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Hampshire
County Council

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting	Corporate Parenting Board
Date and Time	Thursday 21st October 2021 at 10.00am
Place	Chute Room, First Floor, Ell Court South
Enquiries to	members.services@hants.gov.uk

Carolyn Williamson FCPFA
Chief Executive
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting may be recorded and broadcast live on the County Council's website. The meeting may also be recorded and broadcast by the press and members of the public – please see the Filming Protocol available on the County Council's website.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting

4. DEPUTATIONS

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements the Chairman may wish to make.

6. BOARD MEMBERS FEEDBACK - ENGAGEMENT AND RECENT ACTIVITIES

An opportunity for Board members to provide a verbal update on their recent engagement activities.

7. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING SERVICE CARE PLAN AUDIT (Pages 9 - 16)

To receive a presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the outcomes from the department's Independent Reviewing Service Care Plan Audit.

8. BIG ACTIVITY WEEK (Pages 17 - 22)

To receive a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the Big Activity Week.

9. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL (Pages 23 - 46)

To receive a report from the Director of Children's Services providing the annual update from the Virtual School.

10. AN UPDATE ON HEALTH ASSESSMENTS (Pages 47 - 50)

To receive a report providing an update on Health Assessments.

11. AN UPDATE ON THE MODERNISING PLACEMENTS PROGRAMME (Pages 51 - 82)

To receive a report and presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the Modernising Placements Programme.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

ABOUT THIS MEETING:

The press and public are welcome to attend the public sessions of the meeting. If you have any particular requirements, for example if you require wheelchair access, please contact members.services@hants.gov.uk for assistance.

County Councillors attending as appointed members of this Committee or by virtue of Standing Order 18.5; or with the concurrence of the Chairman in connection with their duties as members of the Council or as a local County Councillor qualify for travelling expenses.

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Agenda Item 3

AT A VIRTUAL MEETING of the Corporate Parenting Board of HAMPSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL held on Friday, 16th October, 2020

Chairman:

* Councillor Ann Briggs

* Councillor Fran Carpenter	Councillor Robert Taylor
* Councillor Roz Chadd	* Councillor Malcolm Wade
* Councillor Stephen Philpott	Councillor Peter Edgar MBE
Councillor Jackie Porter	* Councillor Pal Hayre
* Councillor Patricia Stallard	Councillor Dominic Hiscock
* Councillor Elaine Still	* Councillor Wayne Irish

*Present

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Robert Taylor and Councillor Pal Hayre was present as the Conservative deputy member. Apologies were received from Councillor Jackie Porter and Councillor Wayne Irish was present as the Liberal Democrat deputy member.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

3. **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations.

4. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman noted that this was the first meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board since it's remit and membership had been revised following agreement at County Council at its meeting on 13 February 2020. The Chairman welcomed new members to the Board and highlighted the valuable opportunity that being involved in Board matters would bring in terms of listening and engaging with children and young people in care, as well as care givers, across Hampshire.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Roz Chadd who had been the previous Chairman of the Board and also thanked Councillors Fran Carpenter and Malcolm Wade who had comprised the previous Board.

The Chairman welcomed observers to the meeting who would be working closely with the Board in the future. Those observers present included:

- Sue Coleman - Hampshire High Sheriff
- Ruth Hillman - Operational Director, CAMHS
- Chief Inspector Melanie Golding - Hampshire Constabulary
- Naomi Black - Designated Nurse for Children in Care

5. **BOARD MEMBERS FEEDBACK - ENGAGEMENT AND RECENT ACTIVITIES**

The Chairman invited Members to present any feedback from recent engagement activities that they had been involved in.

Councillor Carpenter noted that she had visited Tile Barn for the Big Activity Week and had also been involved in regular care ambassadors meetings with care leavers. Councillor Carpenter had also attended a foster carers group in Ringwood.

Councillor Wade noted that he had visited children's homes, had been a judge in a Got Talent competition and engaged with care ambassadors.

6. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

The Board received a presentation of the Director of Children's Services setting out the roles and responsibilities of the Corporate Parenting Board and the ways in which corporate parenting happens in Hampshire.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Board notes the presentation.

