



Date of Meeting: 15th July 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:

This is an update and progress report regarding looked after children placed in unregulated arrangements. Members are asked to consider the content of the report and the impact of the use of an unregulated placement for a child or young person and the measures in place to ensure that child or young person's safety and well being

A report on the use of unregulated placements is a standing agenda item for this board.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

There are no equalities 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 (Delete as appropriate)

Residual Risk: LOW (Delete as appropriate)

(i.e. reflecting the recommendations in this report and mitigating actions proposed)

(Note: Where HIGH risks have been identified, these should be briefly summarised here, identifying the appropriate risk category, i.e. financial / strategic priorities / health and safety / reputation / criticality of service.)

Other Implications:

Recommendation:

Report is for Information

Reason for Recommendation:

Report is for Information

Appendices:

Background Papers:

Management Instruction note (under review)
Transforming Children's Services – House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts
(March 2019)
Children Act 1989 and subsequent regulations and guidance
Ofsted guidance regarding the regulation and registration of children's
placements

Officer Contact

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1. Introduction:

1.1 The update and progress report on the use of unregulated placements is a standing agenda item for Corporate Parenting Board members and offers board members a summary of the current situation for young people who are placed in unregulated settings and the progress towards finding a suitable regulated alternative.

1.2 Children's services and partners remain committed to ensuring young people for whom a care placement is needed can feel safe, well cared for, listened to and remain close to their family and friends. Our priority is to achieve this within a well matched regulated placement.

1.3 The number of children and young people who are placed in unregulated settings is reported weekly to the Executive Director (Children), the Assistant Director (Children's Services), the Corporate Parenting Officer and the manager of the Independent Reviewing Officer service.

1.4 The weekly update report tracks the duration of the placement, any significant events, the current planning framework, meetings and visits and any exit planning. The weekly report shows the current number of young people in unregulated arrangements and a rolling record of the total for the year and the end dates

2. Progress on activity noted in previous report.

2.1 The development of a retained foster carer scheme has led to two households being identified as suitable to offer out of hours emergency placements. The retainer payment and foster carer agreements are being signed off. The first carer household will be available from the 9th July.

2.2 A suitable council property has been identified to provide emergency placements for young people. Work has been completed on the property and health and safety checks have been undertaken. The property can be made ready for use once the actions arising from the checks have been completed.

2.3 Members of the board have requested to visit the property. The Residential Services Manager will arrange this.

3.0 Current position:

3.1 At the time of writing, the number of children accommodated in unregulated arrangements has reduced to 3.

3.2 As reported previously and as anticipated, the care planning for 3 young people has led to planned endings to the unregulated arrangements in which they were placed.

- One young person moved to a regulated children's home in West Dorset
- One young person made a successful transition to a residential school which will meet his education and care needs.
- One young person returned home with support.

3.3 During this reporting period, one young person came into care over a weekend and was placed in an emergency unregulated setting. The week following saw the child moved to a regulated foster placement within two working days.

Tim Wells
Senior Manager Placements & Resources

Appendix - Case examples (Exempt?)

1.1 At the Corporate Parenting Board Meeting of the 11th June, members of the board requested more detail about the living arrangements and opportunities for young people who find themselves in unregulated placement arrangements.

1.2 Therefore the individual case summaries are now incorporated into an appendix in a way that maintains anonymity and offers a wider view of a young person's environment.

1.3 Child A (aged 15) has been supported in an unregulated setting for 302 days. This was initially extended to cover the duration of care proceedings, however, has been extended given the child's expressed wish to remain in this setting.

There have been particularly challenges in finding a suitable alternative due to the child's specific needs, despite extensive placement searching. Providers with specific expertise in working with complex needs are being invited to discuss placement provision directly with the Placements and Commissioning Team to see if they can create a bespoke regulated setting for this young person. Progress in this matter can be reported at the next board.

The young person's accommodation is 3 bed terraced house in a quiet residential area on the outskirts of a town in a neighbouring county. The internal décor is modern and well maintained. The property has rear garden and Wi-Fi. The young person has their own room and there are no other young people at the accommodation. Two staff provide the day and night care and support. The young person has an educational programme agreed by the virtual school for children in care.

1.4 Child B (aged 15) has been supported in an unregulated setting for 122 days. The young person's accommodation is a 2- bed duplex apartment located approximately 5 minutes' walk from the centre of a town in a neighbouring county. Although it is near the centre of town, the road itself consists of residential properties and is quiet. The property has been redeveloped in past 2 years and décor is clean and modern. The young person has their own room and no other young people reside at the property. The young person is supported by two staff to access the community for education and leisure activities. There is an active plan for this young person to return home and building work to offer the family and the young person more space and ease tensions is underway. Completion date will be end of August. A return home plan is being formulated.

1.5 Child C (aged 15) has been supported in an unregulated setting for 82 days. The accommodation consists of a small modern semi-detached house in a residential road in a town in a neighbouring county. Two staff support the young person. The young person has their own room. It has been particularly difficult to engage this young person in purposeful activity and they have been very clear about where they will or will not live. Plans are now in place for this young person to move to semi supported accommodation on or after their 16th birthday. The young person agrees with the plan as it is within the area where they wish to live. The young person has more actively engaged with the current accommodation and the staff who will assist with the move in early July.

