

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

AGENDA

Meeting to be held on Monday 9 January 2023 at 5.30pm in the Conference Room, Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Sunderland, SR3 4EN

Part I

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ELAINE WAUGH
Assistant Director of Law and Governance

City Hall
SUNDERLAND

29 December 2022

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 21 November 2022 at 5.30pm in the
Conference Room, Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Sunderland, SR3 4EN**

Present:

Members of the Board

Councillor L Farthing (in the Chair)
Councillor C Burnicle
Councillor J McKeith
Councillor P Smith

Washington South Ward
St Chad's Ward
St Peter's Ward
Silksworth Ward

Observing

Councillor J Price

Deputy Cabinet Member for Children,
Education and Skills

All Supporting Officers

Jill Colbert
Majella McCarthy
Tracy Jelfs
Anita Swales
Kathryn McCabe
Daniel Kenny
Samantha Diston
Nikki Donaldson
Alexandra Bowey
Chantelle
Caitlin
Katherine Corfield
Leanne Hill
Vicky Tubman
Gillian Kelly

Chief Executive, Together for Children
Director of Children's Social Care, TfC
Head of Service for Cared for Children, TfC
Acting Headteacher, Virtual School
Service Manager, Cared for Children
Fostering Team Manager
CNTW
Participation and Engagement Officer
Participation and Engagement Officer
Change Council
Change Council
Housing Strategy Officer
Transport Policy Officer
Sustainable Travel Officer
Governance Services

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Crosby, Laws and Tye together with Catherine Hearne.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes

19. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

The Chair noted that dental health treatment had been discussed with Public Health and Jill Colbert said that it might be tabled for a future meeting; the position was improving but it was necessary to understand access to dental care for cared for children.

Change Council Update

The Change Council report had been submitted to the Board and was presented to Members by Chantelle and Caitlin.

The Change Council had continued to meet in their designated space and both the 10-15 and 16+ group were meeting fortnightly.

The Board had previously heard that the Change Council planned to make some short videos on raising awareness and challenging the stigma in education. This process would take some time as it was necessary to get the support needed to produce the films and Sunderland University and the Virtual School had been approached to help with this.

It had been agreed that social workers from the permanence team would support the 10-15 group and the 16+ group had asked that a Next Steps worker also attend as it was felt they would be able to offer more relevant advice.

The Regional Children in Care Council meeting had been hosted at City Hall and a team building residential had been discussed to take place in April 2023. There had also been talks about the possibility of creating two regional Children in Care Councils so that issues relevant to different ages could be addressed.

There had been a cooking event for the National Care Experienced Week and through this it had been hoped to raise awareness of cooking on a budget.

Planning had been taking place for the Cared for Christmas event, young people were disappointed that they could not hold this in the usual venue but it was understood why this was not possible. Venue and budget constraints meant that some things that the Change Council had wanted to do may not be possible.

The Change Council had held a 16+ Movie Night to give them the opportunity to spend time together and had taken photographs to promote Anti-Bullying Week. Unfortunately, the Anti-Bullying Day Dip had been postponed due to bad weather and it was hoped to re-arrange this to a later date.

The training for corporate parents was nearly ready and a practice run was being planned with the participation team. It was hoped to agree a date to deliver the training in the New Year.

There were three new members attending the 10-15 years group of Change Council and the Change Council continued to encourage young people to join the group.

The 16+ Change Council had written to corporate parents asking that Sunderland support making being care experienced a protected characteristic to help protect young people from discrimination and harassment based on their care identity.

The planned work for January to December 2022 was as follows: -

- Drive forward the Change the Language campaign, including working groups and workshops
- Corporate Parenting induction training and support the development of the corporate parenting strategy
- Engage young people in enriching activities to celebrate their hard work and increase engagement
- Consult and involve more cared for and care experienced children and young people.
- Alex was to regularly drop in to Children's Homes and Support 2 Independence and also to be around for Warm Spaces.

The Chair noted that the young people were all very busy but managed to make great progress with the Change Council's work. She would take back the request that being care experienced be considered a protected characteristic in Sunderland to the City Council.

Jill Colbert said that there had been discussions with the Police and Crime Commissioner on this issue and Nikki advised that young people had started working on a video explaining what the change would mean to them. Jill noted that the Change the Language campaign would continue to run through this and this was something which could also be reflected.

The Chair also referred to a presentation from Greater Manchester on their offer for care experienced young people and suggested that officers could speak to regional colleagues to see what innovative programmes were operating in other areas.

In relation to the residential proposed at the Regional Children in Care Council, this had not yet been confirmed but it was hoped that Members would endorse the costs of this being supported by Together for Children.

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

20. RESOLVED that the Change Council update be noted.

Supportive Parenting Partnership – Terms of Reference

The Board received a draft terms of reference for the Supportive Parenting Partnership which would be the new name for the Corporate Parenting Board from May 2023.

The terms of reference set out the purpose, responsibilities and operation of the Partnership, together with the proposed membership.

The Chair commented that she had discussed the terms of reference with the Leader and the Cabinet as they moved the Board into an area where it would be held to account by Scrutiny and she felt that it might operate as a subset of the Cabinet and link in to the themes of the City Plan.

Currently appointments to the Board were politically balanced and there would need to be further discussion on any proposals before these were considered at the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2023. There would need to be further changes to the terms of reference of the Partnership if it was agreed to reformat the group in the way described.

21. RESOLVED that the draft terms of reference for the Supportive Parenting Partnership be approved.

CNTW Cared For Children Report

The Board received a report covering the period July - September 2022.

In July all 13 referrals had been seen, there were 13 referrals in June, 11 of which were seen and in September five out of nine referrals were discharged unseen. There had been no urgent referrals by the CYPS Intensive Community Treatment Service (ICTS) within the period.

Samantha Diston stated that the position had not changed much from the previous report but there had been an increase of referrals across the system. She noted that there were a range of reasons why young people were not seen after being referred but there were no particular issues or difficulties.

