at patient data level. This would allow the tracking of health needs following health assessment and to be used within the quality assurance process, ensuring that their health needs are fully addressed.
- A greater challenge is the co-production of the EHCP with the statutory health assessment to avoid duplication, both are a statutory requirement and the coordination to ensure that they fit yearly timescales at corresponding times is aspirational.

Discussions have begun between CLA health and the EHCP team to establish a direct request for information and to agree that the health assessment is shared with the EHCP team for collation into the EHC plan. A copy of this will be placed into the LAH records to inform the health assessment.

- The assessment of mental health and SDQ scoring which is a national reporting indicator is contentious as the triangulation of child, care and school assessments is rarely applied correctly. Children's mental health is recognised as a concern in Sunderland and the assessment of such as indicated in the Newcastle inspection requires further exploration and direction by the designated professionals to influence practice.
- The Designated Professionals CLA in Sunderland are fully engaged in the SEN/D agenda the doctor has a working relationship with the DMO, both being employed by the same organisation. However the DMO's level of oversight and obtaining assurance in respect CLA/ SEN/D is unclear and requires further understanding.
- Children looked after and SEN/D will continue to receive consideration within CCG contracts and service design.
- The designated professionals will continue to highlight the CLA / SEN/D across the CCG/LA agendas.

The above findings and recommendation were shared with the LAH team who have implemented a number of service improvements and developed an operational action plan. The CCG actions are tabled below in appendix 1.

Appendix 1 – Designated Action Plan – SEN/D

Recommendation	Action to be taken	Lead	Timescale	Progress	RAG
The SEN/D prevalence will feature within health profile. This will be shared to the local authority and corporate parenting / MALAP	The numbers of SEN/D CLA will be collated and placed on the dashboard	Designate professionals	To be published on Q4 dashboard	Complete, see below	Green
	Explore the reason for the lower prevalence of EHCP in Sunderland compared to national statistics	Designate professionals, SEN team and Virtual School	March 2020	Meeting planned, Virtual school arranging date and venue	Amber
Looked after Children will have their emotional and mental health needs assessed	The implementation of an effective evidenced assessment tool	Designate professionals	September 2020	<i>SDQs were completed in 95% for Q3. Training planned and further work into mental health role</i>	Amber
The designated CLA professionals will ensure that CLA and SEN/D are connected at a strategic level and evidence engagement with the DMO	Designated professionals to develop formal arrangements to ensure that CLA /SEN/D have a profile within the SEN/D agenda across the LA and CCG	CCG Designated CLA professionals	March 2020	<i>Looked after health team and virtual school have met, SEN team and DMO to be invited to further meeting</i>	Amber

September 2019

Vicky Smith - Designated Nurse CLA South Tyneside and Sunderland CCG

Sarah Mills – Designated Doctor CLA Sunderland CCG

Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust

Sunderland Children Looked After Report

January 2020 (Sept – Nov 19)



Caring | Discovering | Growing | **Together**

Sunderland Children Looked After Report September – November 2019

1. Activity

	Sept-19	Oct - 19	Nov - 19
Referrals	10	15	20
Referrals discharged unseen	1	5	6

Referrals discharged unseen

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

September

1. The child referred was moved out of area following adoption

October

1. 3 young people were accessing counselling services via Washington Mind and did not feel they required CYPS at the time of appointment.
2. 1 young person had moved out of the area when contacted to offer an appointment
3. 1 young person no longer required the service when an appointment was offered.

November

1. 3 referrals received had no Mental Health Information provided in the referral, CYPS wrote to referrer and further information was received, 2 referrals have been re-reviewed and accepted into CYPS, 1 referral was not accepted due to no mental health concerns.
2. 1 young person was offered 3 appointments, refused to engage and DNA any appointments offered, agreed referral can be made again in the future should they wish to engage is services.
3. 1 young person was 18 - case transferred to Adult ADHD services
4. 1 young person moved out of area, transferred to local CAMHS services

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 urgent or priority response are highlighted and actioned immediately.

CYPS Intensive Community Treatment Service (ICTS) work extended hours and will respond to the young person via telephone to offer a telephone triage within 1 hour. Any 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.

	Sept-19	Oct - 19	Nov - 19
Urgent	2	2	1
Routine	8	13	19
Total	10	15	20

3. Waiting Times

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

	Sept 19 (Weeks)	Oct 19 (Weeks)	Nov 19 (Weeks)
Wait to Treatment	25	23	20

The Trust is currently undertaking a range of initiatives to increase clinical capacity to support the reduction of waiting times within community services in addition to additional recurring funding secured from the CCG within the 2019/20 contracting round. The Trust has also received non-recurring funding from NHS England to support waiting list pressures and in particular Children who are Looked After.

Following discussions with Commissioners and CCAMHS services, it has been agreed that referrals will be accepted on a needs led basis. This means that a Child who is Looked After or a Child with Special Circumstances with mild to moderate mental health needs do not need to be seen by CYPS, but will be seen by CCAMHS.

Any Children who are Looked After or who have Special Circumstances with a Moderate to Complex need will continue to be referred and seen by CYPS.

Non recurring funding has been focussed to see Children and Young People with Special Circumstances and who are Looked After who are currently open to CYPS and we anticipate all young people currently waiting will be in treatment at the end of next quarter 4 (end March 2020).

A new Pathway has been developed specifically for Children who are Looked After taking account of the additional presenting complexities and needs.. This Pathway specifically focusses on work with Carers, which includes Consultation and Training to Foster Families in conjunction with Together for Children and continued dedicated scaffolding support to Residential Homes in Sunderland.

Quarterly meetings are arranged with Together for Children senior managers to develop more integrated working.

Training: Places have been secured to train more clinicians in specific therapies that will benefit Children Looked After accessing CYPS Services.

DBT – 4 places

EMDR – 2 places

4. Current Caseload

	Sept-19	Oct - 19	Nov- 19
Total Children Looked After	139	147	158
Total CYPS Caseload	2342	2326	2297
Total % Children Looked After	5.9%	6.3%	6.9%

TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

DATE:	20th January 2020
REPORT AUTHOR:	Linda Mason HEAD TEACHER Virtual School
SUBJECT:	Head Teacher's Report
PURPOSE:	FOR INFORMATION

1. SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide the Corporate Parenting Board with the statutory annual report of the Virtual School Head (VSH) and the Virtual School for Together For Children and Sunderland City Council. This report highlights the work of the Virtual School in improving the educational outcomes for Children Looked After from the early years up to targeted care leavers aged 25. The report covers the outcomes for all key stages. It also outlines the activity of the Virtual School Head Teacher, the Virtual School and the 2019 educational outcomes of children in care. Data contained in this report, is for children who were in our care for a year or more as at 31 March 2019.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Board is requested to receive the report for information

