



Corporate Parenting Board

Date: Wednesday, 4 September 2019
Time: 2.30 pm
Venue: Committee Room 1, County Hall, Dorchester,
DT1 1XJ

Membership: (Quorum 3)

Toni Coombs (Chairman), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chairman), Ryan Holloway, Stella Jones, Andrew Kerby, Cathy Lugg, Andrew Parry and Elaine Okopski

Chief Executive: Matt Prosser, South Walks House, South Walks Road,
Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UZ (Sat Nav DT1 1EE)

For more information about this agenda please contact Liz Eaton, Democratic Services Officer Tel: 01305 225113 - liz.eaton@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk



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A G E N D A

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1 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

5 - 16

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2019.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest.

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive any questions or statements on the business of the committee from town and parish councils and members of the public.

5 AUDIT REPORT - 2.40 PM

17 - 26

To consider a report from the Executive Director of People – Children.

**6 PERFORMANCE PROGRESS - SERVICE DEVELOPMENT –
2.55 PM**

27 - 30

To consider a report by the Executive Director of People – Children.

**7 CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS PERFORMANCE
OVERVIEW - QUARTERLY REPORT - 3.05 PM**

31 - 40

To consider a report by the Executive Director of People – Children.

8 SEND SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT - 3.15 PM

41 - 52

To consider a report by the Executive Director of People – Children.

9 MASH UPDATE - 3.30 PM

53 - 56

To consider a report by the Executive Director of People – Children.

- 10 CHILD EXPLOITATION AND MISSING CHILDREN - 3.40 PM** 57 - 68
- To consider a report by the Executive Director of People – Children.
- 11 COUNCIL TAX - SUPPORT FOR CARE LEAVERS - 3.50 PM** 69 - 74
- To consider a report from the Executive Director of People – Children.
- 12 URGENT ITEMS**
- To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.
- 13 EXEMPT BUSINESS**
- To consider passing the following resolution:
- To agree that in accordance with Section 100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting in relation to the business specified in items 14 and 15 because it is likely that if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs detailed below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.
- 14 UNREGISTERED PLACEMENTS UPDATE - 4.00 PM** 75 - 78
- To consider a report by the Executive Director of People – Children.
- 15 CLICC - RESPONSES TO CHALLENGES CONSIDERED AT THE LAST MEETING OF THE BOARD AND THE CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS SATISFACTION SURVEY 2019 - 4.15 PM** 79 - 106
- To receive responses to challenges considered at the last meeting of the Board and the Children in Care and Care Leavers Satisfaction Survey 2019.

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DORSET COUNCIL - CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15 JULY 2019

Present: Cllrs Toni Coombs (Chairman), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chairman), Ryan Holloway, Stella Jones, Andrew Kerby, Cathy Lugg, Andrew Parry and Elaine Okopski (Dorset Parent Carers Council)

Also present: Cllr Pauline Batstone

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Mark Blackman (Assistant Director - Schools and Learning), Will Bradbury (Communications Team Leader), Antonia Dixey (CEO Participation People), Penny Earney (Designated Nurse for LAC), Madeleine Hall (Corporate Parenting Officer), Jan Hill (Foster Carer), Martin Hill (Foster Carer), Sarah Parker (Executive Director of People - Children), Stuart Riddle (Senior Manager), Mary Taylor (Acting Assistant Director for Care and Protection) and Liz Eaton (Democratic Services Officer)

12. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2019 were confirmed and signed.

13. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

14. Public Participation

There were no public questions or statements received at the meeting.

15. LAC Reduction Discussion Paper

The Corporate Parenting Board considered a discussion paper by the Executive Director of People - Children on LAC Reduction.

Officers explained the discussion paper was about the number of children Dorset Council had in care. It was about basing services for children on the principle of the right to a family life, and how we should be designing services that enable children to live safely with their family or in a family setting. A great deal of data had been mapped and the University of Warwick had plotted how the centile of deprivation influenced the likelihood of state intervention in family life. Children living in the least deprived areas had little chance of being in care whereas children living in the most deprived areas had a much greater chance of being in care.

LAC numbers had gone up in recent years although that did not always bear any relationship to the level of deprivation within the local authority area. It was interesting to note that if you lived in a deprived part of a relatively affluent place the chances of coming into care would shoot up. For example, if you compared Weymouth to the East End of London you would be more likely to be in care in Weymouth than in the urban area. Warwick University were still researching this.

The discussion paper had a summary of about how things changed in Dorset and an analysis about Dorset's care population and where there was the potential to make a difference and options on how a difference could be made. This was not primarily about cost saving, but was about the right to family life and good outcomes - children in care are less likely to do as well as their peers in the population at large.

Members thought the discussion paper was very interesting and a very well written. Some felt the transfer of the youth centres to community groups had not been a good decision and hoped funding for youth centres would be found as they could help young people look after their children. It was also felt there was an interlink between the 2 residential homes that had closed.

The Chairman confirmed that Homestart provided a good service in the west of the County where there was an exceptional group, but that was not the case in the east of the County where they were not so good. She explained that the People Scrutiny Committee were looking at youth centres at the present time and she would be happy to champion this and was also a member of the People Scrutiny Committee.

One member asked why Dorset was not replicating what Leeds were doing to enable early intervention and was it about leadership and the ethos in Leeds. Officers explained that Leeds started changing about 5 years ago and an awful lot of things needed to be changed. It was about Leeds and the city becoming child friendly. Family group meetings took place to establish whether the family could look after the child before the child came into care. Officers would be visiting Leeds shortly and were also looking at North Tyneside and North Yorkshire who also had good practice.

The Executive Director of People – Children explained this was a huge cultural issue they were at present talking with youth offending about tolerances. Participation People were looking at Happy Dorset which would continue for a couple of years.

The Chief Executive of Participation People confirmed that young people were eager for this conversation. A student voice toolkit was being launched in the Autumn. Work was also being carried out around child exploitation which was a snap chat conversation.

Members mentioned that part of the problem was that families did not want to engage as they did not see the way they behaved as an issue. There was an area in Ferndown where there was a nursery and children's centre. The nursery was very effective and families trusted the head but the children's

centre was ineffective. It was noted that schools and nurseries would notice if something was wrong and closer working with them was important. It was the first 1,000 days of a child's life which would set the scene of how that child's life would be.

One member was interested in the difference between Dorset and urban authorities. Officers confirmed the majority of children in care in Dorset were subject to a Court Order. The other issue was about life chances - in the East End of London over the course of a child's life there were more opportunities and more going on culturally than in Weymouth, Great Yarmouth or Blackpool.

Chief Executive of Participation People commented that in terms of what young people were saying it was about valuing and listening to them, understanding the individual's needs and working with family partnership zones.

One member asked why the family partnership zones had not directly brought down the number of children in care. Officers explained that early help services were not necessarily edge of care services, but that over time early help services would be advantageous.

The Chairman highlighted how members saw the importance of early intervention. She still thought that was the right focus for the Board's endeavours but could well investigate further other areas.

The Executive Director of People – Children confirmed they had focussed on early years and children's centres and youth services and spoken about the culture in communities and, having regard to children in Dorset, did not underestimate the impact of exclusions on families. Voluntary organisations also had a massive contribution to make. There was no one single thing - it was a whole system reform that would help young people and keep them with their families.

The Chairman asked as work progressed on the whole system review that this came back to Corporate Parenting Board so the Board could see how things were changing and enabling young people to have a better deal. The Executive Director of People – Children confirmed there were several distinct pieces of work and the golden thread through all of that was the voice of the child. She was happy to come back to a future meeting to share with the Board how work was progressing.

Resolved

That the Executive Director of People – Children provide a report on how work was progressing to the 16 January 2020 meeting of the Board.

16. Children's Placements - Use of Unregulated Placements - Progress Report on Action Taken

The Corporate Parenting Board considered a report by the Executive Director of People – Children on Children’s Placements – Use of Unregulated Placements.

Officers informed the Board the current position had changed and was not as mentioned in the report which had been based on the previous month’s information. There had been 3 young people in unregulated placements, the current number was 6 although 3 were to move on, one young person was to move home.

Dorset have a number of young people whose behaviour is difficult to manage. There is a lack of sufficient placements available in the local area for these young people. Some placements may be a long way from home, ie north of the country. These sorts of placements were regularly reviewed, and officers continued to search for registered provision for them.

Going forward officers had been looking to provide children’s homes within the Council’s estate and therapeutic foster carers. The Authority needed to work with families at an early stage so as to avoid them needing to come into care due to the experiences they have had and the impact of that on their behaviour.

One member noted there was a potential offer for one young person who had been in an unregulated placement the longest and the young person who had been in unregulated placement the second longest was due to go home mid-August. He mentioned that the Authority did not seem to have a policy of advising Ofsted on unregulated placements.

The Chairman mentioned that Ofsted was informed on a monthly basis.

The Chief Executive, Participation People informed the Board the CLiCC young person who had attended the previous meeting had started a campaign regarding placing young people in unregulated settings.

The Corporate Parenting Officer confirmed that one young person had taken up the offer of having an Advocate.

The Chairman was disappointed that numbers had risen and hoped that next time the Board received an update the numbers had improved.

The Executive Director of People – Children commented that unregulated placements were not the preference, safeguarding of the young person was paramount. She was more concerned about the length of time young people stayed in unregulated placements than the number. One of the things officers were working on was the language used on the form about the young person, the risks were presented first rather than the wonderful things relating to the young person, this required change.

Councillor Kerby indicated he would like to be included in the visit to the caretaker’s bungalow at Colehill School when that was arranged. The

Executive Director of People – Children informed him that dates had been identified in about 3 weeks' time.

The Chairman confirmed the next update on action taken would be at the meeting of the Board on the 4 September 2019.

Resolved

1. That Councillor Kerby be included in the visit to the caretaker's bungalow at Colehill School.
2. That officers provide a progress report on action taken at the next meeting of the Board on 4 September 2019.

17. Looked After Health Briefing Update - Escalation of Performance of Initial Health Assessments - Quarter 4 and Initial Health Assessments

The Chairman asked that the Board take this report and the Initial Health Assessments report together as one item.

The Corporate Parenting Board considered a report on Looked After Health Briefing Update – Escalation of Performance of Initial Health Assessments by the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children and a report on Initial Health Assessments by the Executive Director of People – Children.

The Designated Nurse for Looked After Children informed the Board that during 2018/19 there had been some improvement, but timeliness of consent was still a challenge. She referred to table 2.3 where assessments were ranging from 65.5% to 44.7% with an average of 52.5% Initial Health Assessments completed in 20 working days. During the last few months the Pan-Dorset Pathway had been agreed and implemented including guidance for Social Workers regarding their responsibility for meeting the statutory guidance. There had been increasing challenges on Paediatricians due to a vacancy not being filled, and as there was a national shortage of Paediatricians the CCG were working with Poole Hospital Trust to review the existing model.

The Executive Director of People – Children commented there were complex issues around why decisions were made. A little more analysis needed to be researched regarding young people's wishes about where they need to go to have their IHA. It was not good that they should have to miss school we want to look at the experience of the IHA for young people and ensure they are able to access them in their local area. In terms of the workforce we have LAC health nurses and are positive about the new pathway that has been developed. Meetings had been arranged with Health for the following week beginning 22 July 2019 to discuss progress.

The Foster Carers explained they had been carers for 18 months and during that time they had only been to 2 IHA's one young person did not want to be there and her birth mother who was present, was asked very little. Information relating to the family history was recorded as "no information" available even though the birth mother was in attendance. The second time they attended an IHA was for a very small baby and the medical lasted about

10 minutes – a very quick check over of baby. The birth mother who was in attendance was not asked any information and this also was recorded as “no information” available.

The Designated Nurse for LAC was very disappointed to hear that had happened and would take that away with her to check on. She felt that as both parents were present there had been a missed opportunity. She went on to explain the statutory requirement for completing IHA's.

The Executive Director of People – Children mentioned that the Children Act had been written 30 years ago and LAC were very different now compared to then. If there was a young person who did not want that assessment, officers needed to work with them to establish why. It was about the child and keeping them safe we need to find out why we are not meeting the target.

The Designated Nurse for LAC confirmed the specialist LAC nurses she worked with would ask young people why they did not want an IHA. The Statutory requirement would still need to be met as that was how the service was measured.

The Chairman understood the comments about meeting the national targets but for Corporate Parents it was about the young person.

One member commented that it was also about health checks taking place somewhere accessible, how could they be made desirable to young people as it set them apart from their peers.

One member asked about the timescale for an IHA to take place. The Designated Nurse for LAC explained the timescale. Officers explained they could achieve the timescale but could not get consent in advance of the child coming into care. If the child was coming into care on a court order they could not pre-empt the decision. Ideally notification and consent would be given on day one of the child coming into care this was part of the new pathway. Health should then receive information as early as possible.

Martin Hill, Foster Carer agreed that national targets and timescales had to be met but perhaps it would be better if there was more time available to enable children to settle into coming into care. If this happened there might be a completely different outcome, surely it would be better to have good information and not meet the target than have bad information and meet the target.

The Designated Nurse for LAC considered a change of culture was required about how IHA's were sold to young people. Smarter working with social workers and pooling of information was required.

The Corporate Parenting Officer mentioned that Early Services received a great deal of information about the child and wondered whether information could be released from the GP as they would have had a record of the child.

The Chairman asked whether, when first referrals were coming through, there was anything that stated information could be accessed. The Executive Director of People – Children confirmed there was an issue around informed consent and if they say no, the Authority had to accept that.

One member asked if information could be provided as to the cost of the paediatrician undertaking initial medicals at the child's placement in the same way that the Looked After Children's nurses did for the review medicals. The Designated Nurse for LAC confirmed the cost of visiting at a home would be excessive and had been explored previously but this could be scoped with a view to seeing how much it would cost now.

One member asked for financial information to be provided and the Designated Nurse for LAC agreed she would provide that information at a future meeting of the Board once costings were complete. She anticipated this would be available for the meeting of the Board to be held on 19 March 2020.

The Chairman commented that the Board did not want this issue to keep coming back to them as a problem, a solution should be sought with flexibility on both sides. An update on action taken and progress should be submitted to the Board quarterly, the next report to the 9 October 2019 meeting.

Resolved

1. That the Designated Nurse for LAC provide financial information at the meeting of the Board to be held on 19 March 2020.
2. That officers and the Designated Nurse for LAC provide a joint update report on action taken and progress to the meeting of the Board on 9 October 2019.

18. Pathway Plans

The Corporate Parenting Board considered a report by the Executive Director of People – Children on Pathway Plans.

Officers informed the Board that Pathway Plans were provided for young people aged 16 years onwards. The Plan should be drawn up together with the young person with performance being monitored in two ways; those who had a plan in place and by identifying how many plans had been updated within 7 months. The IRO service looked at the quality of the plans and gave them an Ofsted rating. 95% of all LAC had a Care or Pathway Plan with 89% completed within the past 7 months.

One member asked what happened if a young person wanted the Pathway Plan changed completely. Officers confirmed the Plans could be changed at any time if there was something the young person would like done differently this would be discussed and changed as necessary.

The Chairman referred to table 2 in the report as there was quite a wide variation in completed plans especially for those with a disability only 40% completed in the west of the county. She asked what was being done in

respect of the transition to Adult Services for disabled young people as it could take years for the packages they required to be in place. Officers confirmed the plans were completed alongside the young people wherever this was possible. Officers commented that there was further work to be undertaken alongside Adult Services to ensure there was sufficient lead in time for plans to be firmly in place when the young person moved into being supported by Adult Services and that this was consistent across the service.

The Chairman of Dorset Parent Carer Council mentioned the young people would have an EHCP which started at year 9 and transition should start from that year to enable all services to work together. At the present time it seemed they had separate plans that were not being merged together.

The Executive Director of People – Children could not understand why transitions were a problem. She confirmed that officers would be looking to see how to get this right as whole life services were the favourable option. She was happy to bring this back the Board at a future meeting.

The Chief Executive of Participation People commented that moving into adulthood was contained in the Children’s Satisfaction Survey and it was felt this should start at age 14. Young people were requesting work was started earlier. Young people were also given a postcard with the different terminology written on it to enable them to get used to the phrases used.