The Chair noted that queries had been raised about children and young people having to be in a settled situation before they had intervention from CYPs. Samantha said that came up quite a lot and was judged on a case-by-case basis. Sometimes it was not safe to begin a course of therapy when a young person was in a transient situation, however the care pathway in Sunderland allowed CYPs to go along to meetings etc and transience would not be a block to treatment.

The waiting list for treatment was currently nine weeks and cared for children made up a quite small percentage of the overall caseload (6.0%) but were offered priority appointments.

Jill welcomed the honest and direct way which the position was presented in the report and agreed that the data had not changed massively in recent months. She referred to the current anxiety around children's mental health and wellbeing as a whole and in the light of reports such as the investigation into West Lane Hospital and the fear that a Sunderland young person could be in that position. She queried if there were other things which partners could be doing together.

Samantha commented that it was right to ask these questions and she was keen to develop working on shared issues.

Councillor Smith asked if there were any particular thoughts on the CYPS caseload and Samantha stated that it had increased post-pandemic but the cared for caseload remained relatively static and there was dedicated resource in the team for cared for children.

22. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Virtual School – Headteacher's Report

Anita Swales, Acting Headteacher of the Virtual School submitted a report providing the Board with updated information about the education of cared for children.

The number of cared for children as of 11 November 2022 was 498 and of these 46 were pre-school age, 18 attended nursery or early years provision, 331 were school age and 103 were post 16.

The report showed a deeper dive into attendance and absence monitoring and the trend for attendance across all key stages was improving. The Virtual School had been looking at what promoted good attendance and it was noted that 87% of 100% attendees were attending good or outstanding provision. Of the young people with 100% attendance, 83% of these were living with foster carers, 93% had been in care for over 12 months.

In relation to young people who had attendance of less than 80%, 64% were in residential or transitional care and 32% had been in care for less than 12 months, there was also an increasing number of unaccompanied asylum seekers who were in the cared for system.

Anita noted that young people who were being cared for in Key Stage 4 had a history of educational neglect; very often parents themselves had poor educational experiences and it was a challenge to maintain engagement when children transitioned back to living with their parents. There could be difficulties in arranging appropriate provision for asylum seekers due to language issues and life experiences. Overall special educational provision was also very difficult to access.

The Chair thanked Anita for providing more information on attendance, this had provided a useful overview of the situation.

Councillor Burnicle asked if the service was able to cope with an increasing number of unaccompanied asylum seekers and Anita stated that it was manageable in Key Stage 4 at the moment but it was possible that things may become stretched in the future. Jill assured Members that the numbers were very small at the present time and the issue was that these young people had to be looked after and found somewhere appropriate to live. There was a general concern about international students and their families but there had been some misinformation around this and it was mainly voluntary organisations who were working with these communities.

The Chair commented that concerns had been reported to the University regarding international students and there had been a report on the National Transfer Scheme to the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee. The issue for Together for Children was funding and requirements which increased year on year and these matters would continue to be raised with the Government.

23. RESOLVED that the Virtual School – Headteacher’s Report be noted.

Ofsted Inspection of the Fostering Service

The Board received a copy of the Ofsted report on the Together for Children independent fostering agency.

Daniel Kenny, Fostering Team Manager, was in attendance to talk to the report. Daniel highlighted that the inspection for the fostering service had been overdue, but the agency had been included as part of the overall Children’s Service inspection. Ofsted had visited between 12 and 16 September 2022 and there were three elements of the inspection: -

- Overall experiences and progress of children and young people
- How well children and young people are helped and protected
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers.

All three elements had been judged to be good and the overall judgment of the inspection was good.

There had been a great deal of focus on matching in the 2018 Ofsted report and there had been a lot of work carried out in that area in the intervening period which had been recognised by Ofsted. The Mockingbird programme was also acknowledged for the nurture and support it provided for families and the report commented that this improved children’s experiences by extending foster family networks and peer friendships.

Ofsted had also looked at how ‘missing from home’ incidents and how allegations against foster carers were dealt with and it was highlighted that although supervision was good, the recording of this was inconsistent.

The Chair commended the positive report, noting that Ofsted had highlighted some areas for improvement and asked how the agency would be addressing the points around illustrating children’s progress. Daniel said that they were satisfied that

children did know about their progress but the evidence was not always there and they were working to rectify this.

Majella McCarthy commented that it had been a very challenging inspection and highlighted that Together for Children with over 200 carers was being compared with other agencies who had less than 30. Ofsted inspections could not always reflect the fabulous work done and fantastic outcomes achieved by the service. Majella referred to the launch of the second Mockingbird group and the amazing day to day reality of the fostering agency and the ambitions to continue taking it forward.

Jill noted that nationally the numbers of foster carers had dropped in 2021/2022 but this was not the case in Sunderland. Councillor Smith referred to the current challenges facing the country and how this could impact on fostering.

Daniel said that money was of course important but was not everything and carers were offered excellent support and training. The Fostering Network was currently looking at the national picture and was carrying out research on the cost of fostering and Kathryn McCabe added that the Government issued guidance on the weekly allowance to be paid to carers.

Members were pleased to note the Ofsted report and felt that overall it showed a service which was better than 'good'. All involved were congratulated on the excellent inspection.

24. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Work Programme 2022/2023

The Board were informed of the work programme for the municipal year 2022/2023 and forthcoming agenda items.

It was noted that transport had been raised a number of times in relation to the costs and access for care experienced young people and that this could be a future agenda item.

Katherine Corfield said that she would like to consult with the Change Council on the Housing Strategy and the Chair noted that Manchester had employed a charity to help care experienced young people to manage their tenancies and this was something else that could be looked at.

25. RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

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

26. RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it contained information relating to any individual or information which was likely to reveal the identity of an

individual. (Local Government Act 1972, Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1 and 2).

CNTW Cared for Children Report – Case Study

The Board received detail of a positive case study of a cared for young person who had been treated by CYPS.