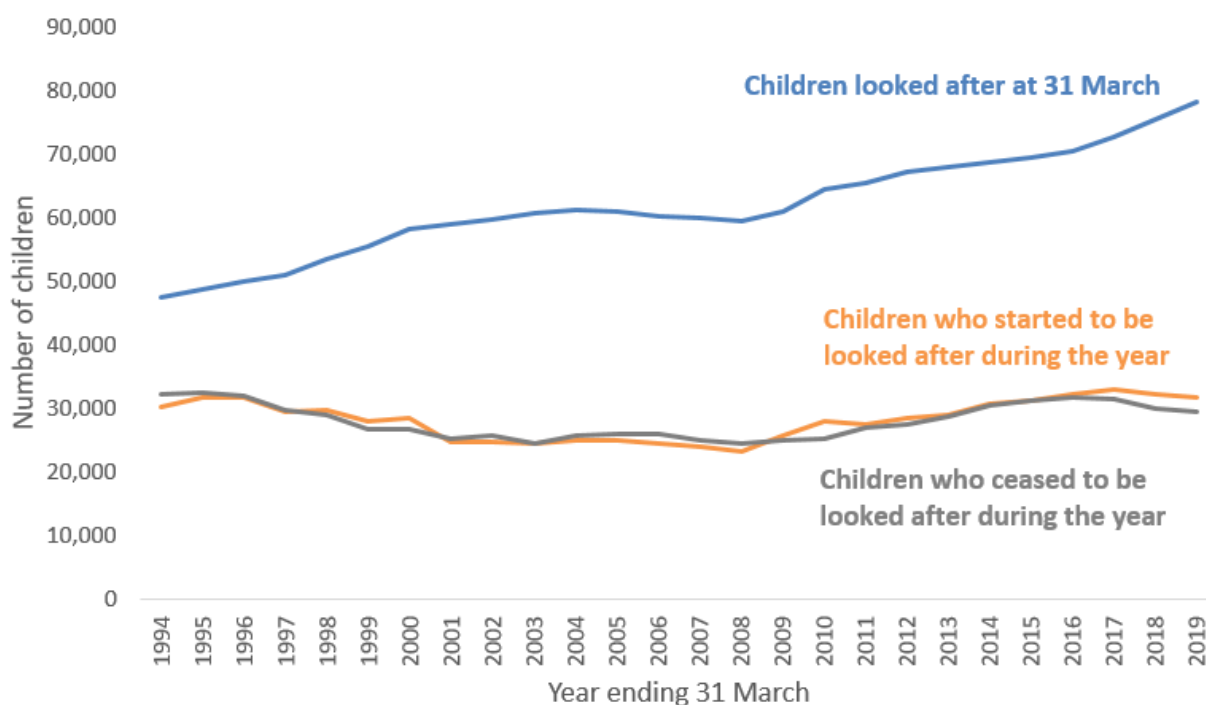
3. Context

At 31 March 2019, the number of children looked after (CLA) by local authorities in England increased by 4% since 2018 to 78,150 - continuing increases seen in recent years. This is equivalent to a rate of 65 children per 10,000 - up from 64 per 10,000 in 2018 and 60 per 10,000 in 2015.

The number of children starting to be looked after has fallen this year by 2% to 31,680.

The number ceasing to be looked after has fallen this year by 2% to 29,460 after a period of gradual increases and a high of 31,860 in 2016.

Number of children starting and ceasing to be looked after in the year and numbers at 31 March England, 1994 to 2019



3.1 Characteristics of children looked after at 31 March

Just over half are male (56%) - 44% are female; similar to 2018.

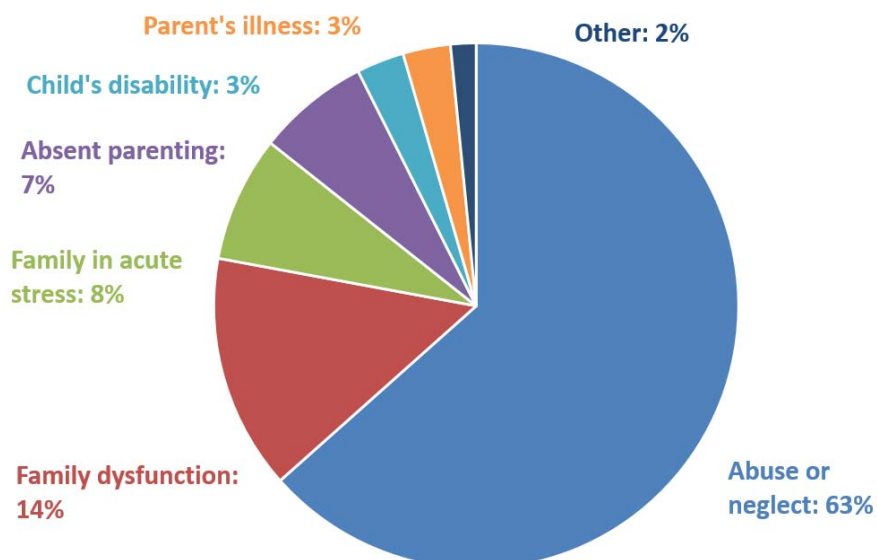
The largest age group (39%) are aged 10-15 years; 24% are aged 16 years and over; 18% are aged 5-9 years, 13% are aged 1-4 years and 5% are aged under 1 year. Over the last 5 years the average age of CLA has been steadily increasing.

The majority are of white ethnicity (74%). 10% were of mixed ethnicity and 8% were of Black or Black British ethnicity. Since 2015, the proportion of CLA of white ethnicity has decreased steadily from 77%. It is likely this slight change is due to the broadly non-white make up of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), a group which has recently grown in number.

3.2 Reason for being looked after

When a child is assessed by children's services their primary need is recorded. There are a range of reasons why a child is looked after including being looked after:

- as a result of or because they were at risk of abuse or neglect - 49,570 children - the most common reason identified
- primarily due to living in a family where the parenting capacity is chronically inadequate (family dysfunction) - 11,310
- due to living in a family that is going through a temporary crisis that diminishes the parental capacity to adequately meet some of the children's needs (family being in acute stress) - 6,050
- due to there being no parents available to provide for the child - 5,410
- due to the child's or parent's disability or illness - 4,580
- due to low income or socially unacceptable behaviour – 1,230.



3.3 Looked after and previously looked after children start with the disadvantage of their pre-care experiences and, often, have special educational and mental health needs.

Children in care are:

- 4 times more likely to have special educational needs than all children
- 10 times more likely to have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

When reviewing the primary need of the EHCP and SEND social, emotional and mental health was the highest category for the children in our care. 34% of our looked after children have an identified SEND. (see table 4.4 for a breakdown by age and stage of SEND)

3.4 VSHs have a key role to ensure these children have the maximum opportunity to reach their full educational potential - an important part of why this head teacher role was made statutory. For children looked after, as part of a local authority's corporate parent role, the VSH is the educational advocate that parents are for others.

3.5 For children previously looked after, the VSH is a source of advice and information to help parents advocate for them as effectively as possible. VSHs do not act as a corporate parent in these circumstances but are there to promote the educational achievement of these children through the provision of advice and information to those with parental responsibility

3.6 In order to achieve positive outcomes, the Virtual School team closely monitor the education outcomes of our children looked after. We have robust monitoring systems in place to ensure we keep track of educational progress each term. This enables us to evaluate the impact of the Pupil Premium Plus and identify pupils that may need additional support.

3.7 Our Pupil Premium process involves giving schools a termly payment on the receipt of a high-quality Personal Education Plan which details interventions and support against planned spend. An amount of the Pupil Premium is retained centrally and is available for complex and immediate need for support, individual requests for tuition, and ICT equipment for example.

3.8 Personal Education Plans are quality assured to ensure they contain the relevant information and include SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound) targets, these can be short, medium and/or longer term. The plans must link the targets to specific interventions and support as well as identifying how the pupil premium will be spent. The Virtual School will be promoting the work of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) who have done valuable research work based on the impact of school interventions focusing on cost and impact on pupil performance. Many schools are beginning to refer to this work in their annual pupil premium statements which are published on school websites. We have trained all Designated Teachers both in and out of Sunderland Local Authority in the use of the electronic PEP (EPEP). This has been successfully implemented with a compliance rate of 88%, that is completed in the Autumn Term 2019. Schools are now expected to complete a termly review with a new EPEP each term. The Virtual School is working closely with the Next Steps team in Social Care in further developing the use of the Pathway Plan education section as the plan for Post 16 Children Looked After. Following this term's implementation, a key area of focus is on the quality assurance through a moderation programme and sharing of good practice. A key target for the Virtual School will be to implement the EPEP and provide training for all social workers and IROs in the Spring Term 2020.

3.8 Research carried out by The Rees Centre, Oxford University, identified a range of factors that impacted most on the educational outcomes of looked after children. These included stability of placement and school, good mental health, SEN and remaining in mainstream provision, where appropriate. The VSH will continue to work closely with social care, health and other agencies to ensure that together we can provide the support needed in pursuit of outstanding educational outcomes.

3.9 Our looked after population still has a high proportion with SEN and for some pupils, a more specialist provision is what they require. Our focus is on ensuring pupils are assessed fully, their needs are understood and appropriate placements are sought.