The Chairman referred to paragraph 2.6 of the report and asked for feedback on the whole service workshop that had taken place on the 8 July 2019. Officers confirmed the workshop looked at how to improve services to young people by monitoring performance and improvements to the pathway planning. The Chief Executive of Participation People was looking at the design of forms with young people to enable them to become more person friendly.

Officers confirmed they would provide a report quarterly on action taken.

Resolved

1. That officers provide the Chairman with feedback on the whole service workshop held on 8 July 2019.
2. That officers provide a quarterly report to the Corporate Parenting Board on action taken to be reported at meeting held on 9 October 2019.

19. Children Who Are Disabled

The Corporate Parenting Board considered a report by the Executive Director of People – Children on Children who are Disabled.

Officers informed the Board there were three social work teams covering the East, West and South areas. Paediatric Occupational Therapy and specialist Early Help services were provided on an authority wide basis. Numbers have remained stable with 53% of young people with foster carers, 5 young people were placed within the authority’s own facilities. Visiting statistics were difficult to report on because a young person may decide not to see their social

worker so often and this could be changed to 3 monthly visits. Table 5 referred to assessments completed within the statutory 45 working days, quarter 4 January to March 2019 showed an improving picture with focus on sustaining that improvement. One of the continuing challenges was securing placements for those young people that came into care and those at risk from criminal and sexual exploitation.

The Chairman of Dorset Parent Carers Council asked if there were any concerns around providers and the number of breaks, were there enough providers and what happened to those with challenging behaviour. Those with quite challenging behaviour and more complex needs tended to be in a residential setting rather than in a family situation, officers were not aware of any issues.

Members asked whether the improving percentages between quarter 1 and quarter 4 were due to the falling number of cases rather than the work. The Executive Director of People – Children confirmed better processes were in place now in the West which had reached 100%.

Reference was made to paragraph 3.3 of the report and members thought it would be interesting to know where the young people were. Officers did not have that information to hand but would ensure it was included in the next report to the Board.

It was agreed the Board would receive a progress report showing peaks and troughs and action taken in 6 months' time at the meeting being held on the 16 January 2020. If further information was available earlier then officers should email Board members with the information.

Resolved

1. That officers provide the Board with a progress report showing peaks and troughs and action taken in 6 months' time at the meeting being held on 16 January 2020.
2. That information relating to where the young people were be included in the next report to the Board.
3. If further information was available earlier officers should email Board members with the information.

20. Urgent Items

The Chairman mentioned the DofE initiative about young people being in independent schools and felt it was something that could be brought to future meetings of the Board she was not clear if the initiative was about residential placements or independent schools ie public schools and wondered if this could be looked at in October.

The Assistant Director – Schools and Learning confirmed it related to children in care being in care and accessing public schools. He confirmed there were no Dorset Children at Shaftesbury School.

Noted

21. **CLICC - List of Broken Promises, Challenge Cards and update from Participation People**

The Chief Executive of Participation People apologised to the Board that unfortunately there no young people available to attend the meeting.

The challenge cards which Children's Services had completed were circulated to the Board and discussion took place on the responses. The Board's response is set out below.

Challenge One – Sometimes it takes too long to hear back from a Social Worker. We have an example of it taking 2 weeks for a reply, by which time it was too late to act on the request. How can we stop this from happening?

Response – Ask young people how they would like to be contacted/communicated with and offer a personalised response. Return calls as a basic/standard duty. Support them to elevate an issue if it persists, easily.

Challenge Two – We think that some decisions are passed up to managers, when they could be made by Social Workers. This can mean the decision takes too long to be effective. Is there a process where Social Workers can have the confidence to make those decision themselves to save time?

Response – Foster Parents should have their own delegated powers. Dorset Council should help them be more aware of these and support them to use them.

Challenge Three, Four and Six – If my Social Worker is on holiday or has left, how can you make sure I can get in touch with someone else when I need to?

Must I always go through my carer if I need to contact my Social Worker? I don't have my Social Worker's email address or contact details.

We think Social Workers should give us a card with their contact details on the front and the out of hours/duty number on the back, so we always know how to get in touch.

Response – Agree to a business card. They need to be of good quality. Not all Social Workers will want their face on a business card, perhaps a Bitmoji could be used instead? We should offer a paper version and digital one for both young people and Foster Carers. The Executive Director of People – Children's details should be added to every card to make it as easy as possible for young people and foster carers to get in touch with her.

Challenge Five and Seven – When a taxi is booked for us, why can't the taxi be given our details so they can keep us informed? We understand that our

Social Worker probably won't know if our taxi has failed to turn up. We need to know what to do if this happens.

Response – Foster Carers should be able to book young people's transport. We should support young people's independence.

The Chief Executive of Participation People thanked the Board for their input and confirmed CLiCC responses would be fed back to the Board at its meeting on 4 September 2019.

Resolved

That the Chief Executive of Participation People provide the CLiCC responses to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Board on 4 September 2019.

Duration of meeting: 3.00 pm - 5.20 pm

Chairman
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Corporate Parenting Board

Audit of Looked After Children and Children Who Are Disabled Case Files

Date of Meeting: 4 September 2019

Lead Member: Andrew Parry - Lead Member for Children's Services...

Lead Officer: Sarah Parker, Executive Director – People Children

Executive Summary:

This paper provides an update and overall conclusion of the findings of the Safeguarding and Standards monthly manager's audit for June 2019 which was for Children Looked After (LAC) and includes a summary of audits undertaken on Children Who Are Disabled (CWAD) case files undertaken since April 2019.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Budget:

There are no budget implications related to this report.

Risk Assessment:

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: HIGH/MEDIUM/LOW (Delete as appropriate)

Residual Risk HIGH/MEDIUM/LOW (Delete as appropriate)

This paper does not require a Risk Assessment

Climate implications:

None

Other Implications:

None

Recommendation:

There are no recommendations from this paper except to note its contents

Reason for Recommendation:

Appendices:

Appendix A - Monthly Audit Report – June 2019 and detailing CWAD since April 2019.

Background Papers: None

Officer Contact:

Name: Karen Elliott, Designated Safeguarding Manager

Tel:

Email: Karen.Elliott@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Case audits help identify good practice as well as highlight areas for development, improvement and learning. Audits support our continuous professional development and contribute to learning across the whole organisation. Auditing is a crucial element of case and service improvement and identifies where we need to do things differently to improve practice. We want to be sure that both the impact of our work and the child's experience is both positive and sustainable.

2. Monthly Audit Process

- 2.1. The audit template has seven domains with each domain given a score of between 1 to 10 by the auditor, with 1 being no evidence found and 10 where good evidence has been found. The auditor will also make an overall judgement at the end of the audit using the Ofsted judgements which are: Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate.
- 2.2. The auditor will consider: the child's voice, the impact of intervention on the specific child being audited, whether approaches have been effective and if policies and procedures have been followed appropriately. The auditor usually focuses on the last three months of involvement – the 'here and now' but where required the auditor will go back further.
- 2.3. The auditors are all peer auditors, so they do not audit their own teams work. The cohort of children audited this month were chosen from a list of Children Looked After. The allocated case workers include those from: the 0-12 and 13-25 teams, CWAD and both East and West Districts.
- 2.4. The auditor should escalate any urgent safeguarding concerns with the Safeguarding and Standards Team. None were identified as requiring escalation for immediate attention in the June audit.
- 2.5. The auditor involves the allocated social worker when auditing. The auditor contacts the social worker and agrees either to: audit the case alongside the social worker, get the perspective from the social worker prior to looking at the case on mosaic or speak to the social worker after auditing the case on mosaic if not possible to do together. The conversation had with the social worker is to try to obtain an understanding of context around practice and work undertaken.
- 2.6. This supports a move away from a deficit model to that of a learning organisation with the objective being a supportive process for the social worker and an opportunity for case reflection.

3. **Audit Compliance** (see 1 in Appendix A)

- 3.1. Audit compliance has reduced again this month down to 76% which is being followed up by the Corporate Director on an individual basis to identify what the barriers are to supporting the audit process.

4. **Audit Scores** (see 2 in Appendix A)

- 4.1. The overall average score across all seven domains has risen from 6.2 in May to 6.9 in the June audit which is in line with the general upward trend. 6.9 is the highest it has been since April 2018 except in April 2019 when it rose to 7.2.
- 4.2. 13 CWAD case files have been included in the cases chosen for audit since April 2019. They were not chosen as a cohort of CWAD specifically but were included in the pick list because they fulfilled the main criteria such as Child n Need or LAC as the cohort chosen for audit.
- 4.3. Of the cases audited since April 2019, the overall average score of all seven domains is in line with the June audit of 6.9. This would indicate a fairly consistent pattern of improved practice although the cohort was only 13, it is still encouraging.
- 4.4. 'Evidencing that supervision takes place regularly and that management oversight has been used appropriately to ensure effective practice', was the weakest scoring domain for both the June audit for LAC (5.9) and CWAD (5.8). This is a consistent pattern for the monthly audits being the weakest domain. Despite this being the weakest area, it still indicates a positive trend line upwards. Where this scored low the comments were again mainly around frequency of supervision and lack of reflection.
- 4.5. The highest scoring domain for June (LAC) of 7.4 and for CWAD 7.8, was the voice of the child. This domain indicates that there is evidence that the child's voice and their experience/needs were captured and understood and that this can be seen to have influenced the assessment, planning and interventions. This is often the highest or one of the highest scoring domains in the monthly audit and this trend upwards is very positive.
- 4.6. There continues to be evidence that work is taking place, but it is not always recorded consistently and in a timely way. This is still evidenced with some back recording onto mosaic taking place when gaps are highlighted in audits and reports.
- 4.7. It is important that there continues to be an emphasis on the expectation that work is recorded as soon after taking place as possible, so that this becomes fully embedded.

5. **Audit Judgements** (see section 3 in Appendix A)

- 5.1. We have seen only 2 Inadequate judgements for the June audit which remains the same as last month. There were no Inadequate judgements for the CWAD case files audited which is good.
- 5.2. There is an increase in Outstanding audits for the June audit where there were 5. This is 15% of the overall judgments which is positive. None of the CWAD audits were graded as Outstanding which is disappointing.
- 5.3. 47% of the audits were judged to be Good for the June audit and 62% for CWAD which is very positive. We remain in the Good/Requires

Improvement being the significant total and need to shift to this being a pattern of Good or Good/Outstanding being the majority.

6. Themes

6.1. The overall themes remain similar to the comments of previous months such as:

- It is sometimes unclear who has attended meetings.
- Within the Equality/Diversity domain it is evident that auditors are sometimes uncertain about what they are looking for, particularly if the child is White British. This domain generally is scoring quite highly with an average of 7 which does not reflect the uncertainty in the comments.
- There are examples of drift when social workers are off sick which highlights the need for managers to be more proactive in case management oversight in these situations and consider reallocation if there is likely to be a prolonged absence.
- There is sometimes no evidence of reflective supervision and this reflects the lower score for this domain.
- When the auditor has made a judgement of Requires Improvement or Inadequate, the actions detailed for follow up are clearer this month.
- There is some evidence of IRO escalation when plans or case recording such as visits are not evident.
- On occasion there is not an up to date care plan/pathway plan although when one is present it is generally good.
- The auditors rarely comment on the chronology. This may suggest that there is not a current up to date chronology present.

7. Children Looked After Statutory Visits (see section 4 in Appendix A)

- 7.1. Previously the need for improvement was highlighted in terms of LAC statutory visits and this continues to remain an area of focus for the monthly audit report.
- 7.2. The data shown in the table 4.A) in the appendix leaves a clear month for any late recording on mosaic to have less of an impact on the accuracy of the data available each month.
- 7.3. There continues to be a consistent gradual improvement for LAC Statutory Visits completed on time which is positive.
- 7.4. The report was re set to start again in April, so the table shows visits carried out in April, April to May and April to June. This is so that any poor performance from last year does not impact negatively on this data.
- 7.5. This month it shows that 85.81% of statutory LAC visits were carried out on time between 1 April to 30 June with 12.33% being undertaken late.

8. Moving Forward and Actions

- 8.1. We will know when we are making improvements when the monthly audit returns consistently show increased scores, and overall judgements show

- a percentage increase in those that are graded 'Good' and 'Outstanding', with fewer 'Requires Improvement' and with no 'Inadequate' judgements.
- 8.2. The Quality Assurance Meeting has been reviewed and will recommence in September where the learning from audits will be shared.
 - 8.3. The findings of case audits will be considered by the Children's Senior Leadership Team on a quarterly basis.
 - 8.4. Good practice is that all case files should have an up to date chronology. It is a quick and effective way to see what is happening in the life of a child or young person. It helps identify patterns and helps with assessing risk and analysing the likely impact of events. A reminder to consider chronologies will be sent out with the next audit cycle.
 - 8.5. The audit programme has been reviewed with a proposal due to go to the Children's Senior Leadership Team later this month with it due to come to Corporate Parenting Board in October. The new programme of quality assurance will increase the pool of auditors to include senior leaders across the council and the introduction of Observed Practice and Observation of Meetings. It will also include an audit week to include a 'Conversation' with children, young people and their families.
 - 8.6. The Cohort of children that will be audited in August will be those with an allocated worker from the CWAD Team.

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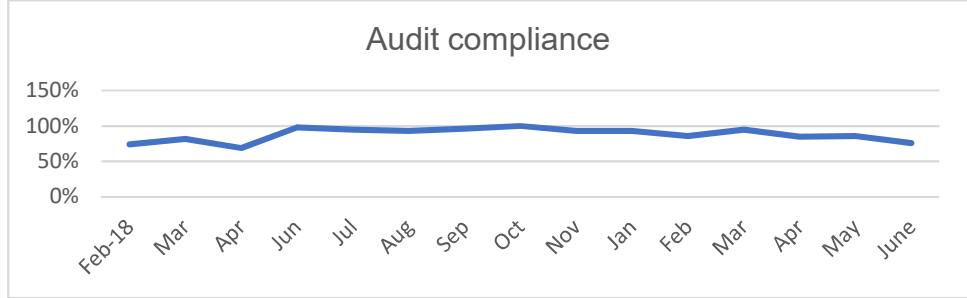
Monthly audit

1. A) June Monthly audit compliance

	Total sent for audit	Number completed	% Completed
April	48	33	69%
May ²	-	-	-
June	48	47	98%
July	43	41	95%
August	43	40	93%
September	45	43	96%
October	41	41	100%
November	44	41	93%
December ²	-	-	-
January 2019	44	41	93%
February 2019	44	38	86%
March 2019	40	38	95%
April 2019	40	35	88%
May 2019	42	36	86%
June 2019	45	34	76%

² No Internal Audits were sent out in May and December 2018.