27. RESOLVED that the case study be noted.

(Signed) L FARTHING
Chair



REPORT AUTHOR:	Alexandra Bowey, Participation and Engagement Officer
SUBJECT:	Together for Children's Change Council Report for Supportive Parenting Partnership Board (Corporate Parenting Board) 9th January 2023
PURPOSE:	To report on the activity of both Change Council 10-15 group and Change Council 16+ group (November 2022-December 2023)

Change Council have continued to meet regularly face to face throughout November-December 2023. Change Council are meeting in their designated space, both Change Council's 10-15 and 16+ group are meeting fortnightly.

Activity	What's Working Well?	What's Not Working So Well?	What needs to happen?
Film - planning around education Change Council 10-15yrs - short videos to be made, raising awareness and challenging the stigma in education. Change Council 16+ to feed in with suggestions on post 16 education and how this impacts them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have started to plan and create a storyboard to create short films to be used for training around how a young person may be feeling to make professionals more aware of what might be going on for a young person. We have been creating characters and discussing why cared for/care experienced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are waiting for the animation student to be chosen by the university. We have not been able to move much further forward until the students are ready to start. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunderland University to appoint its animation student and set up first meeting.

	<p>people may be struggling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunderland University has decided that this can be a part of their Changemaker scheme which funds two students to produce and animate the project for us. They will be funded for 100 hours of work. • Sunderland have appointed their production student who can start in January. 		
<p>Training for Corporate Parents We have been working on a training workshop.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training is nearly ready we just need to do a practice run which we are planning with the participation team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has taken longer than planned due to other commitments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to agree and book a date at Supportive Parenting Partnership Board (Corporate Parenting Board) tonight to deliver the training.
<p>New members of Change Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have two new members attending Change Council 10-15yrs and have more young people interested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would like more young people to join. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to encourage new members. • Ensure the groups are being given time to get to know each other and bond as a group. • We are going to create invitation/leaflet to

			<p>give to Social workers/Next steps to give to their young people encouraging them to come along to Change Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alex to go along to team meetings to promote Change Council.
Making Care Experience a Protected Characteristic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We discussed this at the last Board meeting. Cllr Farthing is going to raise this at Council meeting on the 25th January. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are unsure what the process will be once Cllr Farthing raises this and how we can be involved in the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To meet with Council if this is passed as a motion and talk about what we would like to see from this.
Dresses for Christmas Party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four young people were given the opportunity to have tailor made dresses for the Christmas party. • We felt amazing and it was a really exciting opportunity. • We were able to be part of the designing process. • We will be holding a photoshoot afterwards and have our hair and makeup done. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We were on a tight time scale to get them finished and it was sometimes difficult to get everyone there for fittings at the same time. • Some of the fabrics we liked were not available due to mail strikes and time constraints. • More people wanted dresses than were available so some people were disappointed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressmaker is interested in continuing this process with other young people on a monthly basis. This does not just have to be dresses. • Alex to pass onto permanence/next steps so that other young people benefit from this rather than just Change Council. • Dressmaker also suggested later next year doing a

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressmaker had to cancel planned shoot at last minute which was disappointing. 	possible fashion show with all young people who have had the dresses/outfits.
Cared For Christmas Event - Members of Change Council supported the set up of the event by making Reindeer Dust. Most members attended the party.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We were given the opportunity to be a part of the planning and event set up. • We felt included and were able to see their contributions be appreciated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older members did not get invitations. • We would like this to be in the usual venue for the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to give support these events in the future. • To continue to give feedback and ideas on what we would like at the party. • Sharon to visit Change Council to pass on her thanks.
Change Council Bonkers Bingo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We were able to bring both groups together to spend time together. • Both groups were able to spend time with TFC SLT. • Everyone enjoyed the night and was able to feel very festive. • We had a lot of fun and it was nice to spend time together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was very close to Christmas and a few members and staff already had other plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to hold a Christmas celebration event. • To consider when planning when will be the best date for everyone to attend.

Coming up:

- Winter HAF January 2023
- Regional CiCC meeting January 2023
- Care Day February 2023
- Residential for Children in Care Council - April 2023

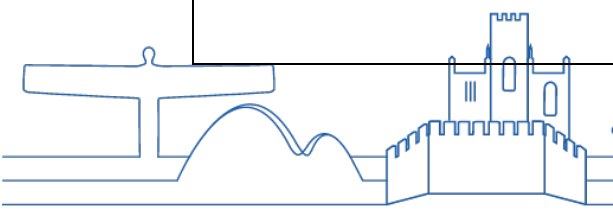
Planned work for Jan – Dec 2023:

- Drive forward the Change the Language campaign, including working group and workshops.
- Creating leaflets to promote Change Council and encourage new members.
- Corporate Parenting Introduction training and support the development of the corporate parenting strategy.
- Engage young people in enriching activities to celebrate their hard work and increase engagement.
- Consult and involve more cared for and care experienced children and young people. Alex to drop into Children's Homes and Support 2 Independence, also be around for warm spaces.
- To create easy guides to different aspects of being cared for/care experienced to support other young people with things we have been unsure of- Accessing records, entering care.

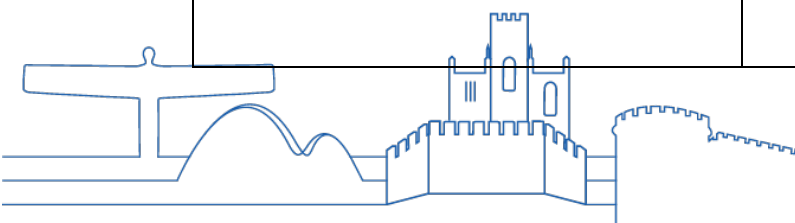
**Report to Corporate Parenting Board – 9 January 2023
Northeast North Cumbria Integrated Care Board**

Designate Workplan 2022-2023	Plan	Update
<p>Poorer outcomes and Early deaths of care leavers</p> <p>Regional Task and Finish Group: Raising awareness of Care Experienced Young People and improving outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunderland is leading this group across the ICS. • Scoping exercise completed. Reviewing SARs in this area to see in themes relate to local picture. • Shared with NENC Safeguarding Network Oct 22 and Safeguarding Adults Board Champion's • Work needed on flagging records as Care Experienced to raise understanding and profile. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This work will be taken forward as part of subcommittee for National Network for Designate Healthcare Professionals (NNDHP). • Health Partnership will discuss this matter and take forward practitioner forum on Care experienced and consider how to support i.e. flagging across agencies etc. • Safeguarding adults board now have care experienced as a question when considering a Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR). • NHS E Cared for Conference will discuss this work
<p>Improving the mental and physical health of care leavers and care experienced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that care leaver health needs are identified in broader commissioning processes. • Peer mentor programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth almighty project have submitted a business plan for mentoring and social prescribing for children in care. Commissioners are considering this.