3.10 Training is a key role of the Virtual School and this will include:

- Carers
- Adoptive parents
- Designated Teachers
- School staff
- SENCos
- Social Workers
- IROS

3.11 Structure of Virtual School

	November 2018		January 2019	Current Proposals
Head Teacher	1 FTE	Strategic Leadership	1FTE	Strategic Leadership
Senior Lead			1FTE	Leadership EPEP and Children Previously Looked After
Teaching Staff	1.4 FTE	Specialist teachers	1.9 FTE	Specialist Teachers
Support Staff	2.6 FTE	Post 16 and NEET Intervention and Support for most complex including SEND and special schools, and, out of area CLA Emotional and Mental Support	2.6 FTE	Support, Intervention and Safeguarding Officers: Early Years KS1 KS2 KS 3 and 4 Post 16
Business Support	1 FTE		1FTE	
Data	1 FTE		1FTE	
Associate Teachers				10 teachers employed on variable hours to provide support in school, home tuition and tuition on site

The current structure has been reviewed and new proposals will be consulted on in January 2020.

3.12 Governance

The Virtual School has its own governing body and this will provide support and challenge to the Head Teacher. With the support of a National Lead for Governance and support from the National Association of Virtual School Head Teachers (NAVSH) through the information on governance in their Handbook they have reformed and established a new Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference. A number of new members are being sought to ensure breadth of experience and skills.

3.13 Working together for children

An essential aspect of the role of the VSH is to work closely with a wide range of agencies and partners and all schools both in Sunderland and those schools outside of Sunderland that provide an education for the children we care for. Our ambition is to get the best education for these

children. The VSH will also ensure that outstanding relationships are developed with regional VSH colleagues as we also educate a significant number of other local authority children in Sunderland schools (see table 4.5).

4 CLA POPULATION

The tables below provide the data for Sunderland.

Table 4.1

Source National Statistics Children Looked After in England including adoption 2018-2019

Total Number of Children 0-18 years looked after as at 31 st March				
2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
570	550	540	579	595

Table 4.2

Number of Children Looked After: rates per 10,000 children aged under 18 years					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
National	60	60	62	64	65
Region	81	84	92	96	101
Sunderland	105	101	100	107	109

Source National Statistics Children Looked After in England including adoption 2018 – 2019

Table 4.3

Number of Children Looked After by Sunderland City Council for at least one year as at 31 st March				
2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
330	371	287	335	xxx

Source National Statistics Children Looked After in England including adoption 2018 – 2019

What is important to note is that whilst 595 children and young people were in the care of Sunderland City Council during the academic year, 335 were in care for at least one year as of 31st March, between the ages of five and sixteen, and are therefore used for statistical purposes throughout this report when looking at educational outcomes.

Table 4.4

SCHOOL ROLL							
	Total	Male	%	Female	%	EHCP	SEND Support
Pre School	108	52	48	56	52	0	0
Nursery 1	17	14	82	3	8	0	0
Nursery 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	125	66	53	58	47	0	0
Reception	18	8	44	10	56	0	3
Year 1	18	11	61	7	39	0	5
Year 2	20	10	50	10	50	2	4
Year 3	25	14	56	11	44	1	3
Year 4	18	9	50	9	50	1	4
Year 5	27	15	55	12	45	4	6
Year 6	31	18	58	13	42	5	9
Total	157	85	54	72	46	13	34
Year 7	38	20	53	18	47	4	11
Year 8	41	25	61	16	39	8	10
Year 9	50	30	60	20	40	10	12
Year 10	37	24	65	13	35	8	12
Year 11	38	19	50	19	50	2	14
Total	204	118	59	86	41	32	59
Year 12	47	29	62	18	38	8	15
Year 13	36	16	44	20	56	9	12
Total	83	45	54	38	46	17	27
Of which NEET	26	31%					
TOTAL CLA Population	569	314	55	254	45	62	120
TOTAL SEND Population	182	32%				34%	21%

Source Virtual School Data 2020

Table 4.5

Sunderland CLA placed in other Local Authority Schools OOA
 Other Local Authority CLA placed in Sunderland schools OLA

OOA	98	23 LAs	
OLA	37	10 LAs	17 of which are in Post 16 provision eg Sunderland College

Source Virtual School data Welfare Call 2020

Table 4.6

Pupils in schools by OFSTED Category

OFSTED RATING	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Not applicable
Reception to Year 6 (157)	19 (12%)	125 (80%)	8 (6%)	5 (2%)	0
Year 7 to Year 11 (204)	36 (18%)	72 (35%)	49 (24%)	41 (20%)	6(3%)
Year 12 and Year 13 (83)	7 (8%)	27 (33%)	4 (5%)	0	45 (54%)
TOTAL 444	62 (14%)	224 (50%)	61 (14%)	46(10%)	51(11%)
	64% in Good or better schools				

Source Virtual School Data and OFSTED 2020

Table 4.6

Ethnicity

Ethnicity All CLA (569)		Number	%
White	British	539	94.7%
White	Scottish	1	0.17%
White	Irish	1	0.17%
White	Other	5	0.87%
White	Romanian	4	0.70%
Asian	Bangladeshi	2	0.35%
Asian	Other	5	0.87%
Asian	Indian	1	0.17%
Black	Other	3	0.52%
Mixed/dual background	Mixed White African	4	0.70%
Mixed/dual background	Mixed White Asian	2	0.35%
Other		2	0.35%

Source Virtual School Data 2020

5 Educational Outcomes

5.1 Virtual Schools now have access to the national NCER (National Consortium for Examination Results) database. A specific set of reports have been developed that brings together education and care data. This is especially useful when trying to make national comparisons. Our cohorts in Sunderland are often very small and outcomes vary year on year, depending on the profile of the pupils. The new system enables us to compare cohorts by gender, time in care, type of provision, number of care placements and age entering care. We can compare CLA performance with national and regional CLA and this is more meaningful than comparing CLA performance with national and local non-CLA performance. I have included the provisional, unvalidated data for all schools nationally and in Sunderland for each stage.

5.2 Early Years Foundation Stage Profile EYFS

	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
EYFSP	GLD ¹		PRIME ² GOALS		ALL GOALS	
National ALL Schools	71.7%	71.8%	79.4%	79.2%	70.3%	70.7%
Sunderland ALL Schools	71.1%	72.6%	79.6%	72.5%	70.8%	71.9%
National CLA	48.0%	47.0%	57.0%	57.0%	47.0%	46.0%
NE Region CLA	51.0%	51.0%	63.0%	60.0%	50.0%	51.0%
Virtual School CLA	46.8%	55.6%	57.4%	69.4%	46.8%	55.6%

Source NCER 2019

Key	GLD	good Level of development
	COM ²	communication and language
	PHY ²	physical development
	PSE ²	personal, social and emotional
	LIT ²	literacy
	MAT ²	maths
	UTW	understanding the world
	EXP	expressive arts and design

- 1 Good Level of Development GLD: pupil will have achieved at least expected level in all Prime, LIT and MAT goals.
- 2 Prime goals

There were 36 children in this cohort 55.6% achieved a GLD compared with the national figure of 47.0% and a regional figure of 51.0%. An individual pupil analysis is available, and this will enable us to identify the children who did not perform well and work with schools and settings to support improvements, this will be reflected in future PEPs. Our Early Years Foundation profile for looked after children has improved this year and compares favourably against regional and national figures overall. The Virtual School will work with schools and designated teachers to consider how further work on the Early Years EPEP and attainment and progress can support further improvement of performance in this area. The Head Teacher, together with the newly designated Intervention, Support and Safeguarding Officer Early Years, KS1 and KS2 and virtual school teachers will monitor termly the attainment and progress and associated targets within the EPEP. Emphasis will be put on the new SEND ranges to ensure early identification of need to ensure appropriate support and intervention can be provided in a timely manner.