7. **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE - RESPONSE TO COVID AND THE IMPACT GOING FORWARD**

The Board received a presentation of the Director of Children's Services outlining how children and families services had responded to the Covid-19 pandemic and the steps being taken to overcome associated challenges.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed that:

- Since August the number of referrals had plateaued at about 15% higher than expected and in comparison to 2019.
- Children's Services staff were initially all based working from home but that some staff had returned to offices – particularly Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) social workers.

- More social workers and two additional managers had been recruited into the MASH.
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking children are often placed into foster care upon arrival into the country.
- 53% of vulnerable children had returned to school during the summer term. The remaining 47% were regularly contacted to ensure their wellbeing and to encourage return to schools where suitable aside from those isolating or shielding families. Attendance since September, through the early autumn term, had been very good.
- The majority of contact centres had re-opened to enable face to face contact with appropriate health and safety measures in place.
- Feedback from children in care regarding the increased use of virtual and IT software, such as WhatsApp and MS Teams, had been very positive.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Board notes the presentation.

8. **THE BIG ACTIVITY WEEK 2020**

The Board received a report of the Director of Children's Services with an update on the Big Activity Week 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Board notes the content of the report and supports the promotion of The Big Activity Week 2021 with a thorough programme of activities throughout the year for children and carers to get outdoors, engaged in exciting and accessible activities.

9. **VIRTUAL SCHOOL UPDATE**

The Board received a presentation of the Director of Children's Services with an update on the Virtual School.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Board note the presentation.

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Hampshire County Council

Hampshire Children's Services Care Plan Audit 2020/21

Presentation to Children & Families Advisory Panel
12 October 2021

Independent Reviewing Service (IRS) Annual Care Plan Audit 2020/21

The Independent Reviewing Service undertakes an annual audit of the quality of children's care plans in Hampshire. The findings from the audits are used to develop and enhance practice, and to improve outcomes for children who are looked after.

The audit focused on the following areas:

- ✚ **The Care Plan** (*looking at the desired outcomes for the child, what actions and outcomes are expected from each agency, and the services and interventions that are required to meet the child's day to day and long-term needs*)
- ✚ **The Personal Education Plan (PEP)** (*looking at strengths, attendance and achievements, SMART academic targets, learning needs, and educational progress*)
- ✚ **The Health Assessment (HA)** (*looking at and ensuring every child has an individual up to date health plan, physical, emotional health and behavioural needs of children and how that is included in the care plan, how the child's wishes, and feelings have been acted upon*)
- ✚ **Needs of the child** (*looking at how the care plan takes in to account specific needs including needs relating to disability, identity, gender, culture, faith, language etc.*)
- ✚ **The Child Looked After Review** (*looking at participation, contribution, inclusion, multi-agency input*)
- ✚ **Equality and Diversity** (*looking at cultural, religious, positive identity, linguistic backgrounds, access to and provision of services etc.*)

Methodology

- Between 30 November 2020 and 4 January 2021, 21 Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) completed a care plan audit following each Child Looked After Review.
- The audit contained 68 questions and included direct answers from children, parents and carers.
- 272 children's plans were audited, an increase from the number audited in 2019 (208).
- In the 20/2021 audits the questions were both qualitative and quantitative to establish if the Hampshire Approach is having a positive impact on care planning and contributes to achieving good outcomes for children.

Key Findings

- Over 98.5% of care plans reflect the needs of the child (an improvement from the 66% in 2019).
- 228 (83.82%) of children reported that their life had improved since becoming looked after which demonstrates that their care plan is meeting their needs. There are notable differences in the findings of 2020/21 audit in comparison with the previous year – the new format care plan **My life, My Future** is capturing how the child's needs are being met and making a positive difference to the child's view and understanding of their journey.
- In 89.3% of cases audited the IRO found that children's equality and diversity needs were being met, this is significantly higher than previous years, 39.9% in 2019.
- Clear evidence of how the permanence plan for the child will be achieved in 76% of cases (an 8% increase from 2019).
- When planning for children it is important to consider contingencies should 'plan A' not be possible; there was an increase of 24% in the 2020/21 results which demonstrated that 86% of care plans evidenced contingency plans.

Key Findings contd.