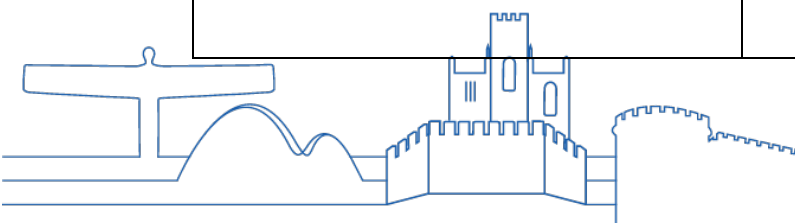
<p>Aim is levelling up and reducing health inequalities, identifying how the health and wellbeing boards will reduce this across the ICBs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make links. Social prescribers have a champion in place for Care Experienced YP, links are being made with PA's in next steps. This champion will also be invited to health group to share areas of good practice and assist in areas of challenge and improve working relationships. • Funding obtained to produce health passport APP, app is in final stages of development. The APP is designed to encourage YP to be more independent in understanding their individual health needs and how they can meet them. • Embedding App in practice and promoting to CYP, agencies and partners is needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health passport app is in final stages, currently out for proof reading and consultation, then launch and work around embedding it needs to be taken forward. • practitioner forum is something that we are looking to hold with TFC in 2023. • Dr Sarah Mills (SM) to compile care leaver data. This will provide some evidence and understanding of the health needs of our young people transitioning out of care. • 1st draft APP https://nenc.healthpassportapp.co.uk/
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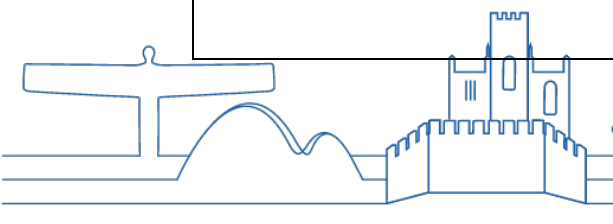
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of health needs of looked after children and care leavers. • Obtaining free prescriptions for care experienced YP across the ICB is a future piece of work for 2023. 	
The Cared for Health Team model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the provider unit in bringing their nursing staffing ratios in line with the intercollegiate document. • Develop and update Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Commissioners. • The health needs of looked after children and care leavers to be a distinct section in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). • To work in partnership to look at the commissioning and intervention strategy and the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health model has been looked at with the provider, there is work within the provider unit looking at caseloads and a relationship-based approach to meeting health needs. Meeting in Jan 23 planning to look at current funding and SLA, ongoing work in this area. • Jo Morgan (JM) is part of JSNA and discussions on how best to collect data to inform and identify gaps. • Electronic completion of SDQ to be trialled in provider unit, pathways around managing mental health concerns to be created. • health needs impact audit jointly with TFC to demonstrate the effectiveness of health



	<p>development of mental health partnership arrangements SDQ process pathway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the cared for health assessments with IROs and their discussion in Care team meetings and reviews to ensure identified and outstanding health needs are met. 	<p>assessments in meeting the health needs of our young people.</p>
<p>For initial and review health assessments to be offered within statutory timescales for health assessments to be meaningful and of good quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the health needs of our young people to be identified and met without delay. Young people to be involved in the developing health assessment paperwork to hear their voices better. Ongoing work with IRO service to promote health and embed assessments and health needs being met within local authority processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JM is part of part of central ICB health needs impact audit jointly with TFC to demonstrate the effectiveness of health assessments in meeting the health needs of our young people. Provider Unit are working on the readability and paperwork for health assessments
<p>Adoption and Fostering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the work of medical advisors for fostering and adoption. SM is writing a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SM continues to work with provider unit, TFC and adopt coast to coast on pressures within service and commissioning arrangements.



	<p>briefing paper for the SSCP (Sunderland Safeguarding Children's Partnership) Ensure risks within system are highlighted to partner agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share learning from CSPRs (Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews) relevant to this area. Promote joint working with safeguarding around this area. • Cared for health actions could be shared into pre-adoptive placements by cared for nurse holding caseload as part of introductions- work for 2023 and part of SLA discussions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSPR learning to be discussed in Dec safeguarding business meeting to be taken forward for TITO or specialist training for GPs providing medical advice.
Understanding the needs of Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Sunderland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection underway looking at this cohort. This will inform service development as national disbursement program increases its distribution to this area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collated and presented. Service improvement work underway. This will involve immunisations and bloodwork as needed at the IHA appointment.

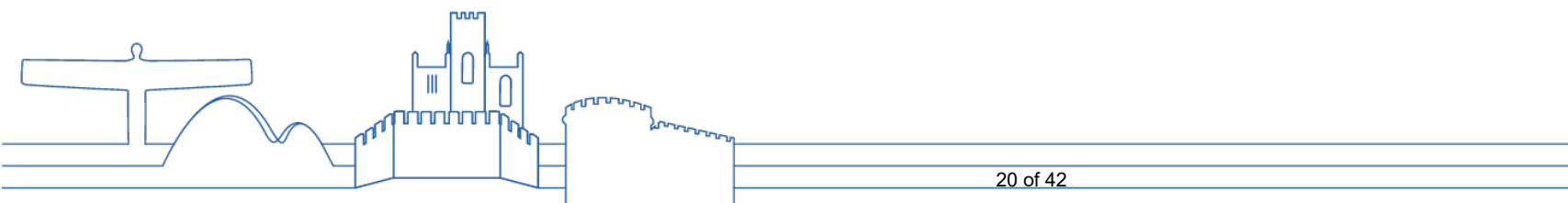


	Presentation at ICB Level 3 safeguarding training Dec 2022.	
Raise local issues on a regional and national forum to seek good practice and influence priorities on a national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NNDHP (National Network of Designate Health Professionals) • Regional Rep. Northeast North Yorkshire NHSE rep for Looked after Des rep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JM is now on NNDHP Sub-committee for children in care. • Regional Designate Doctor and Nurse cared for group has had an initial meeting and further meeting planned for 2023. • Health Partnership meeting planned for 2023.