5.3 Key Stage 1

Expected Level or above

KS1		Reading	Writing	Maths	Science	RWM
National ALL	2018	75.4%	69.9%	76.1%	82.4%	65.3%
	2019	75.0%	69.0%	76.0%	82.0%	
Sunderland	2018	76.0%	71.0%	77.0%	83.2%	67.7%
	2019	74.9%	71.1%	77.0%	81.2%	67.6%
National CLA	2018	52.0%	43.0%	51.0%	60.0%	38.0%
	2019	52.0%	43.0%	51.0%	61.0%	38.0%
NE Region CLA	2018	54.0%	47.0%	55.0%	63.0%	42.0%
	2019	59.0%	51.0%	57.0%	67.0%	46.0%
Virtual School CLA	2018	51.7%	48.3%	51.7%	65.5%	41.4%
	2019	61.09%	52.4%	61.9	64.3%	42.9%

Source NCER 2019

Key

RWM = Reading, Writing and Maths combined at expected level or above

There were 42 children in this cohort, 61.09% were working at or above the expected standard in reading compared with the national figure of 52.0% and a regional figure of 59.0%. In writing 52.4% were at the expected standard or above compared with a national outcome of 43% and 51% regionally. 61.9% were at the expected standard or above in maths compared to a national figure of 51% and 57% regionally. In Science 64.3% of our CLA were at expected levels or above compared to the national figure of 61% and a regional outcome of 67%. When the outcomes for reading, writing and maths (RWM) are combined 42.9% of Sunderland CLA achieved the expected standard or above compared to a national figure of 38% and a regional 46% CLA. Performance at KS1 has improved compared to last year's data is above national data.

An individual pupil analysis is available, and this will enable us to identify the children who did not perform well and work with schools and settings to support improvements, this will be reflected in future EPEPs.

5.3 Key Stage 2

KS2		RWM Exp	RWM High	R Exp	R High	WTA Exp	WTA High	M Exp	M High	GPS Exp	GPS High
National ALL Schools	2018	64.4%	9.9%	75.3%	28.1%	78.3%	19.9%	75.6%	23.6%	77.7%	34.4%
	2019	65%	10%	73%	27%	78%	20%	79%	27%	78%	36%
Sunderland ALL Schools	2018	67.9%	10.9%	77.5%	29.8%	81.2%	23.5%	78.7%	24.2%	79.6%	37.9%
	2019	66%	11%	80%	22%	81%	24%	83%	38%	79%	29%

National CLA	2018	35.0%	2.0%	51.0%	13.0%	40.0%	6.0%	47.0%	8.0%	50.0%	14.0%
	2019	36.0%	2.0%	49.0%	12.0%	50.0%	6.0%	51.0%	9.0%	53.0%	15.0%
NE Region CLA	2018	44.0%	2.0%	57.0%	13.0%	58.0%	6.0%	57.0%	9.0%	57.0%	16.0%
	2019	45.0%	3.0%	56.0%	14.0%	59.0%	10.0%	61.0%	12.0%	60.0%	19.0%
Virtual School CLA	2018	41.7%	6.3%	60.4%	14.6%	58.3%	12.5%	58.3%	10.4%	54.2%	18.8%
	2019	43.9%	2.4%	58.5%	7.3%	65.9%	12.2%	58.5%	4.9%	63.4%	14.6%

Source NCER 2019

Key

RWM	Reading Writing and Maths combined
R	Reading
WTA	Writing Teacher Assessed
M	Maths
GPS	Grammar Punctuation and Spelling
Exp	At expected level
High	At higher level

There were 41 children in this cohort. Outcomes for reading, writing and maths were above national and regional outcomes at expected and above levels. For the combined indicator of reading, writing and maths (RWM) outcomes we were higher than national performance, lower than regional performance but had a similar percentage performing at higher levels as national and the region. This was also reflected in the grammar, punctuation and spelling outcomes. This is strong performance at key stage 2. There is a further KS1 – 2 progress measure, not shown above, this shows that we are significantly above national and the region in all areas.

An individual pupil analysis is available, and this will enable us to identify the children who did not perform well and enables us to work with secondary schools and settings to support improvements, this will be reflected in future EPEPs.

5.4 Key Stage 4

KS4		Att8 APS	Progress 8	9-5 in EM	EBacc entry
National ALL Schools	2018	46.6	-0.02	43.3%	38.4%
	2019	46.7	-0.30	43.0%	40.1%
Sunderland ALL Schools	2018	43.2	-0.36	36.2%	41.9%
	2019	42.7	-0.40	37.0%	39.1%
National CLA	2018	17.5	-1.10	9.6%	11.0%
	2019	23.3	-1.12	10.0%	13.0%
NE Region CLA	2018	18.9	-1.27	10.4%	9.4%
	2019	20.1	-1.46	8.0%	8.0%
Virtual School CLA	2018	17.7	-1.17	8.6%	8.6%
	2019	21.3	-1.55	16.0%	4.0%

Source NCER 2019

Key

Att 8	Attainment 8 is a measure of a pupil's average grade across a set suite of 8 subjects
Progress 8	Progress 8 is based on a pupil's performance score across 8 subjects a value-added measure from KS2 – 4. 0 is average.

All the Progress 8 outcomes above represent performance significantly below average.

9-5 in EM	A grade in English and maths at level 5 or above. 5 is equivalent to a strong pass between a C and B grade. Level 4 represents the old C pass
EBacc entry	The % of pupils who study a suite of EBacc subjects: English language and literature; maths; the sciences; geography or history and a language

There were 38 children in this cohort, performance at attainment 8 was above both the national and regional figures. Progress 8 for these children was -0.05 below the national average, although both regional and national also have a negative progress measure. 23.7% of the cohort achieved the higher, strong 9-5 outcome for English and Maths and 39.4% achieved the previous, standard 9-4 outcome for English and Maths both indicators were above national and regional CLA outcomes.

Further individual pupil analysis will provide key information and case studies as to why performance has strengthened this year, this will inform post 16 activity, interventions and support and the content of post 16 EPEPs. target for the Virtual School will be to work with schools and designated teachers to consider how we can further improve performance in this area.

5.6 Post 16/Key stage 5

2019 Cohort

	Cohort	Further Ed Inc 6 th form	Training & Employment	Other	NEET	Total % in ETE
2019	56	14	16	12	14	54%

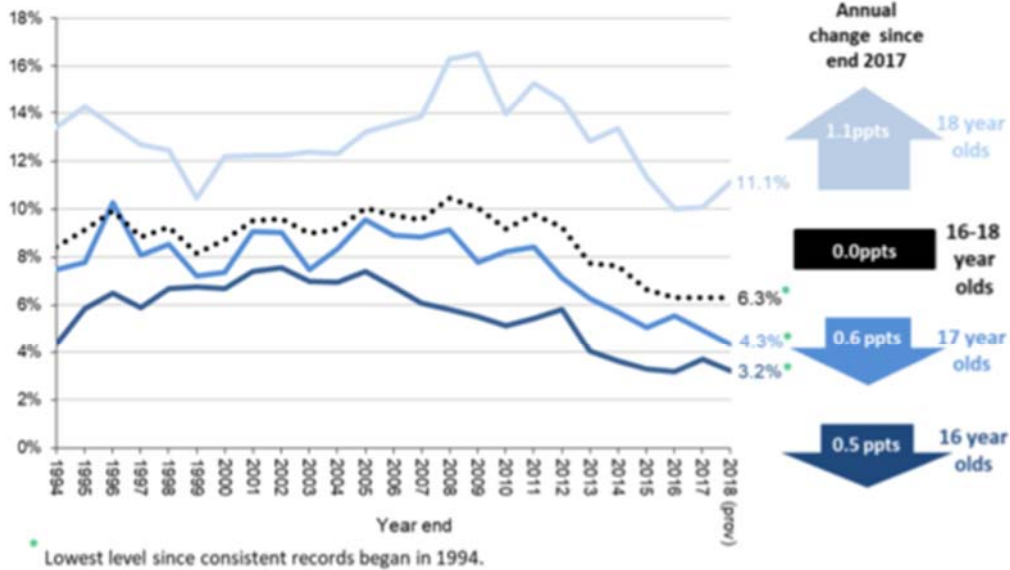
NEET

There are currently 83 post 16 young people on roll with the Virtual School, 47 in year 12 and 36 in year 13 (classed as "relevant"). As of January 2020, 26 of these are identified as NEET, 31% of the cohort. Nationally figures relate to the year ending March 2019, 27% of 17-year olds were NEET and 30% of 18-year olds were NEET (SSDA930). The Virtual School has similar outcomes. National figures for NEET are in the table below.