1. B)

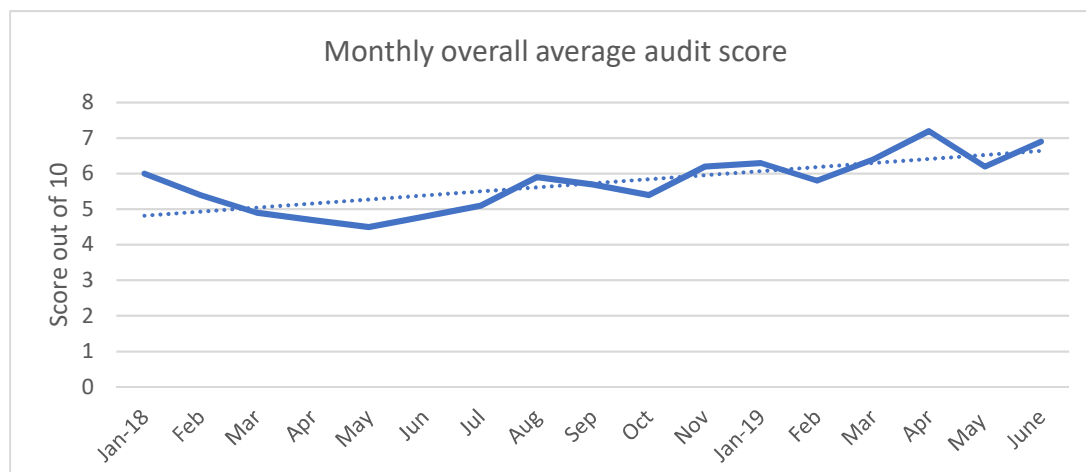


2. A) Monthly audit scores

Average score for each domain								Overall average score
Month	Voice of the child	Parent/Carer views	Planning/ Interventions	Meetings	Multi-agency working	Supervision/ Management oversight	Equalities/ Diversity	
April 2018	5.2	5.2	4.2	4.2	5	4.8	4	4.7
May	6	5.7	4.3	3.4	3.9	4.9	3.4	4.5
June	4.9	5.3	4.6	3.9	5	5.3	4.7	4.8
July	5	5.7	5.1	5.1	5.3	4.5	5.2	5.1
August	6.3	6.5	5.7	5.7	6.1	4.9	6	5.9
Sept	6	5.9	5.6	5.2	5.6	5.8	5.5	5.7
Oct	5.1	6	5.3	5.1	5.4	5	6	5.4
Nov	6.6	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.2	5.6	6	6.2
Jan 2019	7	6.8	6.4	5.8	6.4	5.8	6.2	6.3
Feb	6.3	6.2	5.4	5.6	5.8	5.3	6.1	5.8
March	6.8	6.9	6.2	6.1	6.5	5.6	6.5	6.4
April	7.5	7.2	7.4	7.4	7.5	6.3	7.0	7.2
May	6.9	6.3	6.2	5.9	6.2	5.6	6.3	6.2
June	7.4	6.9	6.7	7.2	7	5.9	7.1	6.9
CWAD total since April	7.8	7	6.3	6.5	7.3	5.8	7.3	6.9

No internal audits were sent out in May and December 2018.

2. B)



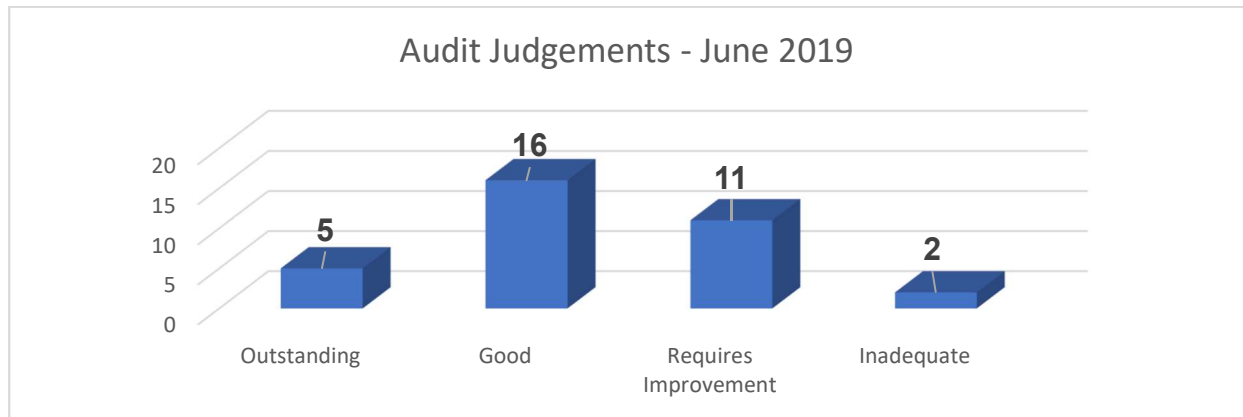
3. A) Monthly audit judgements

Month	Outstanding		Good		Requires Improvement		Inadequate		Total
April	7	6%	27	23%	56	48%	26	22%	116
May	1	4%	4	15%	19	73%	2	8%	26
June	1	2%	16	34%	19	40%	11	23%	47
July	1	2%	15	37%	11	27%	14	34%	41
Aug	2	5%	14	35%	16	40%	8	20%	40
Sep	1	2%	18	41%	21	48%	4	9%	44
Oct	1	2%	8	20%	29	71%	3	7%	41
Nov	6	15%	18	44%	13	32%	4	10%	41
Jan 19	3	7%	25	60%	11	26%	3	7%	41
Feb	2	5%	14	37%	16	42%	6	16%	38
Mar	6	16%	15	39%	14	37%	3	8%	38
Apr	10	29%	14	40%	11	31%	0	0%	35
May	3	8%	20	56%	11	31%	2	8%	36
June	5	15%	16	47%	11	32%	2	6%	34
CWAD since April	0	0%	8	62%	5	38%	0	0%	-

(No internal audits in May and December 2018)

Total	618
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3.B)

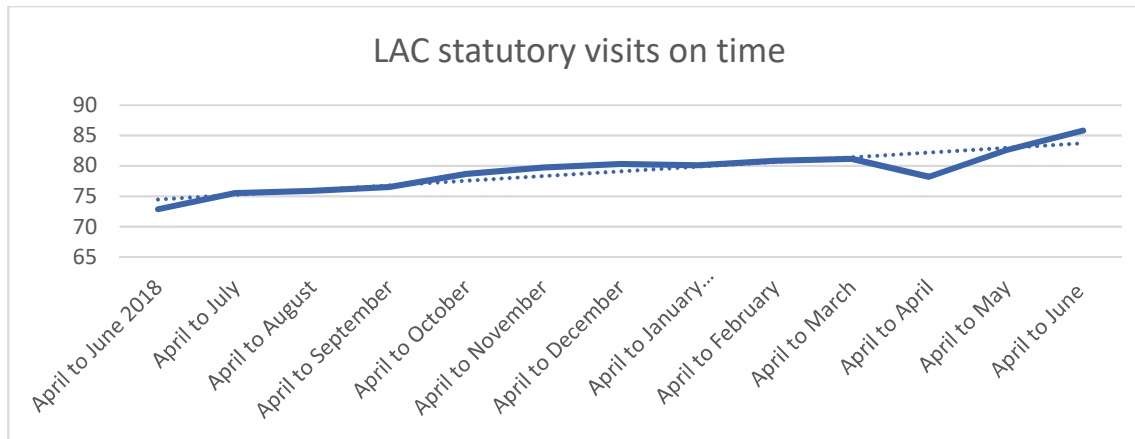


Timeliness of Statutory Visits to Looked After Children (LAC)

4. A)

	April to April		April to May		April to June	
Percentage	On time	Late	On time	Late	On time	Late
LAC	78.22	10.24	82.59	13.96	85.81	12.33

5. B)



Karen Elliott
Designated Safeguarding Manager



Date of Meeting: 4 September 2019

Lead Member: Cllr Andrew Parry Lead Member for Children, Education and Early Help

Lead Officer: Sarah Parker – Executive Director for People - Children

Executive Summary:

We are in the process of talking to staff and partners about how we best deliver high quality services to children and families, and what changes we need to make to achieve this. These conversations have begun and continue across children's services. A proposed structure will be shared in September followed by a 45-day formal consultation period, with a view to moving to the new way of working in early 2020.

We have recently been successful in 2 bids for support in improving services. The first will ensure that our offer to care experienced young people is of good quality and shaped by them. The second provides support in transforming services using a strong public service ethos alongside an entrepreneurial culture, thereby creating services which are sustainable, ethical and socially focused.

Equalities Impact Assessment: N/A

Budget:

N/A

Risk Assessment:

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk Low

Climate implications:

N/A

Other Implications:

N/A
Recommendation: For information
Reason for Recommendation:
Appendices: None
Background Papers: None
Officer Contact: Name: Mary Taylor Tel: 01305 228384 Email: Mary.Taylor@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

1. Blueprint for change.

- 1.1 Senior leaders in children's services together with managers and staff are aware that change is needed in terms of how we deliver services to children and families.
- 1.2 We also recognise that our staff are our most valuable asset and that their experience and understanding of children's needs puts them in a good place to be able to provide creative ideas as to how we can structure services to have a positive impact on outcomes.
- 1.3 In July we started a series on large meetings with staff to start the conversation with them about what needs to change. Sarah Parker (Executive Director – People (Children)) set the scene to begin each meeting by reminding us that the Children Act 1989, is now 30 years old and there have been significant changes in our work since then.
- 1.4 We have seen child protection work spread from looking at risks within families, to also considering risks to our young people in the community, with the emergence of County Lines and Child Criminal Exploitation. We have seen an increase in the numbers of children who do not attend school regularly, either due to being excluded, being electively home educated or through the young people themselves feeling that school has nothing to offer them. We have seen the demand for placements increase while sufficiency of local placements has not kept pace, resulting in some children being placed further from their families and communities than we would like.

1.5 When talking to our staff, and more importantly listening to them, we heard some common themes.

Our staff want:

- to work more closely with families where they live
- to provide seamless services from across the Council
- to work more closely with partner agencies
- to spend more time working directly with children and parents/carers
- to reduce the times a child has a change of Social Worker
- to work with families by building trusting relationships with them
- to recognise and build on the strengths which exist within families
- to work alongside families understanding their unique situation and finding solutions together

1.6 Further conversations are going on within teams who will continue to share their thoughts and ideas through a dedicated email box and this will feed into the way we design services for the future.

1.7 A structure will be shared with staff in September, and a 45-day formal consultation will follow. We aim to move to the new way of delivering services in early 2020.

2. New Belongings:

2.1 In June this year we submitted an expression of interest in the New Belongings programme and have subsequently received confirmation that we have been successful.

2.2 The New Belongings programme was initially developed between 2013 and 2016 with funding from the Department for Education and has now found a new home with Coram Voice, who will use the lessons from the previous programme to support local authorities to develop their leaving care services together with their care leavers.

2.3 The New Belongings Programme (NBP) will develop a model for improving support for care leavers based on engagement and involvement of young people as experts in their own experience. The Bright Spots' [Your Life Beyond Care survey](#) will be used alongside a self-assessment tool in the New Belongings to provide a baseline and inform action planning.

2.4 The team will be contacting us in September to start the work to develop services to care experienced young people through working with us and care leavers to ensure that the offer to them meets their needs and is responsive to local issues.

3. Mutual Ventures:

3.1 Mutual Ventures was set up in 2011 to help public services achieve more through combining a strong public service ethos with an entrepreneurial

culture.

- 3.2 Mutual ventures work with Local Authorities, NHS and other public bodies to transform public services. Bringing experience and expertise, they work flexibly to ensure that solutions are found which fit the need of the organisation.
 - 3.3 They seek to deliver tangible benefits for local communities and are committed to building services which are sustainable, ethical and socially focused.
 - 3.4 Earlier this year we submitted a bid to access support from Mutual Ventures and have been selected as one of the Local Authorities that they will work with. An initial meeting has taken place and we are currently in the process of scoping the work they will do with us.
4. Moving forward.
- 4.1 We will continue to look outwards for inspiration from those who are already providing outstanding services. We will seek opportunities to work with other organisations who can provide additional capacity and expertise to support us in getting where we want to be, that is to be recognised as one of the best children's services nationally.



Date of Meeting: 4 September 2019

Lead Member: Cllr Andrew Parry Lead Member for Children, Education and Early Help

Lead Officer: Sarah Parker-Executive Director for People – Children's

Executive Summary:

This report provides data and intelligence about children in care and care leavers up to 31st July 2019. It includes information on key performance indicators that are part of a nationally collected data set reported to government.

The format of this report was agreed by the corporate parenting board on 19th Feb 2019. The same data set will be reported at each meeting of the board to enable progress tracking. This report focuses on the period up to the end of July.

Included in the report is:

1. An overview of the 445 children in care and key performance indicators relating to their care, which includes:
 - Timeliness of reviews (97%), this is an increase from 86% in the previous reporting period
 - 77% seen in the last 6 weeks, an increase from 65% in the previous reporting period
 - There were 84 new children in care in the last 6 months
 - 88 children left our care
 - 68% of children are in foster care (a slight reduction since April where the % was 70%)
 - Placement stability has remained the same with 7% with 3 or more placement moves in the last 12 months and 70% of children in long term placements being in the same placement for more than 2 years
 - 14% of children in care have been reported missing in the last 12 months, with 70% being offered a return home interview and 72% of these accepting them.
2. An overview of the 217 care leavers and key performance indicators relating to their support, which includes:
 - The council is in touch with over 90% of care leavers
 - 87% of care leavers aged 17/18 are in suitable accommodation (slightly lower than 90% in previous reporting period)
 - 93% of care leavers aged 19-21 are in suitable accommodation
 - 37% of 17 and 18-year-old care leavers are in education, employment or training (a reduction from 43% in the previous reporting period)
 - 54% of 19-21-year-old care leavers are in education, employment or training (an increase from 51% in the previous reporting period)
3. Direction of travel from the previous reporting period is indicated in the body of the report.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

There are no EqIA implications arising from this report.

Budget: n/a

Risk Assessment:

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: LOW

Residual Risk LOW

Other Implications: n/a

Recommendation:

1. Members of the corporate parenting board are asked to note the information in this report

Reason for Recommendation:

2. Members of the corporate parenting board should receive regular progress reports to keep them informed about the children in the council's care, and care leavers.

Appendices:

Background Papers: n/a

Officer Contact

Name: Claire Shiels

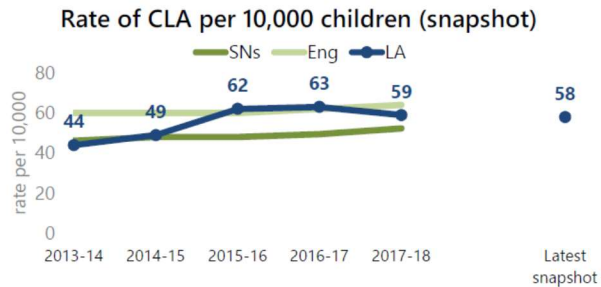
Tel: 01305 224682

Email: claire.shiels@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Children Looked After (CLA) with an open episode of care

Snapshot 01/08/2019

445 Children Looked After (CLA) with an open episode of care



Ethnic background

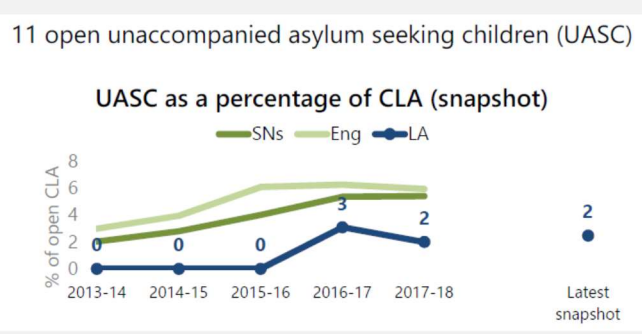
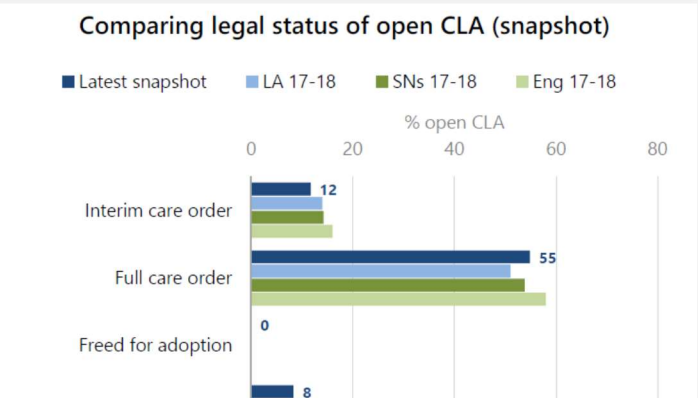
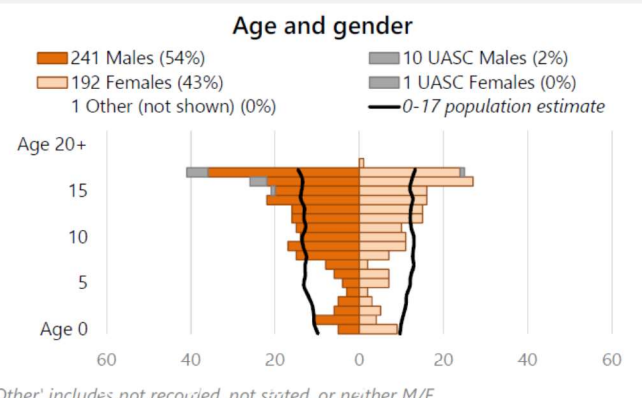
	All CLA	Not UASC	UASC
White	89%	91%	0%
Mixed	4%	4%	9%
Asian or Asian British	1%	1%	9%
Black or black British	1%	0%	45%
Other ethnic group	2%	1%	36%
Not stated	3%	3%	0%
Not recorded	0%	0%	0%