Jo Morgan

Designated Nurse Cared for Children

NENC ICB



Terms of Reference

Cared for and care experienced health subgroup

Date of TOR August 2022

Name of committee: Sunderland Cared for Children /Care Experienced Health Sub-Group		
Reports to:	Supportive Parenting Partnership Board (Previously known as Corporate Parenting Board)	
Chair	Designated Nurse for Cared for Children Jo Morgan	NENC ICB (Sunderland)
Vice Chair	Named Nurse for Children Looked After Vicky Smith	South Tyneside and Sunderland Foundation Trust
Admin Support		
Membership	Designated Dr for Cared for Children Dr Sarah Mills	South Tyneside and Sunderland Foundation Trust/NENC/ICB
	Kathryn McCabe Strategic Service Manager Sharon Willis Strategic Service Manager	Together for Children
	CAMHS Service Manager Louise Bell	CNTW

	CYPS Service Manager/Rep	South Tyneside and Sunderland Foundation Trust
	Public Health Rep Karen Lightfoot-Gencli	Sunderland Council
	0-19 service Rep	HDFT
	Virtual School Rep Virtual Headteacher Anita Swales	TfC
	Senior Federated Services Manager & ATB Programme One Support Lead Bev Dixon	Primary Care Rep/Social Prescribers
Purpose of Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To listen to our young people and ensure their voice is heard to inform service development of health services. • To promote and seek assurance that there are effective arrangements for the health and care of cared for children in an integrated system. • To monitor and enable access to a range of health services that promote and support emotional, physical, and mental health. • Ensure that systems are in place to enable cared for and cared experienced young people access to information about health and wellbeing. • To seek assurance on the delivery of the health outcomes identified within the Corporate Parenting Board. • To provide assurance that legal requirements and national guidance are incorporated into systems and processes. • Develop an understanding of the health needs of our cared for and care experienced young people to help inform the commissioning of services • To work together to improve the health and wellbeing of our young people. 	

Functions of the group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify key health priorities in line with statutory requirements and agree actions to meet these priorities. • To seek assurance that parents or carers have access to health and wellbeing information, services and support in caring for children. • To make recommendations and escalate risks to the Corporate Parenting Board, outlining risk mitigation plans.
Indicators of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health needs analysis in place and reviewed annually to inform commissioning of services and identify areas of priority. • Improved joint working which results in sharing of learning and joined up cared for children systems, policies and procedures. • Evidence of improved health outcomes for cared for children. • Evidence of timely access and interventions to meet the individual health needs of cared for children from all health professionals who work with them • Timely high quality initial and review health assessments • All practitioners working with cared for children have the appropriate levels of skills and training work and support these vulnerable children and young people • Improving satisfaction levels reported by cared for children, parents and carers.
Reporting mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Group will be chaired by the Designated Nurse for Cared for Children or Named Nurse Cared for Children. • It will meet at on a bi-monthly basis • Reports to the Supportive Parenting Partnership through the existing health governance processes.
Frequency of meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bimonthly
Quorum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 organisations should be in attendance at the meeting for it to be quorate
Review of Terms of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of reference will be reviewed annually

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

9 January 2023

Response to the Urgent Action Required in response to the ‘Safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs placed in residential settings’ Phase 1 Report Letter

The Child Safeguarding Practice review Panel and Council for Disabled Children 2022

1 Introduction

This report outlines the approach and findings from the deep dive of children with complex needs and disabilities experience of living away from their families in residential settings. It provides the assurance sought in the National Panel’s letter (23 August 2022) and complies with the required instructed action to be taken by Local Authorities. The report includes the second element of the request relating to the Local Authority Designated Officer activities, referred to in TfC as the Designated Officer (who operates on behalf of the LA through the alternative delivery model that is Together for Children).

It summarises the methodology applied, the children’s needs and characteristics, examples of children’s voice, learning points and recommendations for action. The report attempts to embody the Change the Language campaign in Sunderland and uses the language of: cared for children, children’s homes, care accommodation or care arrangements.

In November the approach and findings were presented to a meeting of the Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and representatives from the Corporate Parenting Board, chaired by the SSCP Independent Scrutineer, in order to engage and consult with statutory partners and key stakeholders, in advance of finalising the recommendations and learning to take forward.

2 Methodology used to undertake the reviews

There was significant consideration given to the task of identifying the children who should have their experience of care reviewed. The decision was taken to include all children with complex and additional needs living or staying out of the area in a variety of different circumstances, as follows:

- 5 children in scope: none fully met the criteria but were living in care accommodation with school on site. 2 were living in Sunderland, 2 in Cumbria, and 1 in Durham. Their average age was 12.5 years old.
- 1 young woman in a Special Guardianship Order family care environment.
- 1 young man (now an adult) who lived in a local specialist residential provision for 6 years.

- 8 children receiving overnight short breaks in Sunderland, treated as sec 20 (Children Act 1989) Regulation 48 arrangement.

The widening of the criteria enabled more children to be considered and a higher degree of assurance about the oversight of their care was provided as a result. For example, children receiving short breaks overnight who were not classed as cared for, but who have complex and significant needs, were included given their level of care needs and vulnerability.

An audit tool was developed, based on the structure of the existing commissioning audit tool, to facilitate the deep dive with pre-visit and on-site sections addressing the following areas:

Staffing, Insurance, Health and Safety, Policies and Documentation, Introduction to the Home and premises, Young People's Experience, Young Person's File, Staffing, Significant Events, Health Records, Medication Administration Records, Physical Restraints, Missing From Home, Summary and Action Plan.