Unfortunately, the Virtual School has been without a Post 16 Coordinator for 12 months, this post will be recruited this term and will

NEET rate down at ages 16 and 17 but up at age 18, overall 16-18 NEET rate stable

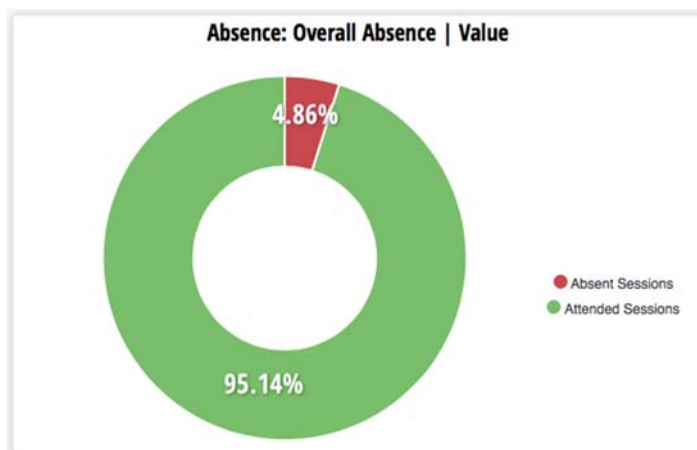
Proportion NEET by academic age, England

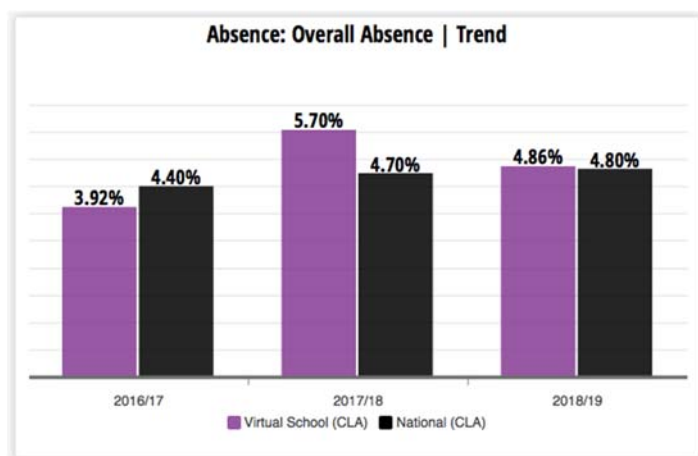


These figures are affected by a number of young people recently returning to the Sunderland area from out of area and secure units who are being re-engaged into mainstream training and education, some of whom are struggling to maintain residential placements. There are also several young people in later stages of confinement who do not wish to engage until after the birth of their child. There are also some young people who refuse to engage with education or training support from either Connexions or the Virtual School.

The NEET figures are also affected by changes in education and training offers within the area such as, closure of training providers, discontinuation of specific courses and discontinuation of rolling enrolments leading to difficulty in some instances enrolling young people onto new courses speedily. To address this, approaches have been made to Sunderland College, the Sunderland Training Providers Association and individual training providers to source new courses and potential new provision as well as discussion about the re-introduction of rolling enrolments. There is also significant work being done across key partners related to post 16 NEET vulnerable groups including CLA.

6 Attendance





We commission Welfare Call to collate this data on a daily basis (this organisation works with 112 local authorities nationally), this enables us to work with schools, social workers and the child to intervene quickly to reduce any persistent or unauthorised absence. There has been a declining trend but this data shows a return to 95% + The Virtual School will continue to scrutinise the attendance of any looked after child whose attendance falls below 95%, intervention and support will be provided where appropriate.

7 Exclusions

2018/19 data demonstrates there has been 54 CLA fixed term excluded. This equates to 253 days of exclusion across 31 schools.

The main reasons that CLA were fixed term excluded was due to Persistent Disruptive Behaviour (34%) and Verbal Assault of an Adult (15%).

34 of the 54 CLA pupils were fixed term excluded more than once.

An improvement target for the Virtual School will be to analyse the data to determine which looked after children have been involved in fixed term exclusion, what is known about the antecedents leading up to these exclusions and, the relationship this has to planned and actual interventions and the role of education, social care and partner agencies. The outcomes of the analysis will be used to inform future practice.

8 Next steps

The VSH school self-evaluation reflects the outcomes in this report and the school improvement plan identifies the key actions to improve the outcomes of CLA in 2019/2020

Key priorities will be:

Develop the effectiveness of leadership and management
 Raise attainment and progress for CLA
 To engage Partners in improvement of educational outcomes for CLA
 To raise profile of Sunderland Virtual School

- EPEP development and improvement of quality and timeliness of completion
- Improving attendance
- Reducing Exclusions

- Education placement for all CLA
- No drift on admissions to new schools
- New structure including the development of Associate Tutors
- Annual training programme

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Full utilisation of the Pupil Premium grant in support of improving educational outcomes

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

DFE Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children
Statutory guidance for local authorities February 2018

DFE The Designated Teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children
Statutory guidance for local authorities February 2018

National Association of Virtual School Head Teachers
The Virtual School Handbook 2018

11 CONTACT

Name: Linda Mason
Position: Head Teacher Virtual School
Email: linda.mason@togetherforchildren.org.uk
Tel: 0191 5615696



TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN	
REPORT AUTHORS:	Keith Munro & Jackie Amos Foster Carer Reviewing/Regulation 44 Officers.
SUBJECT:	Regulation 44 report summarising visits from May 2019 to October 2019.
PURPOSE:	To provide the members of the Corporate Parenting Board with an update on the findings in relation to the Regulation 44 visits.

Purpose

To provide members of the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) with an update on the findings in relation to monthly unannounced Regulation 44 visits (The Children's Homes Regulations 2015) undertaken between May 2019 until October 2019.

This report provides an overview of service performance reflecting on key areas of strength and highlighting any emerging issues to the Management Team and CPB.

Background

The current Children's Homes Regulations and Quality Standards were released in their final form in April 2015.

Regulation 44 of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 clearly states that the registered provider shall appoint, at the registered provider's expense, an independent person to visit and report on the children's home in accordance with this regulation. This is to ensure objective critical analysis with a view to improve safeguarding and service delivery for children.

The Regulation 44 Visitor must be able to evidence demonstrable independence and have the skills necessary to relate to children and young people, assess all relevant information and form a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care.

Independence is defined in the DfE Guidance as a person outside of the line management of the home, including the involvement in the care planning or financial arrangements of the home, visit and report. They may be an employee or be commissioned but must have, 'a clear separation between those with a direct interest in the home performing well'. (2.12DfE Guidance)

There is one full-time and two part-time Foster Care Review/Regulation 44 Officer posts situated in the Children's Independent Review Team within the Corporate & Commercial Services Directorate. In October 2019 a part time left. A successful recruitment process has been completed with the new member of staff due to join the team on the 06/01/2020. The three officers are qualified social workers who have the relevant skills, knowledge and experience to undertake the regulation 44 visits.

Role of the Independent Visitor

Regulation 44 states that the independent person, when carrying out a visit, must interview children and young people accommodated in the home, their parents or relatives, staff from the home and relevant professionals. They are also required to inspect the premises and records (including children's case records where the child and their placing authority consents) of the children's home. The independent visitor produces a report about each visit (referred to in the Regulations as "the independent person's report") which sets out, the independent person's opinion as to whether:

- (a) children are effectively safeguarded; and
- (b) the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.

The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether to take those actions. A copy of the report is sent each month to Ofsted, the Responsible Individual, the Strategic Service Manager for Accommodation and the Homes Manager.