See page 20 for comparisons

44 children (10%) with a disability



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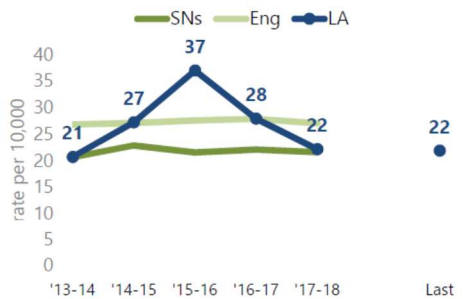
Children Looked After (CLA) started and ceased in the last 6 months

from 02/02/2019
to 01/08/2019

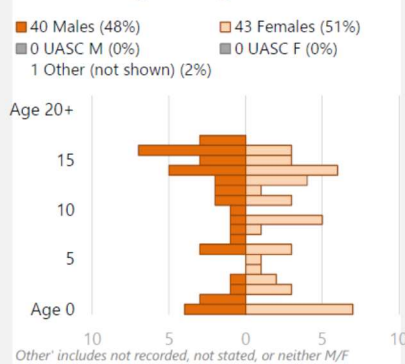
84 CLA started in the last 6 months

88 CLA ceased in the last 6 months

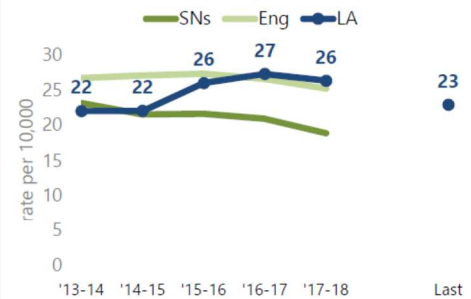
Rate of CLA started per 10,000 children



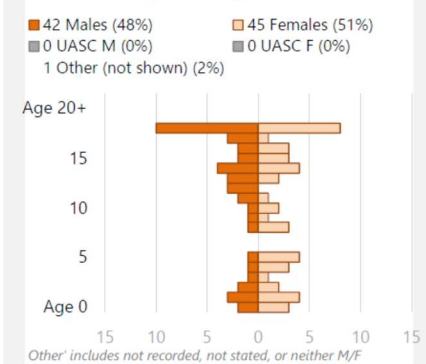
Age and gender



Rate of CLA ceased per 10,000 children



Age and gender



*Annualised rate for comparison purposes

*Annualised rate for comparison purposes

*Annualised rate for comparison purposes

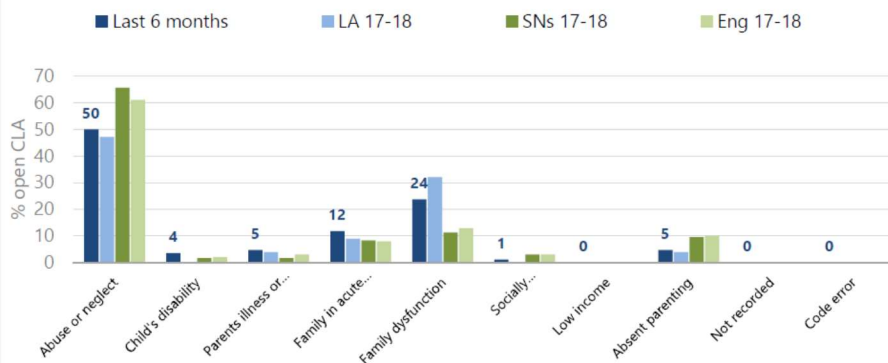
0%

0 of the 84 CLA starters were unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)

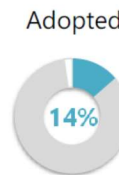
5%

4 of the 84 CLA starters have previously been looked after

Comparing the primary need of CLA starters



Reason episode of care ceased



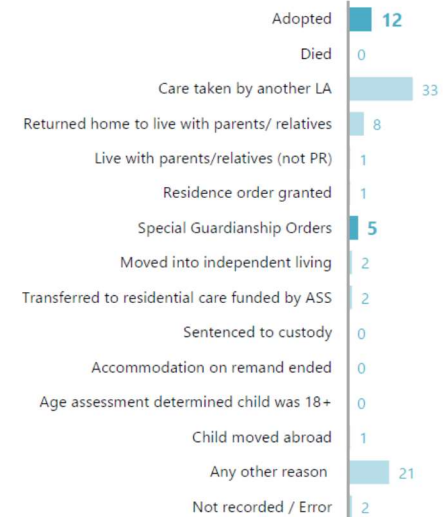
Last 6 months 14% | 2017-18 (published) LA 14%, SNs 15%, Eng 13%

Special Guardianship Order



Last 6 months 6% | 2017-18 (published) LA 21%, SNs 10%, Eng 11%

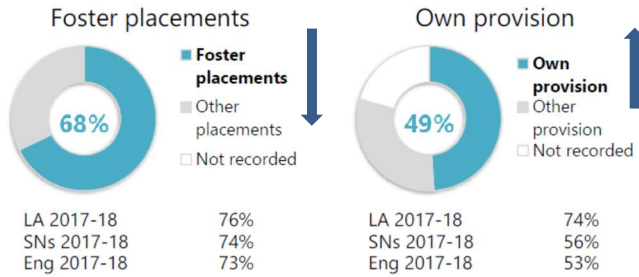
Number of CLA ceased by reason in the period



Children Looked After (CLA) placements

Snapshot 01/08/2019

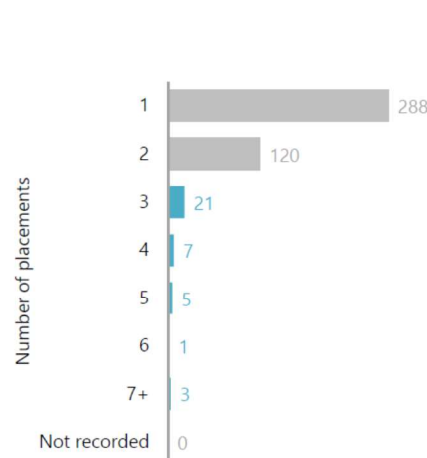
CLA placements by type and provision



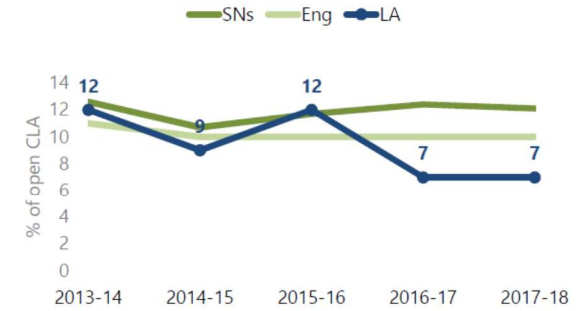
Placement type (open CLA)	Own LA	Private	Other	Total
Foster placement	199	89	14	302
Placed for adoption	0	0	13	13
Placed with parents	0	0	22	22
Independent living	12	2	17	31
Residential employment	0	0	0	0
Residential accommodation	3	11	15	29
Secure Children's Homes	0	0	2	2
Children's Homes	0	0	0	0
Residential Care Home	2	29	7	38
NHS/Health Trust	1	0	0	1
Family Centre	0	0	2	2
Young Offender Institution	0	0	0	0
Residential school	0	3	0	3
Other placements	0	0	0	0
Temporary placement	1	0	1	2
Total placements	218	134	93	445

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Number of placements in the last 12 months

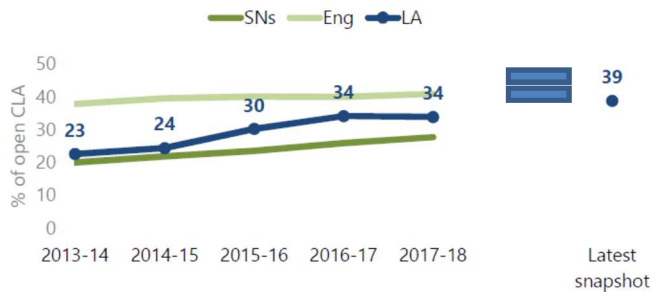


Comparing short term placement stability



Due to limited data in the Annex A dataset, ChAT does not present short-term stability alongside published statistics

CLA placements out of borough

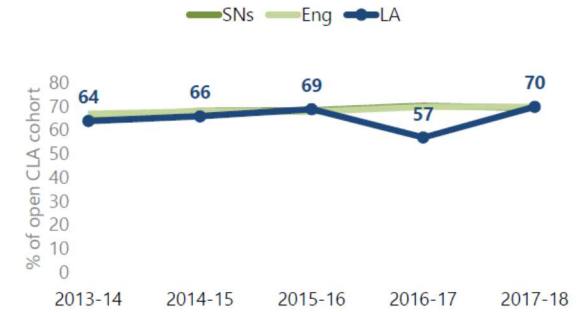


Duration of placements

Duration of latest placement for each current CLA aged under 16 who have been looked after for 2½ years or more



Comparing long term placement stability



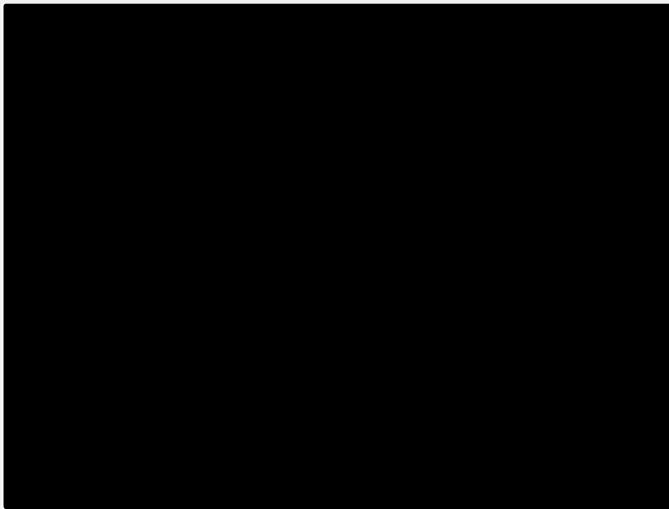
Due to limited data in the Annex A dataset, ChAT does not present long-term stability alongside published statistics

Children Looked After (CLA) health and missing/absent from placement

Snapshot 01/08/2019

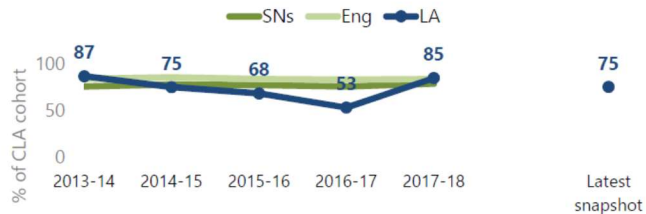
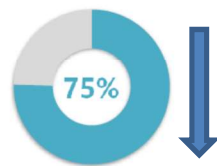
Health

321 current open CLA looked after for at least 12 months



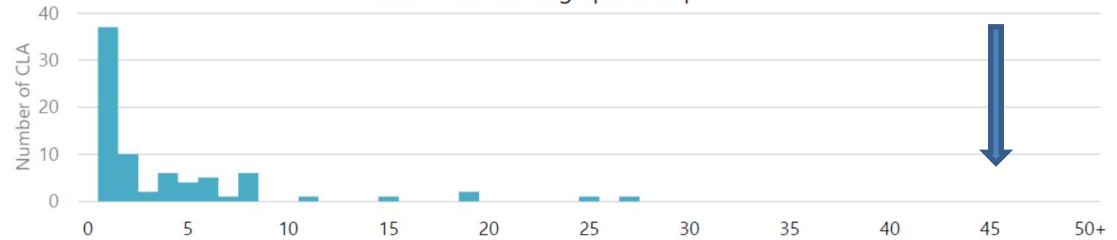
Dental checks

Current open CLA who have been looked after for at least 12 months who have had a dental check in the last 12 months.



Missing from placement

Number of missing episodes per CLA



77 of 533 looked after children had a missing incident in the last 12 months

	Latest data	LA 17-18	SNs 17-18	Eng 17-18
Number of all CLA with a missing incident	77 of 533	73		
Percentage of all CLA with a missing incident	14%	11%	10%	11%
Total number of missing incidents for all CLA	308	319		
Average number of incidents per CLA who went missing	4.0	4.4	5.0	6.1

Missing incidents - return home interviews

	Latest data	
Missing children offered return interview	54 of 77	70%
Missing children not offered return interview	5 of 77	6%
Missing children return interview offer not recorded	18 of 77	23%
Missing children where return interview was n/a	0 of 77	0%



	Latest data	
Missing children accepted return interview	39 of 54	72%
Missing children not accepted return interview	15 of 54	28%
Missing children return interview acceptance not recorded	0 of 54	0%

Absent from placement

11 of 533 looked after children had an absent incident in the last 12 months

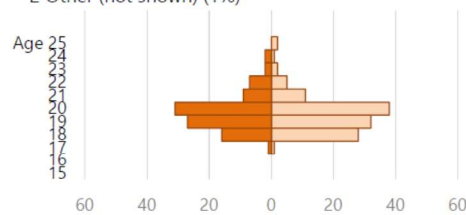
	Latest data	LA 17-18	SNs 17-18	Eng 17-18
Number of all CLA with an absent incident	11 of 533	x		
Percentage of all CLA with an absent incident	2%	-	1%	4%
Total number of absent incidents for all CLA	12	x		
Average number of incidents per CLA who were absent	1.1	1.3	1.4	4.0

Care leavers currently in receipt of leaving care services

217 care leavers

Age and gender

95 Males (44%) 120 Females (55%)
2 Other (not shown) (1%)



Other* includes not recorded, not stated, or neither M/F

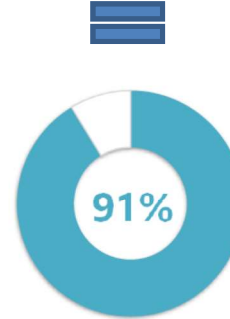
Ethnic background

White	88%
Mixed	1%
Asian or Asian British	2%
Black or black British	3%
Other ethnic group	3%
Not stated	2%
Not recorded	0%

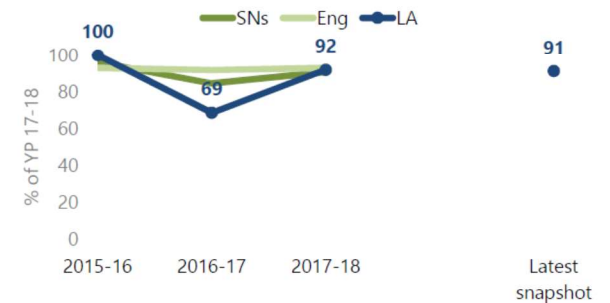
See page 20 for comparisons

24 (11%) care leavers with a disability

LA in touch with 17-18 year olds

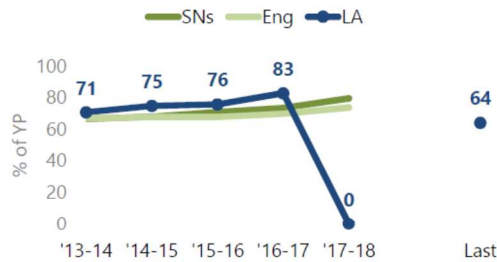


ChAT	Aged 17	Aged 18	Total
Numbers in cohort	2	44	46
LA in touch with YP	100%	91%	91%



Remained in care until aged 18

YP who ceased to be looked after aged 16-plus who were looked after until their 18th birthday



Eligibility category

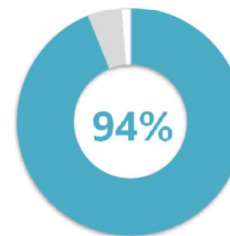
Relevant	4
Former relevant	205
Qualifying	8
Other	0
Not recorded	0

Relevant = YP aged 16-17 no longer looked after and eligible for leaving care services.