Using the audit tool, commissioners visited all care provisions, with the exception of the young woman living with her kinship carer, to undertake onsite quality reviews. Desktop reviews of Reg. 44 visit reports and Ofsted inspection reports were undertaken to build an understanding of the presenting quality of the care provision.

Where relevant for cared for children, the Designated Nurse provided details of the last Cared for Child health review, and also carried out one on-site review of medication management for a child.

The Quality Assurance team and IRO leadership also reviewed children's case records and spoke with allocated Social Workers, Team Managers and IROs to assess their understanding of children's experiences and needs, and how those were being met within their care arrangements.

3 Children's voice

The following excerpts from recorded exchanges between children and their workers give an insight into their lived experience of care:

Child X:

- X is non-verbal but records suggest the team around her have known her for a long-time and recognise her non-verbal communication with activities and routines led by X's ability and needs.
- Good evidence from cared for review minutes of children's current experience of their care:
- The cared for review minutes (June 2022) state "communication – she is making choices; her communication has come on and she has now more choice. Her communication has improved so well we can get her views. She's not happy when going to ****".

Child Y:

- Y was seen. He was in good mood eating his breakfast. Reported to be in good presentation by the IRO and was using PEC's as a form of communication. He was talking about how he loves being in the community, going on walks, swimming and trips to the beach. Noted to be spending more time in the communal areas and going to house parties.
- IRO discussed communication techniques with staff who outlined that they had a good level of understanding and positive interaction and encouragement was noted during the visit – Y was given a high five by staff for putting his rubbish in the bin.

Child Z:

- Z's views were gathered after the meeting as she did not wish to attend it. Z reported being happy with her PA support, enjoying college but does wish she had more independence to do things on her own.
- Z told me that she gets on with some staff, and others she doesn't. Z prefers the staff that let her off with things, rather than a being strict approach.

Child T:

- Reflects discussion between T and his worker, this is written in a manner which is directly to T, should he come to read it in the future. The visit reflects T sharing missing people he knew from living at ***, his Dad making him feel angry and the possibility of T writing a letter to his Dad. Discussion around not being able to 'high five or cuddle' anyone in the home. There is evidence of reflection around T making progress in his new home.

Child A:

- A tells us that he loves going to school and he loves seeing his Dad and enjoys going to rugby, football and car meets with his Dad. He also likes spending time with his Mam. One of the big worries for A is not seeing enough of his Mam and Dad and tells us ideally he would like to live with his Mam and Dad, but tells us he is settled in his current home.
- IRO documents how A looked to D (registered manager) when eating his tea and felt shy, and would lay his head on D. Evidence of staff using PEC's with D during the visit and he indicated his wishes for his tea.

Child M:

- Due to M level of complex needs and Learning disability he does not have capacity to understand what is meant by an advocate. M has two key workers, whom he is able to express any worries or concerns he may have with, he also sees his Social Worker every 6 weeks and has a key worker within school, who he has a very positive relationship with. There are opportunities both in school and at home for M to express any worries he may have.

Short breaks:

- Mam tells us that S "breaks into a beaming smile" when she realises she is going to ****.

- All highlight that C and A enjoy their short break routine. A likes to use her iPad and have songs playing and C likes to play with his friends and going out.
- C is “a beautiful, sassy young lady, who has a cracking sense of humour. C is very independent and knows what she wants. C loves attending respite, she has great relationships with the staff and loves to help out. C also loves soft teddies, evidenced by the huge amount of teddies she has in her bedroom”.
- C tells us about her care package and her experience and that it works well and made a request for her IRO to make a chocolate cake for her review.
- G informed the review that he loves ** and thinks of it as a five-star hotel.

4 Findings – part one

The deep dive drew on a range of different types of evidence about children’s lived experience of living away from their families or their experience of overnight short breaks; children’s voice, additional direct visits, existing review material, regulatory reports and interviews with their Social Workers, Team Managers and Independent Reviewing Officer. Taking all of that evidence the multi-agency team formulated and agreed the following findings:

- Children are regularly seen in their homes by their allocated Social Workers and IROs but are not seen routinely within the education setting in the same way.
- Parents / carers views are regularly gained by social workers and IROs and are consistently captured in review meetings.
- Family time is consistently evidenced as promoted, supported, reviewed and in place for children.
- Where children are non-verbal or have very limited traditional communication abilities, Social Workers are evidenced as using alternative methods such as PECS and MAKATON.
- Observations of interaction, presentation and development are also used to inform understanding of children’s experiences and progress.
- Social workers and IROs know their children well and have positive meaningful relationships with children and families, which is also evident in the way in which they talk about them in case recordings.
- Where children have the ability to use platforms such as Mind of My own, these are used to further gather their views.
- All children’s homes and the residential school visited are currently judged as Good by Ofsted. The short breaks home is judged as Requires Improvement but has a robust action plan in place.
- Reg 44s are received and analysed each month and have not highlighted any issues of significant concern.
- Recording of information in 4 out of 5 settings visited was detailed and up-to date, giving a good sense of what life is like for the children living there.
- A good range of activities and experiences provided by children’s homes were evidenced for young people and often took place in the local community.
- Recruitment and retention of staff was an issue for all homes but providers had strategies in place that were mitigating the impact on children, for example one provider did not use agency staff at all, and those who did tended to use the same agency staff members which supported with the consistency of care.

- One child's residential school made very little distinction between the school and home environment – although it was the child's strong preference to sleep in a downstairs bedroom close to the entrance to the school, it was agreed that would be addressed with the provider.
- Larger homes tended to have a less homely feel and some of the safety measures in place for disabled children, added to a slightly institutional appearance.
- Some homes reported losing staff after induction due to unrealistic expectations around the roles and responsibility of care workers in these settings, including managing complex behaviours.
- All children are living close to their home communities or the places they consider themselves as belonging to.
- Robust transition plans were in place for those children looking to move home or on to supported living.
- There is no routine process for clinical experts (Named or Designated professionals or children's community nursing teams) to advise, support or assist in the assessment of the quality of care for children with complex needs who do not live at home some or all of the time. This is an area of anxiety for non-clinical children's services staff who are assessing the risks to children who often have complex diagnoses. Closer involvement of health and education colleagues in quality visits and activities would facilitate a more holistic overview of a child's care and support arrangements, thus reducing risk.