- For 58% of children their attainment levels had increased since becoming looked after and 112 children had grown in confidence which impacted on their social skills, resulting in more children participating in after school activities.
- Key people, including the child (where age/understanding appropriate), had attended the PEP meeting in 93.6% of cases, a significant increase of 52.2% from the audit results reported in 2019.
- For 239 children (93%), their health had improved since becoming looked after.
- 245 children (88%) reported they have regular exercise and 245 children reported having an attachment to their primary carer and that children had a good bedtime routine and were provided with a healthy diet.
- The audit established that 64.3% of children did not require any professional emotional support and 175 of the 272 children audited are having their emotional needs met by their primary carer.
- In the 2020/21 audit findings 156 (57.4%) children attended their looked after review, an increase of 2.6% from the 2019 audit.

Areas for development

- The new care plan has been designed to be more inclusive and should be signed by the child and parent. The audit findings show that 43 children signed their plan, and 79 parents which is an improvement from 2019. This is an area of focus for the Independent Reviewing Service (IRS) who are working with children and parents to ensure that the care plan is signed by the child and by parents following the looked after review.
- The dental and optician results have been impacted by the national lockdown as routine appointments were not offered. This area of improvement is linked to a multi-agency action plan and the Independent Reviewing Service is working with the social work teams and foster carers to ensure that regular health and dental appointments are made, and that children attend. IROs are confirming and monitoring this through the reviews and report on this through the monthly performance meetings.
- The audit findings noted an improvement in the number of children attending their review, however the focus for IRS is to increase the number of children who attend their review and participate in their care planning. Some children have told us that they prefer to attend their reviews using various platforms and an action plan is in place which is looking at developing hybrid meetings alongside face to face meetings as a way of ensuring that as many children as possible attend and contribute to their reviews.

Summary

- The audit completed this year demonstrated that for the majority of children who are looked after by Hampshire Children's Services their life has improved, not just in the stability of care provided, for them personally but in their academic and social skills, that they feel safe, loved, and cared for and are happy.
- The audit has highlighted some positive findings which clearly show an improvement in comparison to the 2018 and 2019 audit results.
- The audits have identified some areas for development and the IRS already have plans in place to address the areas that have been highlighted through the audit process.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Panel	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	21 October 2021
Title:	The Big Activity Week 2021
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Charley Mills

Tel: 01962 876210

Email: Charley.mills@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Corporate Parenting Board with an overview of The Big Activity Week 2021

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Corporate Parenting Board continue to support The Big Activity Week

Contents

Context	3
Why is The Big Activity Week important?	4
The Big Activity Week 2021	5
Did it work?	6
What's next?	7

3. Context

After a successful residential experience for 76 young people aged 9-13 in 2019 and the well attended 'adventure' days that took place during COVID restrictions in the summer of 2020, the Big Activity Week 2021 was planned to be bigger and better!

The week was extended to accommodate a larger age range across six residential centres. The young people in the eldest age range even ventured to our Hampshire County Council-run Mountain Centre in Wales!

In total 105 young people aged between 8 and 14 attended the week which took place between 2-6 August 2021.

Funding was secured from The National Lottery, Public Health England, Hampshire

Children's Services, The Hendy Foundation, Hampshire Fostering Network, HIWCF and the Lions Club. The centres that the young people visited were also very supportive with costs.

Each group of young people was accompanied by a team of professionals including teachers, social workers and a registered foster carers. It was a real benefit to the project to pull resources and expertise from across the Hampshire County Council departments.

4. Why is The Big Activity Week so important?

Prior to The Big Activity Week 2019, evidence of the benefits of outdoor and adventurous activities was well documented. Our aim had been to support looked after children to build resilience, confidence and skills and enable them to form relationships with children in similar circumstances. It was felt that starting this at an early age would help these young people to overcome some of the barriers in education and socially that they faced.

After the residential in 2019, we sought feedback from carers and young people, to see what the experience had meant to them.

Carers reported that the week had helped hugely with confidence, that mixing with children 'in the same boat' had normalised the situation for the young people. Friendships were made and a sense of achievement and pride was felt as the young people took part in activities they were not accustomed to.

The young people were asked to sum up their week using 3 words. The most popular choices were fun, amazing, exciting, challenging and awesome. This sense of enjoyment was very apparent at the celebration event we held with children, carers, social workers and senior staff.