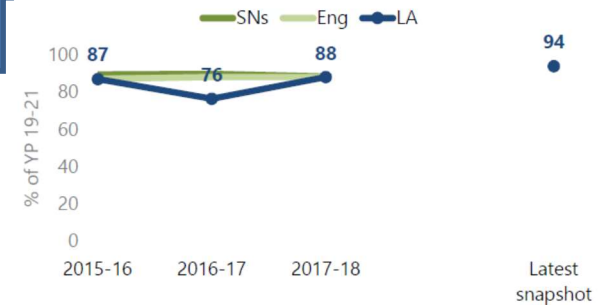
Former relevant = YP aged 18-25 eligible for leaving care services.

Qualifying = YP aged 18-25 in receipt of support but not eligible for full leaving care services.

LA in touch with 19-21 year olds

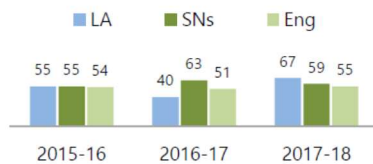


ChAT	Aged 19	Aged 20	Aged 21	Total
Numbers in cohort	59	69	20	148
LA in touch with YP	93%	96%	90%	94%

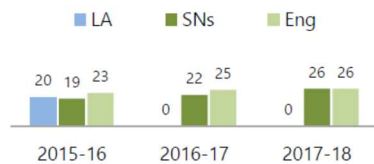


Remain with former foster carer

Aged 18



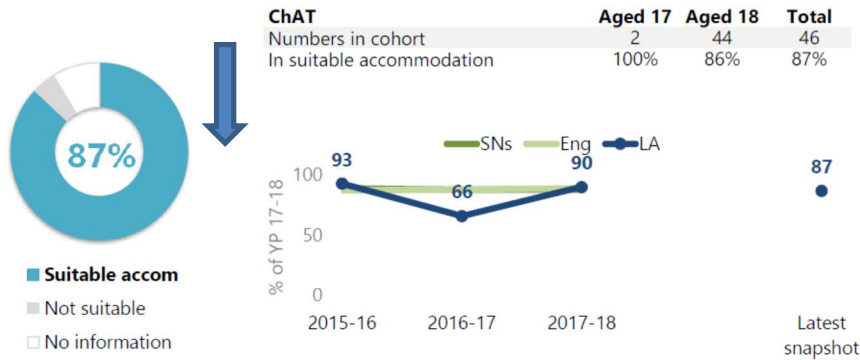
Aged 19-20



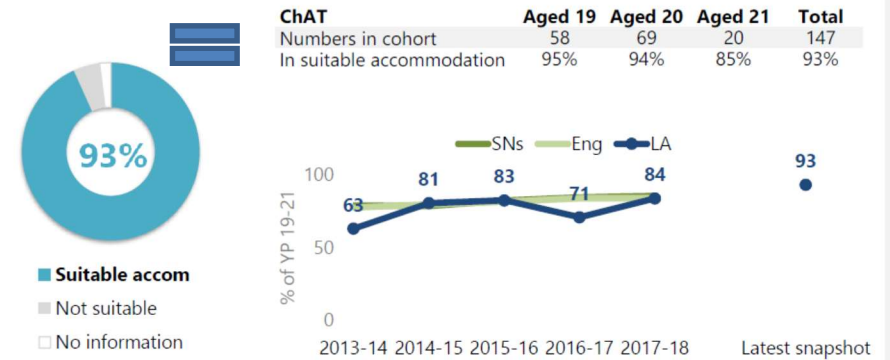
Care leavers accommodation suitability and type

Snapshot 01/08/2019

Accommodation suitability of 17-18 year olds



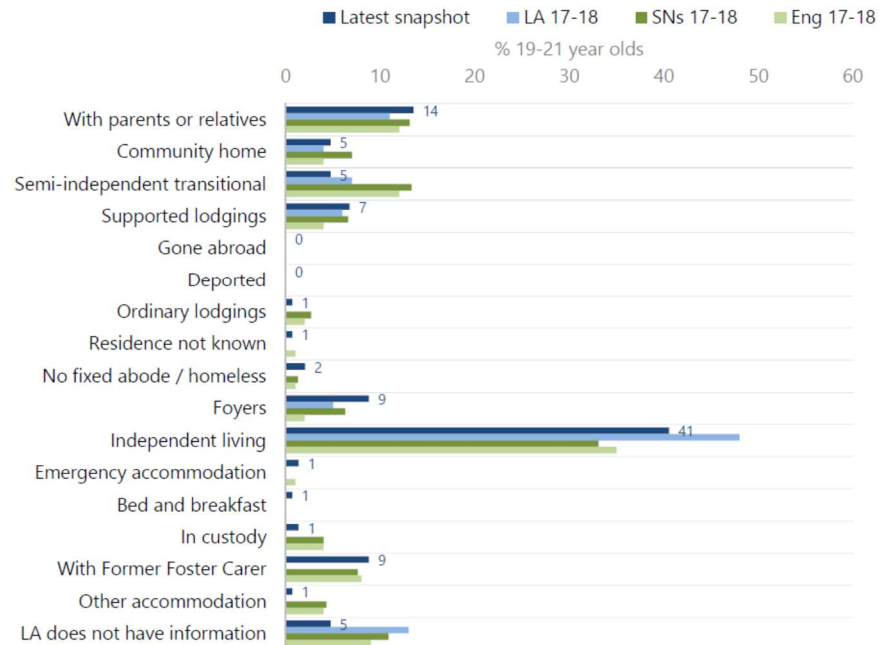
Accommodation suitability of 19-21 year olds



Accommodation types of 17-18 year olds



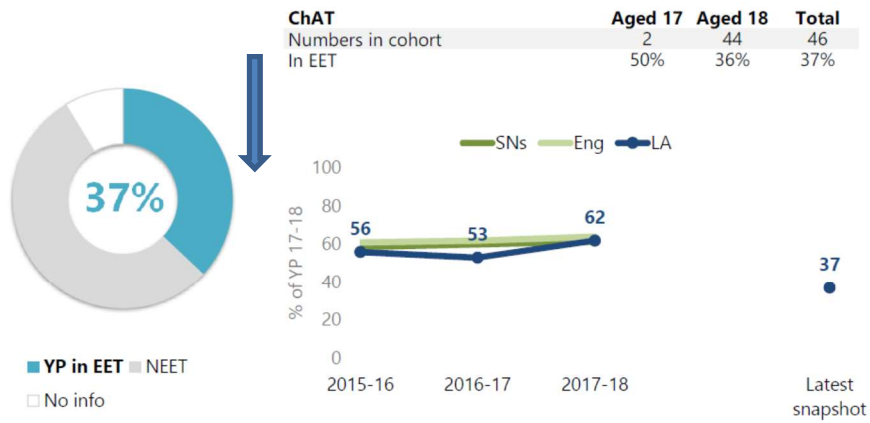
Accommodation types of 19-21 year olds



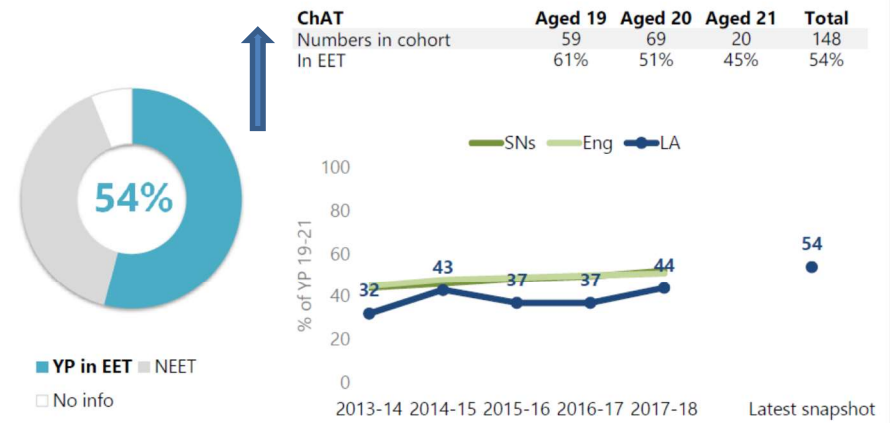
Care leavers activity (Education, Employment, or Training)

Snapshot 01/08/2019

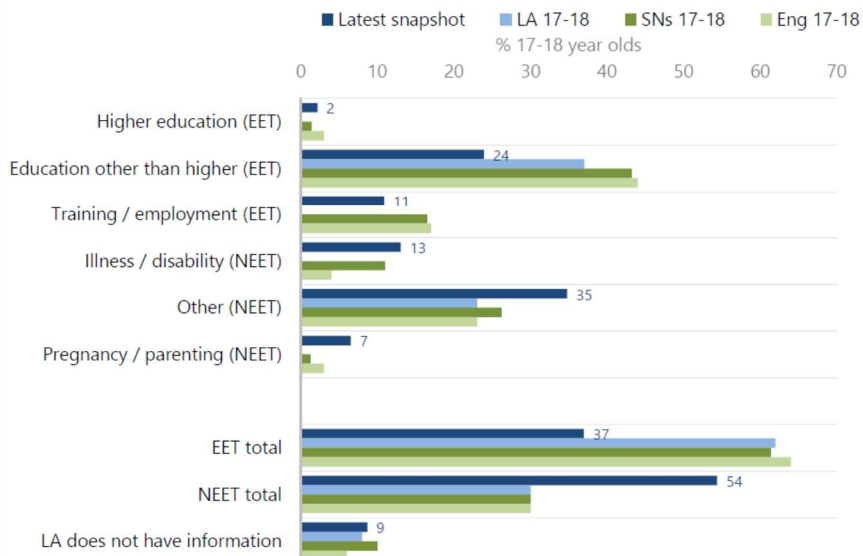
Education, Employment, or Training (EET) of 17-18 year olds



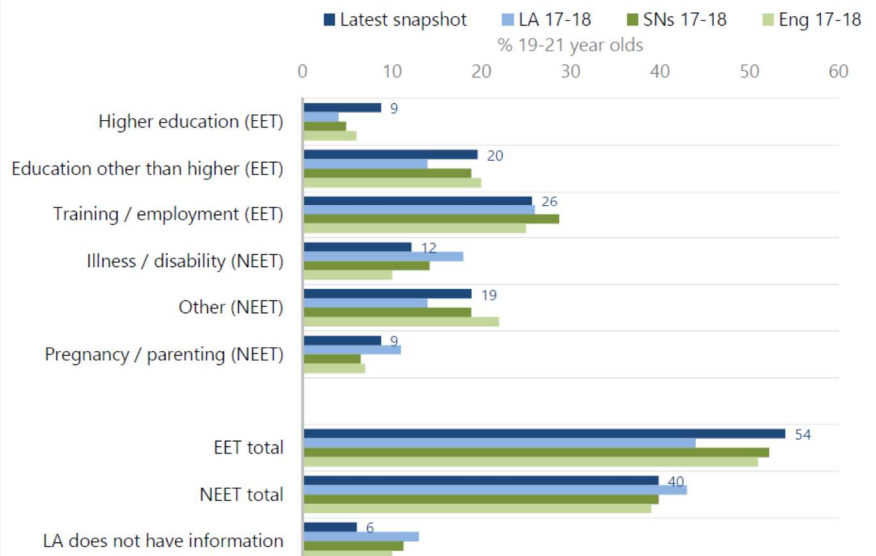
Education, Employment, or Training (EET) of 19-21 year olds



Activity types of 17-18 year olds



Activity types of 19-21 year olds



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Date of Meeting: 4th September 2019

Lead Member: Cllr Andrew Parry, Lead Member for Children's Services

Lead Officer: Mark Blackman, Corporate Director for Schools and Learning

Executive Summary:

1. In 2018, national data shows that Looked After Children (LAC) are four times as likely to have a Special Educational Need and/or Disability than all children and are just over nine times more likely to have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) than all children (DfE 2019).
2. In Dorset, there are slightly less LAC on roll with the Virtual School at the SEN Support Stage and slightly more EHCPs than the national percentage. The numbers of young people in care with EHCPs are increasing in this current year in line with the overall increase in demand for EHCPs within Dorset.
3. The most common need identified for LAC with EHCPs is 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health' in Dorset and this is in line with national prevalence. This category of need is showing a significant increase in-year.
4. 50% of Dorset LAC with EHCPs are being educated in specialist placements (mainstream or independent) compared to other EHCPs which stands at 36%. Of those in specialist placements, 38.2% of these are outside of the county of Dorset.
5. The SEND Services and the Virtual School are working together more effectively to improve early identification of needs, assessment, support and outcomes for LAC.
6. The Local Area SEND Inspection of 2017 (Ofsted/CQC) identified four areas of weakness in the delivery of the SEND reforms in Dorset. The SEND Inspection revisit in February 2019 concluded that two of the four areas of weaknesses had shown sufficient improvement and two needed further improvement. A joint action plan covering one year has been approved by the Department of Education, is currently being delivered and on track to be completed.
7. Despite the 71% increase in demand for EHCPs since the reforms began, Dorset Council has worked hard to improve performance in issuing plans within 20 weeks, currently achieving 94% of plans within the statutory timescale which is well above the national average. The local area is focussed on producing high quality EHCPs using local and national audits to quality assure this area of work.

<p>Equalities Impact Assessment:</p> <p>There are no equalities implications arising from this report</p>
<p>Budget: not applicable</p>
<p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:</p> <p>Current Risk: LOW (For information only) Residual Risk: LOW (For information only)</p>
<p>Climate implications:</p> <p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Other Implications: Sustainability; increasing demand for EHCPs (2.4 – 2.7)</p>
<p>Recommendation: For information purposes only</p>
<p>Appendices:</p> <p>Appendix A - The distribution of EHCPs for Looked After Children across the Key Stages July 2019 Appendix B - Types of provision for LAC with EHCPs July 2019 Appendix C - EHCP six-month volume and performance data January to June '19 Appendix D - Total number of Statements/EHCPs over time</p>
<p>Background Papers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The SEND Joint Strategy 2018-2021 https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/sen-and-disability-local-offer/about-our-local-offer/dorset-send-strategy.aspx• The SEND Recent Statement of Action 2017 https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/sen-and-disability-local-offer/about-our-local-offer/dorset-send-written-statement-of-action.aspx• DfE (2019) Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities in England 31 March 2018 www.assets.publishing.service.gov.uk
<p>Officer Contact: Gerri Kemp, Senior Manager, SEND Services Tel: 01305 228323 Email: g.kemp@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>

Report in Full

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides key data on the number and profile of Dorset children and young people in care who have SEND and the work being done in partnership within teams and agencies to improve outcomes for this group.
- 1.2. This is the first SEND Services annual report to the Corporate Parenting Board. With that in mind, the report includes a brief overview of key events, priorities, challenges and improvements that have happened in Dorset regarding provision for SEND since the National SEND Reforms came into place in 2015.

2. Looked After Children with SEND – prevalence and characteristics

- 2.1. Looked after children (LAC) are significantly more likely to have SEND than their peers. In 2018, national data shows that LAC are four times as likely to have a Special Educational Need than all children and are just over nine times more likely to have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) than all children (DfE 2019).
- 2.2. Nationally, 55.5% of children who had been looked after continuously for 12 months for whom data was available, had a SEND in 2017/2018, which consists of 29% on the 'SEN support' stage of the SEND Code of Practice and 26.5% with an EHCP. This compares to 45.7% of children in need with SEND and 14.6% of all children with SEND (DfE 2019).
- 2.3. In Dorset, there were 336 young people on the Virtual School roll in July 2019. The table below shows the number of children on the SEND Register (pre-school to Year 13) as at 10th July 2019. The numbers in table 1 below show those on SEN Support and those with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Please note that this includes EHCPs funded by other Local Authorities, administered by Dorset Council and that the next round of national data for 2019 is not available until 2020.