4i Findings – Part two, the Local Authority Designated Officer (DO) questions

The analysis and cross-referencing of allegations and allegation management processes for all of the types of care accommodation in scope was undertaken as per the request.

The detailed findings are presented below:

- A total of 9 care accommodations were considered for the scoping exercise, 5 of which are in Sunderland. All, apart from the short break provision, are either specialist residential schools or residential provisions.
- TfC currently have children living in the 5 care accommodations in Sunderland who were identified as in scope. There are currently no open DO investigations in these homes. From reviewing the information relating to closed referrals, appropriate action was taken in respect of all allegations reported from these homes.
- TfC currently have children living in four specialist residential schools outside of Sunderland, 2 of which currently have open DO investigations. Both open investigations are as a result of concerns of a physical nature. Neither of these investigations are linked to Sunderland children and DO oversight remains in place from the 2 host local authorities (Cumbria and Durham).
- From the data received 'Physical' and 'Neglect' are the most prominent reasons for contact being made with the DO services in the 9 homes considered in the scope of this exercise.
- The DO team do not currently contact all placing authorities when an allegation is received in respect of a specialist residential school, only the placing authority of

the young person making the allegation. Notification is made to the allocated Social Worker for the young person (See recommendation 1).

- TfC DO already have audit processes in place to review settings should more than 5 referrals be received within a 6-month timescale which includes sharing any concerns with the appropriate commissioning teams for all placing authorities. There is no statutory requirement to complete this however the National LADO Network (NLN) are currently formulating guidance for all LADO/DO to standardise this process nationally.

There were no apparent concerns about the robustness of the allegation management process beyond the one recommended area for improvement as noted in the next section.

5 Recommendations

Children with complex and additional needs who do not live at home all or some of the time, clearly have a range of vulnerabilities brought to life by the examples of children's voice in this report. The process of the deep dive highlighted areas for improvement, all of which it would appear could be considered as areas to develop national exemplar practice, with a number requiring national instruction or guidance to establish.

These recommendations were discussed with statutory partners and will be tabled at the SSCP and Corporate Parenting Board for follow up action and reporting purposes.

Local actions as follows:

- A strengthened process is required for the DO and ICRT services to share/notify information regarding children currently placed in Sunderland from another LA.
- The DO service should notify the placing LA commissioning services alongside the allocated Social Workers of any referral that meets the DO threshold relating to a care accommodation in Sunderland, to support a holistic analysis of risk for the child/ren, and also to notify them of the referral outcome.
- More could be done to strengthen the recording and analysis of children's cultural needs. Although their voices are strongly present and captured clearly, the understanding of their culture and identity is implicit rather than explicit.
- Children's allocated Social Workers to ensure that children are regularly seen within their education settings.
- Work to be undertaken with providers to develop creative ways of ensuring all settings have a homely and nurturing feel.

National actions as follows:

- There is no routine process for clinical experts (Named or Designated professionals or children's community nursing teams) to advise, support or assist in the assessment of the quality of care for children with complex needs who do not live at home some or all of the time. This is an area of anxiety for non-clinical children's services staff who are assessing the risks to children who often have complex diagnoses and presenting needs. Integrated, multi-disciplinary

assessment and oversight should be at the heart of children's care, and closely knitted together with regulatory processes. This is an area that Government could consider developing clear guidance for ICB and LA to take forward together.

- A national workforce development plan is urgently required for health and social care workers which reflects the pressures, skills and responsibilities of the role, particularly when working with children with disabilities.

Jill Colbert OBE
Director of Children's Services
16 December 2022

Together for Children Adoption - Sunderland

Together for Children Sunderland Limited

Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Sunderland SR3 4EN

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this voluntary adoption agency

This voluntary adoption agency is owned by Together for Children Sunderland Limited, and provides adoption services on behalf of Sunderland City Council.

Together for Children Adoption – Sunderland is a partner of a regional adoption agency with two other local authorities that operate across the north of England. The adoption team undertakes the recruitment, assessment, training and support services for prospective adopters, children adopted, members of the adoptive family, birth families and significant adults.

The agency also provides post-adoption support to adoptive families, operates a letterbox facility, which enables indirect contact arrangements between adopted children and their birth families, and works with adopted adults, including undertaking intermediary work. Support to birth families is commissioned to another voluntary adoption agency.

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 November 2022

Overall experiences and progress of service users, taking into account **good**

How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The voluntary adoption agency provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of previous inspection: 24 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of service users: good

Adoptive families benefit from the wraparound service provided by a long-standing and stable staff team. This is a particular strength of the agency as there is continuity of support available to adoptive families from the first point of contact through to post-adoption assistance.

Early permanence is promoted by the agency when there is a plan of adoption for children. The adoption team works closely with Together for Children Sunderland social work teams to search for, and identify, prospective adopters. Children benefit from an increased pool of adopters through the agency being part of a regional adoption agency. Strong tracking systems and 'children waiting' meetings show the tenacity and ongoing efforts that the staff make to seek the right permanent families for children.

Adopters who approach the agency feel welcomed and are dealt with sensitively by staff. Adopters spoke of feeling understood and not judged. Communication is clear and adopters feel able to ask any questions. Their positive experience has led to adopters being strong advocates for others interested in adoption. One adopter said:

'We have felt welcomed and supported. Our whole experience from start to finish was fantastic; we recommended the agency to our friends, who have now been approved to adopt.'

The preparation process is timely, and assessments are thorough and evaluative. Adopters said that the assessment process and the training that they receive leave them feeling prepared to embark on their adoption journey. One adopter said:

'It was intense, but in a good way. The social worker couldn't have been better and we felt comfortable enough to open up and show our most vulnerable parts of ourselves.'

The agency recognises the importance of the adopter's family and friends in the preparation and matching stages of the process. The addition of the 'family network' meetings includes family and friends in the planning. This gives the agency an extra layer of reassurance that prospective adopters have the necessary support that they need when children move in with them.