Performance Overview

The following table provides the dates within the reporting period that Regulation 44 visits have been undertaken and the date of most recent Ofsted visit:

Home	Recent Ofsted	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
Colombo Road	18&19/10/19	09/05/19	06/06/19	02/07/19	06/08/19	03/09/19	18/10/19
Monument View	12&13/11/19	09/05/19	12/06/19	19/07/19	12/08/19	05/09/19	02/10/19
Grasswell House	07&08/05/19	13/05/19	03/06/19	08/07/19	12/08/19	05/09/19	02/10/19
Revelstoke Road	02&03/07/19	08/05/19	04/06/19	05/07/19	02/08/19	05/09/19	03/10/19

Administration

On average, it takes seven hours each month to undertake the Regulation 44 visits at each of the four homes. Evidence is gathered from a range of sources including young people and parents and information is evaluated to inform the report. When completed the reports are distributed by the Regulation 44 visitor to the managers of the homes within 5 working days and at the end of the process the monthly report is then forwarded to Ofsted.

During each visit at least one young person is consulted with. The discussions include their relationships with staff and how staff try to support them in relation to their education or training, hobbies and personal interests. Wherever possible a parent or carer of a different young person is also consulted with during the visit. Where this is not possible the young person's social worker or

Independent Reviewing Officer are contacted to gain their views about the care they feel is provided to the child by staff at the home.

Colombo Road

Colombo Road Children's Home is approved for up to six young people of either gender aged from twelve up to the age of eighteen. It is situated on a large housing estate in the Hylton Castle area of Sunderland. A new Senior RCCW was appointed in October 2019 bringing the management team to full strength.

The following table shows the Ofsted Judgements for the 2018 and 2019 Ofsted inspections of Colombo Road. Since the last report to CPB there has been an inspection made by Ofsted. The home has been judged to be outstanding for the last three years.

Ofsted Rating	07/02/18 Judgement	18 &19/09/18 Judgement	21&22/10/19 Judgement
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Sustained Effectiveness	Outstanding	Outstanding
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Sustained Effectiveness	Outstanding	Outstanding
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Sustained Effectiveness	Outstanding	Outstanding

Within the reporting period Colombo Road has provided care for the following numbers of young people:

May	June	July	August	September	October
5	5	5	5	5	4

Colombo Road has had unannounced Regulation 44 visits undertaken during each month of the reporting period. The management and staff team respond positively to the recommendations made in the monthly reports. They discuss the recommendations at team meetings and view the recommendations as helpful to their ongoing development of practice and running of the home. The care practice observed with young people throughout the reporting period has been of a high standard.

No of admissions in reporting period	No of discharges in reporting period	No of missing incidents	No of missing incidents over 24hrs	Number of recommendations in the reporting period
0	2	36	0	6

Young people have positive relationships with the staff at the home. Staff use a therapeutic parenting model (PACE) which is centred on understanding trauma and emphasises building relationships where staff focus on connecting with young people. While the number of episodes of young people reported missing to the Police was 36 which was a significant increase from the last reporting period which was 2, it was positive to note for the second reporting period running no

young people were missing for more than 24 hours. After young people return from an episode of being missing, they are offered independent return home interviews via workers commissioned from Barnardo's.

Sanctions or consequences in response to challenging behaviour presented by young people were issued on 23 occasions which was a significant increase on the previous reporting period of 3. This was due to several incidents where young people had behaved inappropriately at the home in groups. Restraints were used on 2 occasions which was a slight decrease from 3 in the previous reporting period. Thirteen critical incidents were recorded which was the same number from the previous reporting period. Five notifications were made to Ofsted which was a slight reduction from the previous reporting period of 7. Critical incidents are responded to and reflected upon in a timely way. A post crisis response is completed for each incident and actions identified and progressed to prevent reoccurrence. This involves not only learning for the home but also the opportunity for the young person to undertake some reflection to avoid the situation re-occurring.

The fabric of the building of Colombo Road both internally and externally is maintained to a very good standard. The environment within the home feels homely and young people report during visits that they feel safe. The home remains decorated and furnished to a high standard in a modern style. A capital bid to replace the boilers and refurbish the kitchen was agreed and this work was completed during the review period

The young people living at the home are settled and have high levels of attendance in education/training. Young people take up a wide variety of activities and personal hobbies inside and out with the home and take part in trips out with staff.

To summarise, the number of recommendations reduced significantly to 13 from 20 in this reporting period. Recommendations ranged from improvements to the kitchen to reviewing the individual crisis management plans for young people. The recommendations from the regulation 44 visits were accepted by the manager and implemented within the given timescales. The manager and staff have been judged by Ofsted to be outstanding for a third consecutive year. While the manager and staff recognise this as a great achievement, they remain committed to continuing to seek ways to improve the care they provide.

Voice of a Young Person

A young person was spoken with during the visit on the 11/10/19 whilst he was playing Lego with a member of staff. This is the first time B had spoken to the visitor.

B said that he got on well with staff at the home and liked his link worker Al who he felt he gets on with well. B was relaxed in the company of the member of staff he was playing Lego with which was consistent with his views about getting on well with staff. B commented that he was doing well at his alternative school placement & his tutoring since coming into placement and had completed 100% attendance at school last week something he was proud about. B said he receives a clothing allowance and has had the opportunity to choose the clothes he wants which he likes. B commented that he liked all the food which staff prepare, and he did not have any favourite meals. B said that he "*Liked things just the way they are*" at the home. Overall B summed up his experiences to date of living at the home as "*I love it here*".

Voice of a Parent

A parent of D was spoken to during the visit on the 03/09/19. D reported he is happy with the progress D is making in placement, describing him as "*doing brilliant*" with just the odd occasion of being led off by the other young people. He stated that he was "*more than happy*" with the care

D received. He advised that the staff always keep in touch with him about what D is doing, with them “*never off the phone*”, which he sees as a good thing. He knows who D’s link worker is. When he sees D, he is always well presented, with good, clean clothing. He thinks that D has lots of opportunities to go on outings and participate in activities.

Monument View

Monument View provides residential care for up to six young people of either gender aged from twelve up to the age of eighteen. It is situated geographically within Sunderland West. There have been no changes to the management structure in this reporting period. The staff team remains very stable, cohesive and committed to ensuring the best outcomes possible for young people living there

The following table shows the Ofsted judgements for the 2018 and 2019 inspections of Monument View. At the most recent Ofsted Inspection undertaken on the 12 &13/11/19 Monument View had their judgement of effectiveness reduced from an overall Outstanding to Good. When this report was completed Ofsted had not released their inspection report. Therefore, the reasons for the change in judgement were not formally available to the manager and Service Manager to consider.

Ofsted Rating	24/01/18 Judgement	9 &10/10/18 Judgement	12 &13/10/19 Judgement
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Sustained Effectiveness	Outstanding	Good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Sustained Effectiveness	Good	Good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Sustained Effectiveness	Outstanding	Good

Within the reporting period Monument View has provided care for the following numbers of young people:

May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Aug
6	5	5	6	6	5

Monument View has had an unannounced Regulation 44 visit each month during the reporting period. The management and staff team responded well to the recommendations. Recommendations are discussed at team meetings and seen as assisting the home in maintaining standards and improving practice. The care practice observed with young people continues to be of a very high standard during visits to the home.

Each young person has education and/or training provision and where young people struggle to engage with education or training the manager and staff team work diligently in supporting them to re-engage. There is demonstrable evidence of how staff work in partnership with young people, their parents and relevant professionals to help young people to achieve their true potential.

Monument View is maintained to a consistently high standard. In November 2019 a new kitchen was fitted which has enhanced the internal appearance of the home. The homes location, garden and outbuildings provide a caring and safe environment. Young people are supported to grow their own produce and look after the hens and ducks. The home has a community built a yurt in

the garden. The home has a sensory room which is equipped to create a therapeutic environment for young people.

No of admissions in reporting period	No of discharges in reporting period	No of missing incidents	No of missing incidents over 24hrs	No of rec's in the reporting period
2	2	20	3	6

Young people have good relationships with the staff at the home. Staff are implementing a therapeutic parenting model (PACE) which is centred on understanding trauma and focuses building relationships where staff place an emphasis on connecting with young people.