SEND Stage of CoP	SEN Support	EHCP
Total number (174)	82	92
Percentage of total LAC - 51.8%	24.4%	27.4%
Percentage of total EHCPs in Dorset		4%

Table 1: SEN on virtual school roll, pre-school to year 13, including those funded by other local authorities, as at 10th July 2019

- 2.4. The table shows slightly less numbers at the SEN Support Stage and slightly more EHCPs than in the national data set. The Virtual School reports that the numbers of young people in care with EHCPs are increasing in this current year in line with the overall demand for EHCPs within Dorset. For example, in October 2018, 41 young people in care (Reception to year 11 only) had an EHCP and this number had increased to 66 young people by July 2019. This reflects a 61% increase in nine months.
- 2.5. The most common type of need for looked after children nationally in 2017/2018 was 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health' – 38.5% of looked after children with an EHCP had this type of need nationally compared to 14.6% of all children with SEND.
- 2.6. Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH) and Communication and Interaction needs (C&I) are by far the largest categories for these plans in Dorset and reflects South West Regional Virtual School register comparisons and national comparisons. In October 2018, there were 41 EHCPs for LAC in Dorset, and of these 16 had SEMH as the primary need (39%). It should be noted that at the time of this data collection, a further six children were in the process of EHC assessment, with all of these described as having SEMH as the primary need.
- 2.7. There is a fairly even distribution of EHCPs across key stages for young people in care in Dorset as can be seen in the chart in Appendix A. However, we have limited specialist provision for post 16 locally. As numbers in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 move through to post 16, the demand will continue for local specialist provision, particularly for SEMH needs. The new specialist school currently being established locally in Bovington will eventually provide for children up to age 18 but this element of the provision is likely to be established in three or four years' time.
- 2.8. As can be seen in the graph in Appendix B, 50% of EHCPs for looked after children are currently educated in specialist provision (mainstream or independent) and 36% in non-specialist mainstream or independent schools. This is a high proportion relative to all groups of EHCPs educated in specialist provision which is 39% compared to 61% in non-specialist mainstream schools. Of those LAC in specialist placements, 38.2% are outside of the county of Dorset.

3 Areas of joint service development and provision regarding LAC with SEND.

3.1 The SEND Services and the Virtual School are working together regularly to identify needs earlier and in a more preventative way:

- a. The Virtual School SENDCo has worked with the SEN Specialist Service (SENS) to develop an early identification screener for learning needs. All LAC of primary school age will be screened on a rolling programme. The earlier identification of additional needs will lead to signposting to specialist support prior to and possibly preventing the need for an EHCP.
- b. The Virtual School SENDCo is attending SEN Decision Making Panels for professional development and joint working opportunities with SEND services and other agencies.
- c. There have been joint training sessions this year for virtual school staff on the identification of SEND, the role of the SENDCo and familiarisation with the EHCP processes.
- d. The Virtual School SENDCo meets regularly with the SEND Assessment Team Operational Manager to discuss EHCP cases and those children indicating the need for statutory assessment.

3.2. The Educational Psychology Service have a designated psychologist role for Looked After Children. The role is to support the Virtual School to identify and support individual young people with SEND in urgent need of assessment, although all the EP team also work with LAC. This work is carried out in partnership with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and is intensive work. In the Autumn Term 2018 alone, 9 EHCP plans were prioritised for EHC referral and assessment. The designated psychologist is allocated 14 days per year to provide support to the LAC SENDCo, to carry out supervision and to carry out direct casework with LAC.

3.3 The Virtual School (VS) also works in partnership with the Educational Psychology Service to promote and establish a programme of Attachment Aware Schools. The VS Development Plan reports that the June conference with designated LAC teachers helped identify schools for priority input, with Middle Schools emerging as having priority needs (Virtual School Head's Report to Governing Body – July 2019).

4. SEND Services - overview of recent developments

4.1 As this is the first SEND report to the board, the following section gives a brief overview of recent developments within SEND Service delivery in the light of the SEND reforms of 2015.

4.2 The SEND Joint Strategy for Dorset 2018-21. We wrote a SEND Joint Strategy in partnership with the Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), schools, colleges, educational settings, voluntary and community sector, children, young people with SEND and their families. The strategy sets out our vision, priorities, objectives and goals over a 3-year period. It also talks about how we are monitoring progress. You can read about the SEND Joint Strategy on our Dorset SEND Local Offer webpages at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/sen-and-disability-local-offer/about-our-local-offer/dorset-send-strategy.aspx>

4.3 Our vision is:

- a. Children and young people in Dorset with SEND are happy and enjoy their education and social life. They and their families trust and have confidence in the support they receive.
- b. We work together to give children and young people with SEND in Dorset the best chance to succeed; enjoy family life and go to school as close to home as possible.
- c. Together we support children and young people with SEND to maximise their potential at home, in the early years, at school and at college and to prepare well for adulthood.
- d. Our young adults with SEND have opportunities to work, live independently, participate fully in their community and live full, healthy lives.

4.4 In January 2017, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) carried out an inspection of services in the Dorset area for children and young people with SEND. The inspectors were looking at how organisations, including Dorset Council, health services and schools were carrying out the changes to government policies for children and young people with SEND.

4.5 While the inspectors said we are doing some things well, they also found four significant weaknesses where we could be doing better. They asked us to produce a written statement of action (WSOA) to say what we should do to improve. The statement sets out how we are working together to make services better for children and young people with SEND. It describes what we are doing to improve on the four weaknesses the inspectors found and how we would know if things are better for children and young people with SEND.

The four outcomes in our Written Statement of Action 2017 are:

- i. A single system working together across education, health and social care for joint outcomes
- ii. Getting it right first time: appropriate, effective and timely joint assessment, planning and review of need that is personalised to the child or young person with SEND
- iii. Talking to, listening to and involving children, young people and parents and carers

- iv. Use effective monitoring and quality assurance procedures to challenge, support and develop provision.

You can read the WSOA and the improvements we have made here:

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/sen-and-disability-local-offer/about-our-local-offer/dorset-send-written-statement-of-action.aspx>

4.6 Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) revisited the local area of Dorset in February 2019. This was to decide whether the local area had made enough progress in addressing the areas within the WSOA. The inspectors told us that significant progress had been made in the first two priority areas above. However, insufficient progress had been made to improve other two areas of weakness identified at the initial inspection.

4.7 We have produced an updated action plan in response to the inspection re-visit and this has been approved by the Department of Education. The plan covers one year with milestones after three months, six months and one year. We show evidence of how the data gathered on our SEND Performance Framework informs future planning/implementation between partner agencies. The plan is about to be published on the front page of the Dorset SEND Local Offer website at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/sen-and-disability-local-offer/about-our-local-offer/about-our-local-offer.aspx>.

5 Statutory Reporting on Dorset Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) June 2019 (Appendix C)

5.1 Number of EHCPs end June 2019 **2369**

There has been a significant demand for SEND Statutory Assessment since the start of 2015 when the SEND reforms came into place, with an 71% increase in the number of EHCPs. As can be seen in appendix D, it is forecast based on current demand and data analysis that an additional 351 EHCPs will be issued by 2021 before an incident rate of 3% is reached.

5.2 Percentage of EHCPs completed within 20 weeks **93%**

Despite the increase in demand on the assessment planning and co-ordination team, we have worked hard to improve our performance in issuing plans within the statutory timescale of 20 weeks. In October 2017, Dorset were only producing 7.1% of EHCPs within this timescale – one of the poorest performances in the country. The current national average rate is 64.9% so we have made excellent progress and this was recognised in the SEND inspection.

5.3 The quality of EHCPs is also a priority in Dorset. The first full PAN Dorset Audit of EHCPs has taken place with a focus on the ECHPs of Looked After Children. We can see from this audit that the sections within the EHCPs regarding health and social care are poor. Our new action plan focuses on these areas so we can

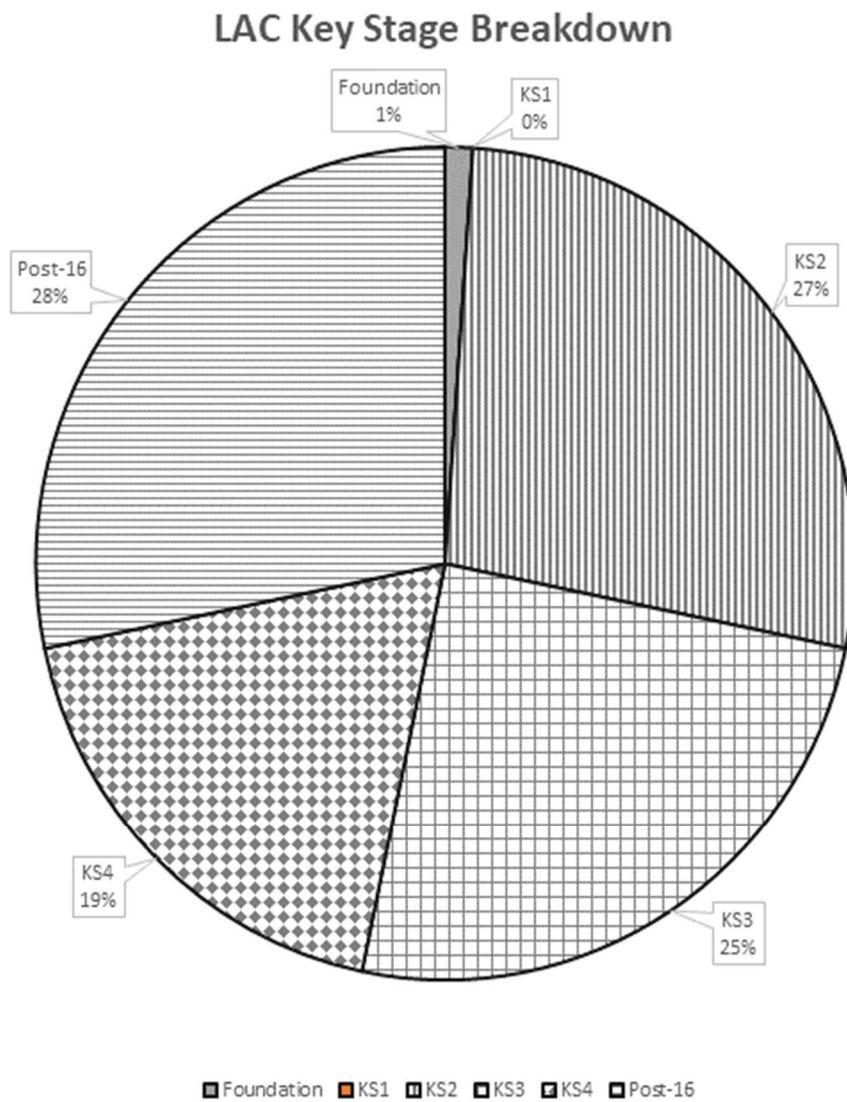
work with partners to improve the content of these sections. In addition, a more robust internal Quality Assurance audit system has been established by the SEN Assessment Leadership Team. A monitoring spreadsheet is in development to record quality of contributions from health, education & social care.

5.4 In line with the SEND Action Plan priorities, there is significant focused work currently in place to work co-productively with children and young people with SEND and their families. Participation groups of young people with SEND, including LAC have been working with senior leaders from health and education and are being actively used to support improvement projects.

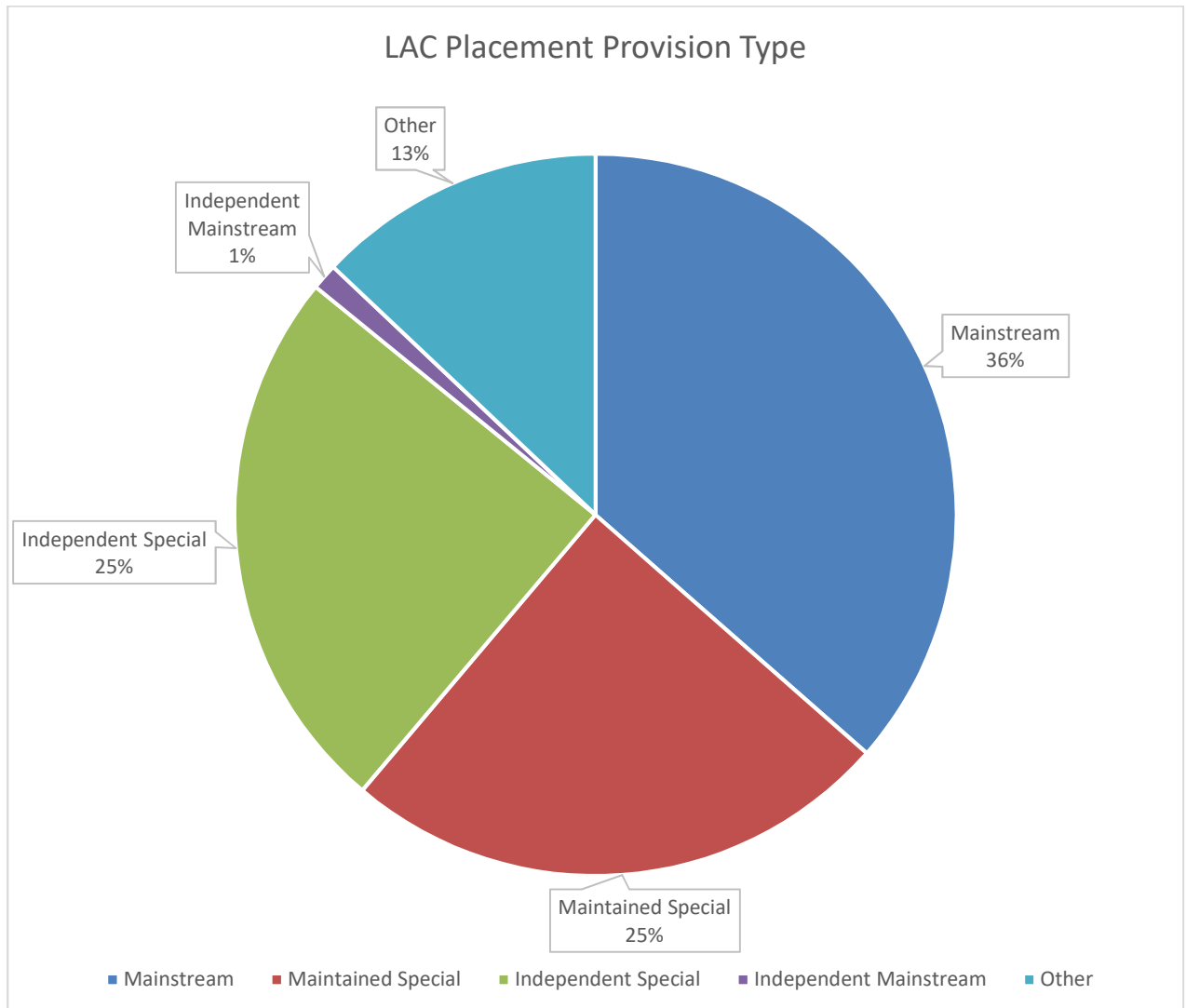
6 Future reporting to the Corporate Parenting Board

6.1 This is the first annual SEND Report to the Corporate Parenting Board. Future reports will include a breakdown of the numbers of requests for statutory assessment for LAC. Using national comparative data due to be published in early 2020 we will also report on impact of provision in terms of progress and attainment for young people with SEND who are looked after, in conjunction with the Virtual School Team.