Careful matching takes place and prospective adopters attend 'child appreciation days' and 'bump-into' meetings. One adopter said:

'These are absolutely invaluable. It has given so many fabulous insights into my child's life from birth to present day. This is important for life-story work.'

An in-house psychologist provides advice, training and support to staff and adopters at all stages of the adoption process. This includes post-adoption support as well as bespoke assessments, such as for those children needing educational support. This work provides a timely response, and, along with the staff's early intervention, helps to prevent adoption disruptions.

When necessary, the staff use partner agencies to undertake bespoke pieces of work, such as with birth parents, to assist with children's life-story work. The agency is also proactive and includes birth parents. This requires sensitivity, with adopters reporting positively about this involvement. One adopter said:

'The organisation of a meeting with her birth mother was invaluable and will allow me to provide my daughter with so much more vital life-story details regarding her identity.'

Fostering-for-adoption placements are used to support early progression of children's plans and to reduce delay. Adoption social workers oversee the fostering elements of these placements to avoid the introduction of extra professionals into the household. However, it is not always clear that adoption social workers fully understand or apply the relevant fostering regulations to these placements.

How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected: good

Adopters and prospective adopters have access to a wide range of training, which includes different aspects of safeguarding children. Adopter training also focuses on therapeutic parenting and enables adopters to understand and respond to children with complex experiences of trauma. As children grow and develop, adopters are supported to understand the potential risks, such as exploitation, through bespoke training. One adopter said:

'The adopter approval process was all about safeguarding all concerned but especially the children. Every form I completed, questions I answered, session I participated in was child-centred.'

Staff are all trained in Signs of Safety as well as wider safeguarding themes, such as around exploitation and the 'Prevent' duty.

The adoption panel is chaired by a knowledgeable and experienced panel chair who is confident in addressing any shortfalls. The panel is suitably resourced with people from diverse backgrounds and who have a range of experiences. The agency decision maker provides extra scrutiny, which includes challenge of the recommendations made where deemed necessary. The addition of a legal representative who looks at the panel papers provides the panel members with the reassurance that the relevant regulations have been met.

The agency is committed to identifying and then improving the safeguarding arrangements for children. There have been two recent placement disruptions for

children. A detailed and reflective review took place to look at the learning from these disruptions, in addition to the wider national safeguarding reviews.

The welfare and protection of children are promoted as safer recruitment of social work staff and panel members takes place.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The adoption team is passionate about its roles, and aspirational about the agency. There is a stable, experienced and knowledgeable staff team that is child-focused and keen to achieve the best outcomes for children.

Staff reported that they enjoy their work, which is evidenced in how long they have worked for the agency. The team is forward-thinking and creative. The agency has a number of developments under way, which are in the early stages of implementation and need embedding in practice before their full impact is known.

Staff spoke of feeling supported by their manager and by each other. Staff receive regular supervision, including access to group supervision. However, not all of the individual supervision records show the practice discussions that take place. This does not demonstrate the quality of the supervision that staff receive, and whether they are given the opportunity to reflect on their practice.

The management team has a range of systems in place to support their monitoring of the service in terms of their responsibilities to the local authority and the relationship with the regional adoption agency. This gives strategic oversight. However, day-to-day management decision-making is not always clearly apparent on case records. This leaves the agency without a full and accurate picture of the adopter's journey.

The manager has taken effective action to address the one complaint thoroughly. They have taken the learning from the investigation to make continued improvements to the service.

Feedback received during the inspection from adopters and professionals has been wholly positive. In particular, this includes praise for the work of the staff, who are described as 'going over and beyond to help' and of being 'professional, caring and informative'.

What does the voluntary adoption agency need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that suitable arrangements exist for professional supervision of managers and the registered person of the agency. In particular, ensure that staff supervision is provided and documented in line with the agency's statement of purpose. (Adoption: national minimum standards 2014 24.3)
- The registered person should ensure that the manager regularly monitors all records kept by the agency to ensure compliance with the agency's policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. Immediate action should be taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring. This particularly refers to ensuring that management decision-making is clearly recorded in adopters' records. (Adoption: national minimum standards 2014 25.2)
- The registered person should ensure that the managers, staff and volunteers are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The level of delegation and responsibility of the manager and the lines of accountability should be clearly defined. This particularly refers to ensuring that, where adoption social workers are undertaking the responsibilities of fostering social workers in fostering-for-adoption placements, these staff are aware of the relevant regulations and guidance and that this is applied to practice during the course of the foster placement. (Adoption: national minimum standards 2014 25.4)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Voluntary Adoption Agencies and the Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2003, the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005, any other relevant legislation, and the national minimum standards.

Voluntary adoption agency details

Unique reference number: 1254834

Registered provider: Together for Children Sunderland Limited

Registered provider address: Stanfield Business Centre, Addison Street,
Sunderland SR2 8SZ

Responsible individual: Majella McCarthy

Telephone number: 0191 520 5553

Email address: adoption@togetherforchildren.org.uk

Inspectors

Tina Ruffles, Social Care Inspector

Jacqueline Tate, Social Care Inspector

Tracey Cogan Greig, Social Care Inspector

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CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

9 January 2023

WORK PROGRAMME 2022/2023

Report of the Assistant Director of Law and Governance

1. Purpose of the Report

To inform the Corporate Parenting Board of the work programme for the municipal year 2022/2023 and forthcoming agenda items.

2. Work Programme

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Officer Responsible
9 January 2023	Change Council Update	Alex Bowey
	Health of Looked After Children	Jo Morgan
	Review of Children with Disabilities	Jill Colbert/Majella McCarthy
	Living in Residential Accommodation	Kathryn McCabe
6 March 2023	Adoption Inspection Report	
	Change Council Update	Alex Bowey
	Health of Looked After Children	Jo Morgan
	CYPS Data Dashboard	Samantha Diston
	Annual Report of the Virtual Headteacher	Anita Swales
	Update from Next Steps	Sharon Willis

3. Recommendations

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