There were 20 reported episodes of young people being reported missing from care compared to 41 in the previous reporting period which is a significant decrease. On 3 occasions young people were reported missing for more than 24 hour the same number as the previous reporting period. Sanctions were used on 2 occasions which was slightly down when compared to the 4 used during the previous reporting period. After young people return from an episode of being missing, they are offered interviews from the Barnardo's missing from home or care service workers. There were 0 restraints used during the reporting period the same as the previous reporting period. There were 2 critical incidents recorded which is a significant decrease from 8 reported previously. There were 3 notifications made to Ofsted the same number as in the last reporting period. A post crisis response is completed for each incident and actions identified and taken forward to prevent reoccurrence. The number of recommendations has increased slightly to 6 compared to 5. Recommendations ranged from: reassessing the risk assessment scoring of a young person to the maintenance of the building. The recommendations from the regulation 44 visits were accepted by the manager and implemented within the given timescales.

In summary, the manager and staff at the home were disappointed when the Ofsted rating for the home was moved from outstanding to good at the most recent inspection. Dependent upon the evidence provided within the Ofsted report, the Manager and the Service Manager may propose Together for Children liaises with Ofsted in relation to the outcome. However, the manager with support from his line manager are motivated and committed to learning from the observations and comments made by Ofsted to work towards regaining their outstanding rating.

Voice of a Young Person

P was spoken with briefly prior to him leaving to attend his training course. P said he was happy in placement. P looked physically well and was very well dressed in modern good quality clothes. P really liked the professional photograph album that staff had obtained for him and KP that captured great memories from their trip to Barcelona this summer with staff. NK was also listened to and spoken with in more depth during the visit. N was looking forward to going away with a friend of hers (not a child looked after) with two female members of staff to a beach caravan site in Northumberland in the homes caravan the following weekend. N was pleased staff had arranged for her friend to come along on this trip. At present N commented that she attends a local trust part time and is aware that a placement to meet her needs to study Art has been identified and all staff involved in her care are trying to make this happen for her. N felt that she can make age appropriate choices at the home such as the style and type of clothing she likes and that she can prepare meals for herself and her favourite is currently salad. N said that staff have supported her to learn to cook and wash and dry her clothes'. N could not think of any improvements or changes she would like to be made at the home. The impression the visitor gained was that N is happy in her placement.

Voice of a Parent

A telephone conversation was held on the 02/10/19 with D, K's mother, during the visit. D was very pleased with the progress her son is making in respect of having a job and undertaking driving lessons. D said her relationships with staff are positive. M K's link worker has visited D at her home, and she receives verbal and written information about K's progress. Overall D stated that the staff are doing a "*Fantastic job*" with K.

Grasswell House

Grasswell House provides residential care for up to six young people of either gender. It is situated within Sunderland West. The management structure has changed since reporting to members of the Corporate Parenting Board in October 2018. This followed the Ofsted inspection undertaken on the 31/10/18. The deputy manager managed the home with the approval of Ofsted since then and was appointed as manager on a permanent basis in October 2019. One of the senior residential workers acted up as Deputy Manager and was appointed deputy manager in November 2019.

The manager and the leadership team have worked hard to lead, manage and motivate the staff at Grasswell House to successfully lead the home through its journey of improvement to ensure the home meets the needs of the young people living accommodated there.

At the inspection undertaken in December 2018 the home was judged to be requires improvement to be good. It is important to note that at the most recent full inspection in May the overall experiences and progress of children and young people, how well young people are helped and protected, and the effectiveness of leaders and managers were all judged to be good. New residential child care workers have been appointed and good quality training provided. The management and staff now demonstrate a commitment to their continuous professional development, and this is reflected in their competence in practice and motivation to provide the best possible care for young people

Ofsted Rating	Judgement 31/10/18	Judgement 4&5/12/18	Judgement 7&8/05/19
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Declined Effectiveness	Requires improvement to be good	Good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Declined Effectiveness	Requires improvement to be good	Good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Declined Effectiveness	Requires improvement to be good	Good

Within the reporting period the home has been residence to the following number of young people:

May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
6	6	6	6	6	5

Grasswell House has had an unannounced Regulation 44 visit each month during the reporting period. The management and staff team responded well to the recommendations made following

the Regulation 44 visits. Recommendations are discussed at team meetings and seen as assisting the home in maintaining standards and improving practice. The care practice observed with young people continues to be good during visits to the home.

The young people were engaged in education and/or training and where they struggle to engage with education or training the manager and staff team work hard to support young people to re-engage. There is good evidence to show how staff work in partnership with young people, their parents and relevant professionals to help young people to achieve their true potential.

No of admissions in reporting period	No of discharges in reporting period	No of missing incidents	No of missing incidents over 24hrs	No of rec's in the reporting period
02	3	34	10	6

Young people have good relationships with the staff at the home. Staff are implementing a therapeutic parenting model (PACE) which is centred on understanding trauma and focuses building relationships where staff place an emphasis on connecting with young people.

There were 31 episodes of young people being reported missing from care compared to 34 a slight decrease from the previous reporting period. The number of missing episodes over 24 hours was 10 the same figure as in the last reporting period. After young people return from an episode of being missing, they are offered interviews from the Barnardo's missing from home or care service workers. Sanctions were used on 3 occasions which was slightly up when compared to the 2 used during the previous reporting period. There was 1 restraint used during the reporting period compared to 0 in the previous reporting period. There were 15 critical incidents recorded which is a significant increase from 2 during the previous period.

There were 10 notifications made to Ofsted a significant increase compared to the previous period of 3. A post crisis response is completed for each incident and action identified and taken to try and reduce the risk of incidents reoccurring. The number of recommendations reduced considerably to 6 when compared to the figure during the last review period of 27. This reduction in recommendations reflects the good progress the home has made. The evidence coincided with the homes Ofsted inspection in May 2019 and continued to improve afterwards. The recommendations from the regulation 44 visits were accepted by the manager and implemented within the given timescales.

The newly appointed manager (formerly deputy manager) have worked hard to improve the care they provide to achieve a rating of good by Ofsted in their most recent inspection. The manager and staff are committed to trying to improve the care they provide further with the hope this will be recognised up by the inspector at their next Ofsted inspection.

To summarise, young people have positive relationships with the management team and staff built on an understanding of trauma and child centred care practice. A therapeutic parenting model (PACE) is used and it is evident the needs of young people are prioritised appropriately. The manager and staff at the home are pleased that Ofsted's judgement of the standards of care they provide to young people at the home has improved for two inspections in a row and the home is now rated good.

Voice of a Young Person

During the visit on the 12/08/19 J was consulted with. J has only recently come to live here after previously being in foster care. J feels she is settling in well and is getting to know everyone who lives and works here. Before she moved in, she came to visit and went with staff to choose new wallpaper and soft furnishings for her bedroom. Personalising her room is helpful for J in making it

feel like, *'her own'*. I asked J about privacy and she said her carers always knock on her door and wait until she answers. Her room is kept locked and no one goes in without being invited. J left school at the end of the summer term and will start college in September. She is aware that she will be supported by the (temporary) manager and staff team to get to and from college and with her college work if needed.

J told me about the young people's meetings. She has attended them since she came to live here and said, *'staff listen to us and they act on what we say'*. She talked about participation and engagement workers from the Organisation becoming involved to support young people to learn new skills and access more opportunities. Later in the visit young person D was consulted. Young person D was happy to speak to me during the visit. D described the home as *"class"*, saying it was much better since two other young people moved out. It is now much quieter.

D clearly has a good relationship with his link worker (J). D said he loved her and feels she supports him 100%. D can talk to his link worker about anything. D is in education and feels he has support from the staff team to achieve. He is currently attending summer school and is hoping to progress to an apprenticeship. D takes an active part in weekly young people's meetings. Issues are taken forward by one member of the staff team. If an issue needs to go to management for a decision, D feels they can take too long to *"think about it"*. This issue was addressed with the homes (acting) manager following the visit and assurance was given that he will make sure young people are responded to in a timely manner. The young people are going to meet with the participation team to try to secure some additional funding for activities.