Appendix A – the distribution of EHCPs for Looked After Children across the Key Stages – July 2019



Appendix B – Types of provision for LAC with EHCPs July 2019

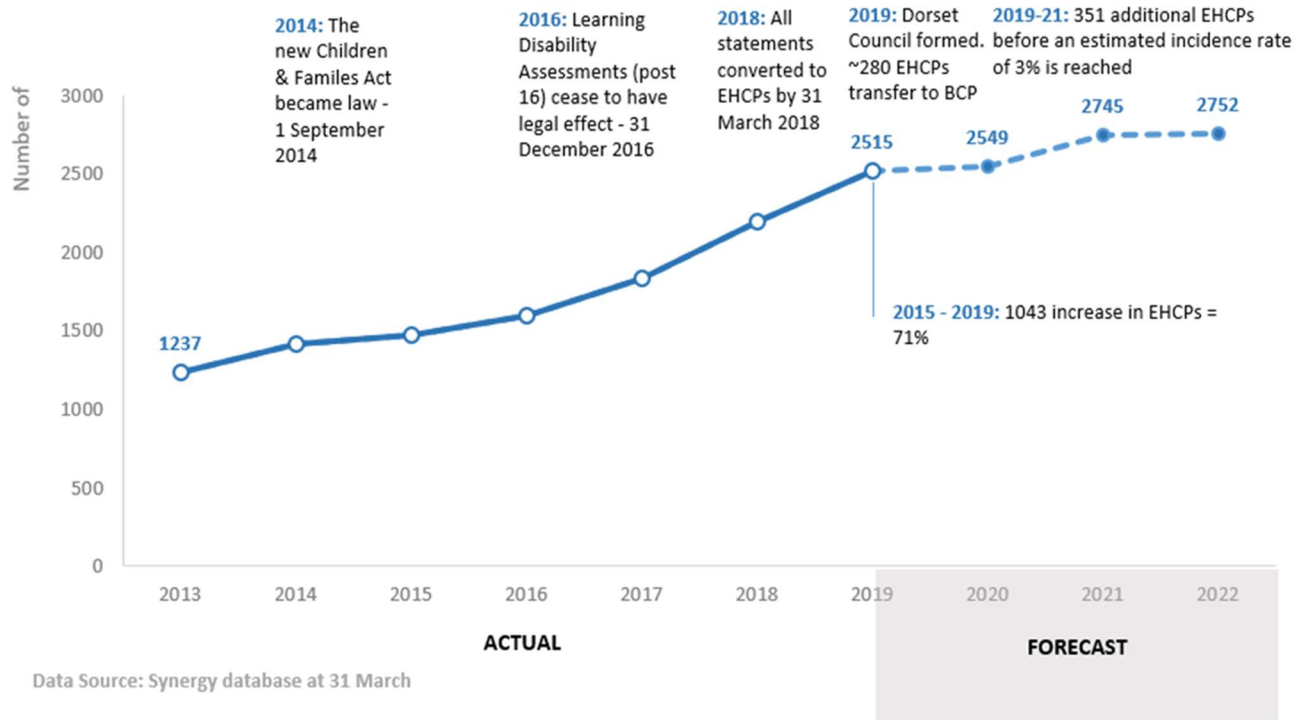


Appendix C – EHCP six month Volume and performance data January to June 2019

	October 17 baseline	Jan 19	Feb 19	Mar 19	Apr 19	May 19	June 19	Notes
Requests for assessment	47	41	53	54	53	66	56	
Assessments commenced	62	67	35	64	68	69	67	
EHCPs issued	28	34	28	28	42	51	42	
No of Active EHCPs	1530	2483	2494	2515	2309	2358	2369	April '19 loss of Christchurch EHCPs
% of new EHCPs completed within 20 weeks	7.1%	85%	86%	82%	88%	75%	93%	National average completion 64.9%
% of initial decision to assess completed within 6 weeks	100%	93%	89%	92%	91%	93%	97%	
% of requests for assessment that became EHCPs	93.2%	86%	86%	88%	90%	79%	85%	National average 77.4%

Appendix D – Number of Statements/EHCPs over time

Number of Statements / EHCPs over time





Date of Meeting: 4 September 2019

Lead Member: Cllr Andrew Parry - Lead Member for Education and Early Help

Lead Officer: Sarah Parker – Executive Director for People – Children

Executive Summary:

This report provides information in respect of the work being completed to transform the front door (currently the MASH). We are working with Professor David Thorpe from Lancaster University and his team to develop and implement his ‘front door’ model.

The aim of the model is to implement the “Virtuous Cycle” with the strategic goals of safely reducing the numbers of referrals, developing intensive social casework services focussed on the most vulnerable children and families and reducing the numbers of children looked after.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

Not applicable

Budget:

There are no negative impacts for the budget.

Risk Assessment:

Not applicable

Climate implications:

Not applicable

Other Implications:

Not applicable

Recommendation:

For information

Reason for Recommendation:
Appendices: One – The Virtuous Cycle
Background Papers: None
Officer Contact: Name: Maggie Aldwell Tel: 01305 225829 Email: maggie.aldwell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

1. Introduction

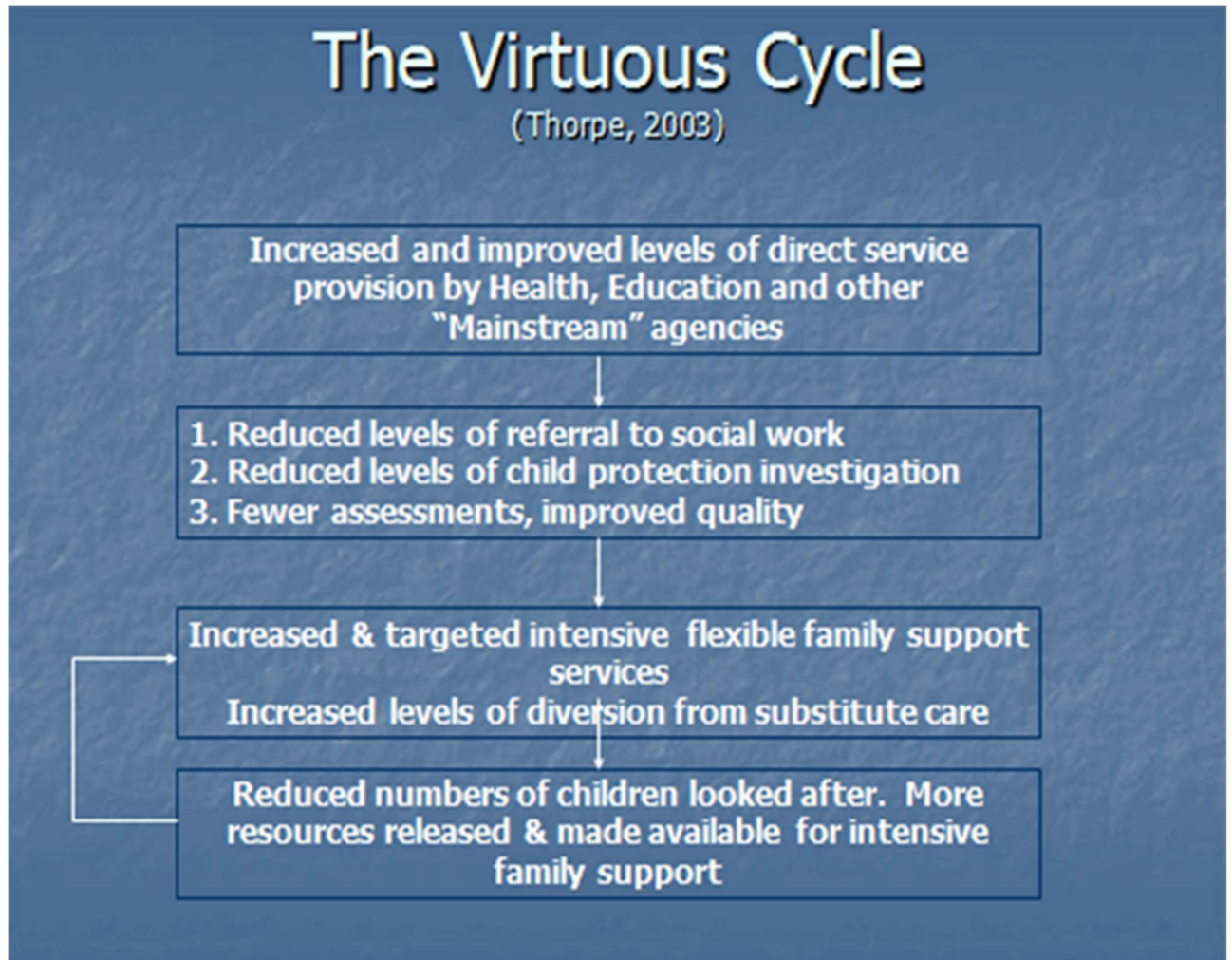
1.1 The current MASH has been under significant pressure because of increasing numbers of Contacts and Referrals. This has contributed to numbers of unnecessary assessments being sent to the District Teams, elevated rereferral rates and high caseloads. High re-referrals can be costly, but more importantly, potentially stressful and harmful to the children and their parent/carer. Research completed by Dr Patricio Troncoso in 2017 found that, “potentially, multiple referrals can be detrimental to children’s development, as they may imply prolonged periods of unmet needs and recurrent episodes of abuse, neglect, maltreatment, etc.” *Analysing repeated referrals to children’s services in England 20 July 2017*.

1.2 We need to manage Contacts differently, so that children get the right support, first time, and from the right professionals. To achieve this, and as part of the wider changes in Children’s Services through the Blueprint for Change, we have been working with Professor David Thorpe from Lancaster University, and his team to transform our Front Door arrangements, creating the Children’s Advice and Duty Service.

1.3 Professor Thorpe’s model was developed from his work on the ‘The Virtuous Cycle’ – appendix 1. This is based on building a ‘front door’ where experienced social workers who have received specialist training from Professor Thorpe, provide advice and support to other professionals. They do this by ask key questions about the strengths and risks within families and will then agree together who is best placed to meet the needs of the child. The service will no longer take written referrals, but instead will have conversations with potential referrers so that a comprehensive understanding of the child’s circumstances can be obtained.

1.4 We know from the work with Professor Thorpe, and from talking to other Councils where the model is used, that quality conversations are more likely to lead to right support at an early stage for our children and young people, the first time. By talking through concerns and solutions with professionals we can work better together and get support earlier to families.

1.5 It is expected that successful implementation of the model in October 2019, will not only reduce the numbers of unnecessary referrals, lower the re-referral rate, and social work caseloads, it will, more importantly, help us safely support children and young people remain in the care of their families.





**Dorset
Council**

Corporate Parenting Board

Child Exploitation and Missing Children

Date of Meeting: 4 September 2019

Lead Member: Cllr Andrew Parry - Lead Member for Education and Early Help

Lead Officer: Sarah Parker – Executive Director for People – Children

Executive Summary:

The Joint Targeted Area Inspection carried out in in May 2018, focussed on child sexual exploitation, children associated with gangs and at risk of exploitation and children missing from home, care or education, identified gaps in the partnership understanding and joint working in these areas. Since the inspection, significant work has been completed to develop the understanding of the issues across Dorset and to improve practice with individual children and young people. This work has been completed pan-Dorset to support a consistent approach across the partnership and to share best practice.

This report provides a summary of some of the work completed and how we will see better understanding of the risks, risk reduction and improved outcomes for children and young people.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

Not applicable

Budget:

Not applicable

Risk Assessment:

Medium

Climate implications:

Not applicable

Other Implications:

Not applicable

Recommendation: Not applicable
Reason for Recommendation:
Appendices: None
Background Papers: None
Officer Contact: Name: Maggie Aldwell Tel: 01305 225829 Email: maggie.aldwell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Young person who goes missing or run away are at increased risk of potential harm and research suggests that approximately 25% are at risk of serious harm. The most significant risk is that of Child Criminal Exploitation. which occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal or sexual activity. This will be carried out in exchange for something the young person needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or threat of violence. A young person may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Criminal exploitation of children is broader than Child Sexual Exploitation and county lines and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft, modern slavery, radicalisation and trafficking.

2. Return Home Interviews

- 2.1 When a child is found following a period of being missing, they must be offered an independent Return Home Interview (RHI). Independent RHIs provide an opportunity to uncover information that can help protect children from the risk of going missing again, from risks they may have been exposed to while missing as described above or from risk factors in their home.

- 2.2 RHIs should be carried out within 72 hours of the child returning to their home or care setting. This should be an in-depth interview and is normally best carried out by an independent person (i.e. someone not involved in caring for the child) who is trained to carry out these interviews and is able to follow-up any actions that emerge. Children sometimes need to build up trust with a person before they will discuss in depth the reasons why they ran away.
- 2.3 We are now offering most looked after children who have been reported missing an interview with a practitioner who is not involved in their care, through the Family Focus Team. The exception to this is the young people placed outside of Dorset who are often those at most risk. It is not possible for these RHIs be completed by the two workers as this would significantly impact their ability to undertake the local RHIs. This is being managed by the Care and Support Team by offering telephone RHIs and interviews as part of the social work visits. These measures are not adequate as they offer no independence, are not timely and are unlikely to be successful in reducing risk.
- 2.4 We have consistently found meeting the timeline requirements of all RHIs difficult and despite now having dedicated Family Workers to undertake the task, the data available continues to show under performance.

3. Missing Data Q1 2019/20

- 3.1 There were 189 missing episodes reported to the Police during Q1 (April – end June 2019), relating to 105 individual children. 12 of the episodes were re-categorised as ‘Absent’ by the Children’s Services Front Door Managers; that is the information indicated that the child or young person was not ‘missing’ but was not where they were supposed to be for some reason for a short period of time. Fig. 1 below provides a breakdown of the missing data, by age, gender, length of time missing and category. Although the number’s of looked after children reported missing is the lowest, they are statistically more likely to go missing than any other group of young people.

Description	Missing	Absent	Total
01. Number of missing incidences during the period	177	12	189
02. Number of missing children during the period	93	12	105
03. Number of missing Incidences where child is still missing	1	0	1
04. Number who were male	85	8	93
05. Number who were female	88	4	92
06. Number of missing Incidents where child is missing more than 24 hours	39	2	41
07. Number of children who were missing more than 24 hours	27	2	29
08. Number of missing incidents where child is missing more than 72 hours	11	0	11
09. Number of children who were missing more than 72 hours	9	0	9
10. Number of children who went missing on one occasion	61	8	69
11. Number of children who went missing on more than one occasion	32	4	36
12. Number who are LAC	25	0	25
13. Number who are CIN	37	2	39
14. Number who are children who are vulnerable	34	10	44

Fig.1 Children reported missing Q1 2019/20

3.2 Fig.2 provides the detail on the numbers of RHIs completed and the timeliness of the visit. Ideally each of the children missing would have been offered and accepted an RHI, on each occasion they were reported missing which would therefore equate to 189 RHIs being completed during Q1. The data shows that this was not the case for 81 episodes.

Description	Missing	Absent	Total
01. Number of RHIs conducted	99	9	108
02. Number of RHIs not conducted	78	3	81
03. Number of children who had at least one RHI	69	9	78
04. Number of children who did not have an RHI	24	3	27
05. Number of RHIs conducted within 72 hours	47	3	50
06. Number of RHIs conducted within 3 working days of being notified	68	6	74
07. Number of RHIs not offered as child missing on subsequent occasion(s)	1	0	1
08. Number of RHIs not offered as 24 hr decision did not identify risk	0	0	0
09. Number of RHIs not accepted	62	3	65
10. Number of children not accepting RHIs	33	3	36

Fig 2 – RHI statistics Q1 2019/20

3.3 There some known reasons for RHIs not taking place:

- *A management decision is made that an RHI is not appropriate.*

During Q1 there were just 5 cases (4.6%) where a decision was made that an RHI was not required. Two young people were unwell, one being in hospital and a manager felt a visit at that time was not in the best interests of the young person. One young person was seen by his social worker on the day and it was established that he was not in fact missing. In two cases the recorded reason for the decision is unclear.

- *The child or young person has gone missing again, within 72 hours of the previous episode and before the RHI can be completed. In this situation, the RHI would be completed only once.*

In Q1 just one young person went missing for a second time within 72 hours.

- *Recording errors/duplicate records were created.*

In two cases there was a duplicate record created in error.

- *The offer of an RHI was declined by the young person or their parent/carer, or the practitioner attended but the young person declined to meet with them.*

RHIs are rightly not imposed on children and young people, and although there should be a positive approach made, we do need to respect the views of the child and their family unless there is an evidenced risk of significant harm. I am however concerned that in some cases there was not a robust enough offer and persistence would support a better outcome. In Q1 65 (60%) young people or their family declined the offer of an RHI. This is an area of practice that required further examination.

3.4 A further area where performance needs to be improved is in the timeliness of the RHIs being completed. A safe and well check is usually completed by the Police as soon as the child is located or returned. An RHI needs to be completed within 72 hours.

3.5 In Q1 2019/20 just 50 of the 108 (46.3%) RHIs completed met the expected timeframe. There are again, known reasons why the visits might be delayed:

- *There is a delay in notification being received from the Police.*

This is data we have only recently been able to collect and for Q1 it is incomplete. However, at least 68.5% of RHIs were completed within 3 working days of Children's Services being made aware of the young person's return.

- *There is a delay in being able to contact the family and make the arrangements.*

This is reported by the RHI practitioners as an issue but at the current time there is no available data to confirm.

- *There is a delay in assigning the work*

This is an issue but again, there is no clear data on this.

3.6 Although there continues to be work required to improve our response to children who are at risk through going missing, we have made changes that will identify risk more robustly. The RHI practitioners who have been in post since October 2018 have been developing their experience and expertise. They are ensuring that responsible social workers for looked after children are made aware of risk quickly and the development of a Child Exploitation Screening Tool identifies the risks more explicitly. This tool is now embedded into the RHI assessment document and must be completed for all children over 10 years of age where an RHI has been completed.

4. Criminal Child Exploitation

- 4.1 Significant work had been completed across the partnership in our understanding of and management of the risk of Child Criminal Exploitation. A toolkit has been developed and is available to all multi-agency practitioners. The toolkit contains the CE Screening Tool, the CE Risk Assessment and CE Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Meeting and Plan templates. There is guidance to support practitioners in the use of the toolkit.
- 4.2 Risk Assessments can and should be completed by all partner agencies. The assessments indicate three levels of risk:
- Significant Risk – where a significant risk is identified there will be a Moderation Meeting to consider the risk. This meeting is attended by the assessing practitioner, and MASH Police, Health and Social Care. The Moderation Meeting is a benchmarking and intelligence gathering forum. Where a Significant Risk is confirmed at the Moderation Meeting, a Strategy Meeting will be held within 24 hours. All children and young people where there is a significant risk identified will have an allocated social worker and an initial Multi Agency Child Exploitation Meeting (MACE) will take place within 15 working days. There will be continued MACE Meetings at least every 6 weeks until the risk is reduced.
 - Moderate Risk - where a moderate risk is identified and confirmed at a Moderation Meeting, a Social Work assessment will commence if there is not already an allocated social worker. All children and young people where a moderate risk is identified will have an allocated social worker and an initial MACE Meeting will take place within 15 working days. There will be continued MACE Meetings at least every 12 weeks until the risk is reduced.
 - Emerging Risk – where a potential emerging risk is identified, a Moderation Meeting is not required but a MACE Meeting should be considered by the assessing practitioner and a MACE plan developed to reduce the risk. This can be managed through the Team Around the Family (TAF) process.

5. Child Exploitation Data Q1 2019/20

- 5.1 The data for Q1 in relation to child exploitation is not yet completely clear as the reports are newly developed and there continues to be data picked up on work completed before the new process went live on Mosaic. This is evident in fig. 3 which continues to report on CSE and the 4 previous risk levels (lines 4 – 7 fig. 1). However, the report does show that during May and June, 46 new CE risk

assessments were undertaken by Dorset Council Social Workers or Family Workers.

Risk Level	CSE	CE	Both	None	Not Known	TOTAL
1. Emerging/Reducing risk of criminal/sexual exploitation	1	2	1	13	0	17
2. Moderate risk of criminal/sexual exploitation	3	9	8	3	0	23
3. Significant risk of criminal/sexual exploitation	0	4	2	0	0	6
4. Category 1 - Minimal risk of sexual exploitation	0	0	0	0	7	7
5. Category 2 - Mild risk of sexual exploitation	0	0	0	0	6	6
6. Category 3 - Moderate risk of sexual exploitation	0	0	0	0	1	1
7. Category 4 - Significant risk of sexual exploitation	0	0	0	0	2	2
8. Not calculated	0	0	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	4	15	12	16	16	63

(Fig 3 – New CE Assessments completed May/June 2019)

5.2 There were 37 Moderation Meetings held but only 29 assessments considered to be reaching Moderate or Significant risk. This implies that 8 assessments were moderated to a lower level than the initial risk identified. However, this needs to be treated with some caution as the process is very new and the report picking information up retrospectively.

Did Moderation Meeting Take Place	CSE	CE	Both	None	Not Known	TOTAL
Information Not Available	0	0	0	0	16	16
No	0	1	1	8	0	10
Yes	4	14	11	8	0	37
TOTAL	4	15	12	16	16	63

(Fig 4 – Moderation Meetings completed May/June 2019)

5.3 We are now able to look at the number of CE Assessments reviewed. This is a disappointing picture as the data suggests only 6 cases were reviewed where we should expect to see closer to the full 29 as all should have been reviewed within 15 working days of the Moderation Meeting. This will need further interrogation.

Statistic	CSE	CE	Both	None	Not Known	TOTAL
01. How many children were reviewed?	0	3	3	0	0	6
02. How many reviews took place?	0	3	3	0	0	6
03. How many reviews on time?	0	3	3	0	0	6
04. How many children where the risk increased?	0	0	0	0	0	0
05. How many children where the risk stayed the same?	0	2	3	0	0	5
06. How many children where the risk decreased?	0	1	0	0	0	1
07. How many reviews where the professional judgement risk is different from the scored risk?	0	0	0	0	0	0

(Fig 5 – CE Assessment reviews completed May/June 2019)

5.4 We can calculate the total numbers of children and young people assessed as at Moderate or Significant Risk at any given date. Fig 6 is the total number of young people assessed as of 15th July 2019.

Risk Level	CSE	CE	Both	None	Not Known	TOTAL
1. Emerging/Reducing risk of criminal/sexual exploitation	1	1	1	1	0	4
2. Moderate risk of criminal/sexual exploitation	3	6	6	1	0	16
3. Significant risk of criminal/sexual exploitation	0	3	2	0	0	5
5. Category 2 - Mild risk of sexual exploitation	0	0	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	4	10	9	2	1	26

(Fig 4 –All children (open to Children’s Services) assessed as at risk as of 15/07/19)

5.5 We can also report on age and gender of the children assessed at risk at the end of a defined period, 15-year-old males being most likely to be at risk of CE and 14-year-old females at risk of CSE or both CSE and CE. The numbers are small and as yet provide no trends.

Gender	Age	CSE	CE	Both	None	Not Known	TOTAL
1. Male	13	0	2	0	0	0	2
1. Male	14	0	1	0	1	0	2
1. Male	15	0	5	0	0	0	5
1. Male	16	0	0	1	0	0	1
1. Male	17	0	2	0	1	0	3
2. Female	13	0	0	2	0	0	2
2. Female	14	2	0	3	0	0	5
2. Female	15	0	0	2	0	1	3
2. Female	16	1	0	1	0	0	2
2. Female	17	1	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL		4	10	9	2	1	26

(Fig 5 –Age/Gender of children and young people assessed as at risk on 15/07/19)

6. Update on previous plan presented to CPB

Action	Responsible Manager/s	Completion Date	Expected Outcome	Actual Outcome
The introduction of two dedicated Family Workers in the Extended MASH to conduct all Return Home Interviews	Maggie Aldwell	05.11.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of RHIs completed/accepted – Target 85% • Improved timeliness of RHIs – Target 75% completed within 72 hours 	Completed - As stated above, there continues to be an issue with the numbers and timeliness of RHIs. However, we now have a clearer understanding of why this is the case which will allow further work to take place.
The development and introduction of a Child Criminal Exploitation screening tool	Maggie Aldwell/Mary Taylor	30.11.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All young people over the age of 12 years open to Social Care will have been screened for CE and there will be an emerging picture of the prevalence across Dorset 	Completed - Recent multi-agency audit has identified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new CE Screening Tool and Assessment is being used and there is very positive feedback • Organisations have confidence in the Tools and the MACE process. • Good case presented where managing the risks through MACE rather than CP was more acceptable to the family and achieved better outcomes. • Many cases would suggest that there is further work in terms of there being multi-agency plans being put together and then the risk held as at multi-agency level. However, it was acknowledged that it is early days and the MACE should help facilitate this.
The development and introduction of a Child Criminal Exploitation Risk Assessment	Maggie Aldwell	30.11.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a tool available to all professionals to support high quality assessments of all forms of child exploitation including County Lines 	Completed – part of the toolkit, see above.
Mosaic Workflow created to support Multi Agency Child Exploitation	Maggie Aldwell/Mosaic Team	30.11.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MACE Meetings will be used to review CE Risk Assessments and more consistently and risk levels will 	Completed

(MACE) Meetings			be monitored and addressed through multi-agency plans	
Update Mosaic reporting to identify prevalence of all forms of child exploitation	Maggie Aldwell/IT Support Team	01.01.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports will be available to begin to develop an understanding of the prevalence of CE across Dorset 	Completed
Update Mosaic Reporting to monitor frequency of CE risk reviews and changing risk levels	Maggie Aldwell/IT Support Team	01.01.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports will be available to monitor performance in assessing, reviewing and addressing risk for Q3 	Completed

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 We have made significant progress in the work across the partnership in assessing and understanding the risks to children and young people at risk of criminal exploitation. The toolkit developed and made available to multi-agency practitioners has been well developed and a recent multi-agency audit has identified the tools support assessment. We need to continue to monitor progress with reviews as data is more available.
- 7.2 We are offering RHIs to over 95% of children who are reported missing and when an RHI was not offered, this was a decision made in the best interests of the young person.
- 7.3 However, we have not yet reached our target of completing 85%. This is due to the high 'decline' rate which needs to be further understood. A multi-agency audit is being completed by the MASH partners at the end of August which will help us understand this issue.
- 7.4 To improve timeliness, we need to work with police to ensure notifications are sent through immediately the young person is located or returns, ensure the RHI is assigned to a missing practitioner quickly, and that the importance of a timely visit is understood by the family.
- 7.7 We are not consistently offering our looked after children placed outside of Dorset RHIs, and when they are completed, these are often not independent. This is a concern as these are potentially the young people at the highest risk of exploitation

and other harm. An options review is required to ensure we are keeping our young people who go missing placed outside of Dorset safe.

8. Actions

Action	Responsible Manager/s	Completion Date	Expected Outcome
MASH Audit of RHIs	Maggie Aldwell	30.08.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased understanding of the decline rate of RHIs offered Increased understanding of timeliness issues
Discussion with Dorset Police to understand the delays in notifications being sent to Children's Services and resolve the issues	Maggie Aldwell	30.08.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved notification and RHI timeliness
RHI Options Review to be discussed	Maggie Aldwell/Tanya Hamilton-Fletcher/Mary Taylor	30.09.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A decision made on how RHIs are managed for children placed outside of Dorset that ensures timely and independent interviews are consistently taking place.

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Date of Meeting: 4 September 2019

Lead Member: Cllr Andrew Parry Lead Member for Children, Education and Early Help

Lead Officer: Sarah Parker – Executive Director for People - Children

Executive Summary: In 2017 and 2018, the Corporate Parenting Board considered how to support a national campaign led by The Children’s Society to exempt care leavers from council tax until the age of 25 in order to prevent debt after leaving care.

This paper reviews the progress of the campaign across the UK, and explores the options adopted by English local authorities which have supported the campaign.

Equalities Impact Assessment: See background papers

Budget: The potential cost to Dorset Council could be £200,000. Further work is taking place to refine this estimate.

Risk Assessment:

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: LOW

Residual Risk LOW

Climate implications: NA

Other Implications: NA

Recommendation: That Corporate Parenting Board recommend to Cabinet that Dorset Council exercise its powers under the Local Governance Finance Act 1992, Section 13A so that Dorset care leavers up to the age of 25 receive discretionary discount on their Council Tax bill as of 1 April 2020.

Reason for Recommendation: Dorset Council has a duty to act as a corporate parent to children. Care leavers face a range of pressures when they start to live independently for the first time. This recommendation will help these care leavers manage the transition to adulthood.

Appendices:

Background Papers:

[Claiming after care: Care leavers and the benefits system](#), August 2017

[A National Offer for care leavers: Preventing them from falling into financial difficulty](#), December 2016

[The cost of being care free: The impact of poor financial education and removal of support on care leavers](#), September 2016

[The Wolf at the Door: How council tax debt collection is harming children](#), March 2015

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Background

1. The Children's Society have campaigned around the issue of care leavers and council tax since 2015. The campaign is based on research which found that many care leavers fell into a pattern of debt when transitioning to adulthood. Reasons for this include:
 - Lack of support networks of family and friends
 - Lack of financial education while in care
 - Care leavers are more likely to be subject to benefit sanctions than other claimants
2. Care leavers are exempt from council tax in Scotland and Wales, and 102 English local authorities. In England, there are differences in how "exemption" is applied
 - Are care leavers exempt up until 21 or 25?
 - Does exemption from council tax in a local authority area apply only to care leavers from that local authority, or are all care leavers eligible?
 - Are care leavers exempt from payment, or do they claim a refund?
 - How does the policy applied to shared living?
3. Dorset Council has corporate parenting responsibility for 225 care leavers aged between 18 and 25. Of the 130 care leavers who live in Dorset, 64 live in Weymouth and Portland. Of the 95 care leavers who live outside Dorset, or

whose whereabouts is unknown, 33 live in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

4. 66 care leavers are in full time education and exempt from council tax for the duration of their studies. 26 of these live in Dorset.
5. There are therefore 104 care leavers resident in Dorset who would be liable for council tax. We do not collect data on the amount of council tax which they pay, or on the composition of their households. 37 of these care leavers are not in employment, education or training and are likely to qualify for council tax support currently.
6. As a rough guide, the potential cost to Dorset could be £200k pa (based on 104 carers x av. Council tax charge[band D]). Further work will take place to refine these figures before any report is submitted for consideration by Cabinet.

How the discount works

7. Scotland was the first nation to introduce council tax discount for care leavers in April 2018, and was followed by Wales in April 2019. Although the two national assemblies took a lead in this, in practice the matter is devolved to local authorities and there are a variety of approaches to implementation.
8. In Scotland, CELCIS, the Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection brought together local authorities and other stakeholders to produce best practice principles:

As good corporate parents, local authorities should take action based on the 'assumption of entitlement' principle. Therefore:

- Eligible young people should not have to 'apply' for or request this 'exemption'
- There is no legislative necessity for a young person to sign/complete a form, therefore local authorities should avoid any unnecessary paperwork to be completed by a young person
- Legislation does not require any evidence over and above a professional endorsement
- Eligible young people in contact with services are easier to identify
- Additional measures should be taken to identify and notify eligible care leavers who are no longer in contact with support services, or who have moved to another local authority area

9. In Wales, Carmarthenshire is an area which has adopted this sort of approach:

We have introduced a Council Tax discount scheme for care leavers for whom we had corporate parenting responsibility at the point at which they left care.

The discount will be granted to care leavers aged 18 up to their 25th birthday that are still engaged with the corporate parenting team.

The amount of discount will be the care leaver's Council Tax liability after any other reductions, such as a single person's discount or Council Tax Reduction (Benefit) have been taken off the bill. That means, the amount shown on the care leaver's Council Tax bill will be covered by the discount, leaving nothing to pay.

The same discount scheme will also apply where the care leaver is living with another person and is jointly responsible for paying the Council Tax bill. The entire bill, after any other reduction, will be covered by a discount.

....

The discount will be granted automatically with no application necessary and it will not depend on the care leaver's financial situation.

10. English councils which have awarded discounts to care leavers have taken a variety of approaches

- Some only apply the discount to their own care leavers, others to all care leavers
- Some apply the discount up to age 25, others for an initial period of independent living
- Some automatically apply the discount if a young person is known to the council, others require an application of some sort
- Some have excluded qualifying care leavers from the scheme
- The extent of applying the discount when the property contains other householders varies

All local authorities seem to apply the discount to the bill which remains after other exemptions or support have been applied, and amend this to nil.

11. The most complex area is how to apply any discount to care leavers when they are living in shared accommodation. Further work will take place to shape proposals which ensure that care leavers are not discriminated against, or their housemates disadvantaged, in these circumstances.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that:

- a. There is a discount for council tax for care leavers who fall under the corporate parenting responsibility of Dorset Council. This should apply to qualifying care leavers where a decision has been taken that they should receive a service due to their vulnerability
- b. The discount should apply up to the age of 25.

- c. The discount should be applied after all other discounts have been applied and before council tax support has been taken into account.
- d. The discount should be applied automatically in respect of care leavers who are in touch with Dorset Council. Care leavers who have fallen out of touch will need to apply for the discount.
- e. That further proposals are developed where care leavers are living as part of a household.

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