Voice of a Parent

A telephone conversation was held on the 12/08/19 with D's mother during the visit. She feels that D is doing very well. He has been working hard and is doing summer school. He presents as happier. He has recently been out clothes shopping and he always looks well dressed. Staff regularly telephone with updates. She knows D's link worker and stated that D *"loves all the workers to bits"*. If she visits the home, she is always made to feel welcome, describing it as a home from home. D's parent spoke very highly of the home. She has experienced other homes and feels that this is the best one.

Revelstoke Road

Revelstoke Road children's home provides residential care for up to six young people of either gender. It is situated on a housing estate within Sunderland North. There have been no changes to the management structure during this reporting period.

The following table shows the Ofsted Judgements for 2017 and 2018 Ofsted inspections of the home. At the last Full Inspection undertaken in July 2019 the overall experiences and progress of children and young people were judged to be Good.

Ofsted Rating	Judgement 8 & 9/11/17	Judgement 26/06/18	Judgement 02/07/19 03/07/19
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good	Good	Good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement to be good	Good	Good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement to be good	Good	Good

Within the reporting period the home has been residence to the following number of young people:

May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
6	6	6	6	6	6

Young people have positive relationships with the staff at the home. Staff are implementing a therapeutic parenting model (PACE) which is centred on understanding trauma and focuses building relationships where staff place an emphasis on connecting with young people.

Unannounced Regulation 44 visits were undertaken during each month of the reporting period. Care practice with young people was observed to be of a good standard. Young people are looked after well at the home and they are making progress. The number of times young people were reported missing from the home increased significantly from 16 during the previous reporting period to 80 during this period.

The increase was hugely affected by the admission of a young person placed in June 19. There were 2 young people reported missing for periods of over 24 hours compared to 0 during the last reporting period. After young people return from an episode of being missing, they are offered interviews from the Barnardo's missing from home or care service workers. Restraints were used on 7 occasions during the reporting period a significant increase when compared to 1 during the previous reporting period.

There were 26 critical incidents of which 20 were reported to Ofsted. This was a significant increase from the previous reporting period when 7 critical incidents were recorded. There were 10 notifications made to Ofsted which was the same as the previous reporting period. The reason for the significant increase in figures mentioned above relates to the young person admitted to the home in June 2019. The young person's behaviours reflect the trauma they had suffered prior to their admission. Staff have supported the young person through a series of crisis's and these critical incidents were responded to efficiently and a post crisis response was completed on each occasion for the young person and staff.

Ofsted inspected the home in July 2019, and despite the significant increase in critical incidents and Ofsted notifications, the inspector was satisfied with the support provided by staff to the young person and how her behaviour was managed. It is to the credit of staff through their perseverance in supporting the young person that the home maintained its judgement of good at this inspection in all three categories. The recommendations from the regulation 44 visits were accepted by the manager and implemented within the given timescales.

Young people are engaged in education and/or training and if they struggle to engage with education or training the manager and staff team work well to support young people to re-engage. There is strong evidence to show how staff work in partnership with young people, their parents and relevant professionals to help young people to achieve their true potential.

No of admissions in reporting period	No of discharges in reporting period	No of missing incidents	No of missing incidents over 24hrs	No of rec's in the reporting period
2	1	80	2	9

Revelstoke Road is maintained externally and internally to a good standard and is decorated and furnished in a modern contemporary style. The environment within the home feels welcoming, comfortable and warm and the young people present as being happy during the regulation 44 visits.

At the beginning of the reported period five young people were attending school or an alternative educational provision. One young person disengaged from education regardless of consistent efforts from team members to support him. By the end of the six months period three young people were attending school, one disengaged although is engaging in an educational programme within Revelstoke Road, one young person attended college and one, for the main part enjoyed full-time employment until recently when his hours were reduced to week-end work due to lack of opportunity and not as a consequence of his work ethic. The young person is hoping to resume full-time employment next year.

The attendance and attainment of the young people at school or alternative educational provision generally varied. Most of the young people struggled with attainment and their attendance fluctuated. One young person kept consistently high attendance and made positive academic progress.

In summary, young people have positive relationships with the management team and staff, built on an understanding of trauma and child centred care practice. A therapeutic parenting model (PACE) is used and it is evident the needs of young people are prioritised appropriately. The manager and staff at the home are pleased that Ofsted's judgement of the standards of care they provide to young people at the home has been rated as good for the second inspection in a row and are working hard to try to improve their rating to outstanding.

Voice of a Young Person

Several young people made themselves available to discuss their wishes and views during the visits. The young people were polite and engaging. They were confident to express their wishes and feelings and raise any concerns they had. The young people expressed that they felt well looked after and that the staff care about them and support them. The young people gave examples of support with education, developing independent life skills, relationships with other young people within the home and their own emotions. The young people also had opportunities to participate in young people's meetings to discuss aspects of their lives such as meal planning, holidays and activities.

An example is from the regulation 44 visit on the 12/08/19. B was consulted. B feels that staff showed respect to him giving the example of "*How they speak to you*" by which he meant their tone and demeanour. B said he tries to show respect to staff "*By trying to be fair to them*". B also commented that he feels he has privacy at the home. For example, if he wants to be alone, he can

spend time in his bedroom and staff respect his privacy and always knock on the door when they want to speak to him.

Voice of a Parent

The feedback from the parents of young people in this reporting period has been positive with regards to the quality of care that has been provided and there being clear lines of communication between residential staff and parents. One parent commented that she felt her daughter is developing positive relationships with staff and that the staff are '*brilliant*' in communicating with her. The parents in their feedback have also advised that they feel that the home has clear boundaries/expectations and that staff have close relationships with the young people.

Analysis

In this reporting period each children's home has had visits undertaken in accordance with Regulation 44 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015. The reports have been written and distributed to Ofsted, the Responsible Individual, Strategic Manager and Home Manager within the given timescale.

Learning from recommendations is shared within individual homes and across all 4 homes. Managers and the staff teams have used the recommendations made to assist them to provide standards of care which support young people to reach their true potential.

Colombo Road is currently judged by Ofsted to be providing "*Outstanding*" standards of care and Monument View, Grasswell House and Revelstoke Road are rated as providing "*Good*" standards of care. It was also good to note that Grasswell House have had their grading improved twice in the last seven months and are now judged to be providing good care.

The managers of the homes accept and act upon the recommendations made in the regulation 44 monthly reports and are committed along with their staff teams to improving the standards of care they provide for children and young people.

Service Review & Development

The annual programme of themed audits has been reviewed and updated to reflect the feedback from Ofsted inspections, the needs of the managers of the homes, their line manager and those of the regulation 44 visitors. In addition, feedback letters are now being sent to young people at each home after the regulation 44 visits.

The regulation 44 visit forms are to be amended to ensure the new model of working adopted by Together for Children, Signs of Safety will be implemented from February 2020.

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

20 January 2020

WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020

Report of the Head of Law and Governance

1. Purpose of the Report

To inform the Corporate Parenting Board of the revised work programme for the municipal year 2019/2020.

2. Work Programme

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Officer Responsible
30 March 2020	Change Council Update Commitments Review Health of Looked After Children CYPS Data Dashboard Education for Children Looked After Foster Care Recruitment Update RAA Update	Jane Wheeler Jane Wheeler Dr Sarah Mills Janet Thomson Linda Mason Martin Birch/Kathryn McCabe Kathryn McCabe
July 2020 Date tbc	Change Council Update Commitments Review Health of Looked After Children CYPS Data Dashboard Education for Children Looked After Reg 44 Visits Homelessness Strategy and Joint Protocol	Jane Wheeler Jane Wheeler Dr Sarah Mills Janet Thomson Linda Mason Stacy Hodgkinson/Gavin Taylor Marion Dixon

3. Other Suggested Agenda Items

At the meeting held on 1 April, the following items were suggested to be considered at future meetings: -

- Regional View on Pocket Money
- Sufficiency Planning
- Case Studies for Pathway Planning and Personal Advisors

Members are asked to consider when these items could be brought forward for consideration and whether they have any further suggested topics for meetings in the next municipal year.

4. Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the work programme and suggest any additional topics which may be discussed at a future meeting.