The restricted nature of the week in 2020 still produced very positive feedback and results with carers commenting on new friendships, positive attitudes, improved sense of self-worth and an increase in resilience and confidence. With the continued disruption of COVID-19 and the impact it has had on the mental well-being of all young people, The Big Activity Week 2021 was very much needed.

5. The Big Activity Week 2021

The ever-changing COVID restrictions meant that planning for the Big Activity Week 2021 was a challenge but we were ultimately able to take 105 young people on residential between 2-6 August 2021.

Activity Centre	Year group (Age)	Number of young people
Minstead Study Centre	4 (8-9)	13
Stubbington Study Centre	5 (9-10)	19
Avon Tyrell Activity Centre	6 (10-11)	17
Peter Ashley Activity Centre	7 (11-12)	18
Calshot Activity Centre	8 (12-13)	19
Hampshire Mountain Centre	9 (13-14)	19

Activities included:

- Sports – volleyball, petanque, lacrosse, netball,
- Nature – trees, minibeasts, mammals, pond dipping, woodland walks
- Survival – firelighting, shelter building, mapping, orienteering
- Challenge – raft building, problem solving,
- Art – clay, natural art, willow sculptures, leaf printing
- Archery
- Snowsports – Ringos, skiing
- Climbing, abseiling, crate stacking
- Watersports – kayaking, sailing, canoeing
- High ropes
- Low ropes
- Rifle shooting
- Caving

In addition to the activities, the young people were able to socialise and build friendships with others and fast friendships were formed.

6. Did it work?

The smiling faces and constant chatter when the young people were picked up and the promises to 'stay in touch' with new friends were enough to prove that this was a successful week.

We obviously can't measure the impact long term but feedback from carers and young people has been overwhelmingly positive. A selection of feedback is below.

'... my girl hasn't stopped talking about it and took part in something that I never thought she would! She also asked me if she could go next year.

'... our lad had the week of his life. Made new friends and took part in new experiences.'

'... I've loved being part of the BAW again this year after we missed out last year due to covid. I'm already looking forward to next year and hope we get the opportunity to go to Wales like my older brother did as he had an amazing time.' *'... this is an opportunity like no other. Our children get to spend time with other children in a similar situation. it makes them feel like they are not alone. What an*

amazing project this is, it's impacted by 2 boys in so many ways, giving them memories that will last a lifetime.'

' ... I've pencilled the date in for next year already and the children still talk about it all the time. I am so pleased this has been set up for our children. One of my boys has never had a successful residential experience with school because they cannot manage his behaviour. The staff are well trained and understand the needs of our children which is reassuring knowing they are in safe hands.'

7. What's next?

We hope to provide a programme of activities throughout the year for children and carers to get outdoors, engaged in exciting and accessible activities. This will of course depend on funding.

The Big Activity Week 2022 is in the process of being booked and venues secured.

Contact

For more information about the Big Activity Week please contact the Outdoor Participation team via outdoor.education@hants.gov.uk

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes
OR	
<p>This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because: <i>NB: Only complete this section if you have not completed any of the Strategic Plan tick boxes above. Whichever section is not applicable, please delete.</i></p>	

NB: If the 'Other significant links' section below is not applicable, please delete it.

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-ImpactAssessments.aspx?web=1>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- (a) *why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- (b) *will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Panel:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	21 st October 2021
Title:	Annual Report of the Virtual School Head 2021
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Nicola Blake

Tel: 07928 128629

Email: Nicola.blake@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose is to deliver the annual report of the Virtual School Headteacher in Hampshire.

Recommendation(s)

2. The Corporate Parenting Board note and agree the contents of this report.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to review the educational outcomes and experiences of our children and young people in care and to set out the priorities and strategies for improvement for the Virtual School and key partners. This is in line with the statutory duty on the local authority to promote the educational achievement of our care experienced children.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

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- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. **Equalities Impact Assessment:** The work led by the Virtual School is contributing to improved educational outcomes and experiences of Hampshire's children and young people in care.

Education and Inclusion Branch Management

Item No:

Insert Date 8th June 2021

Insert Report title: Hampshire Virtual School Headteacher Annual Report 2021

Children in the care of the Hampshire

Report for the Director of Children's Services

Nicola Blake Nicola.Blake@hants.gov.uk

VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT (HAMPSHIRE) 2021 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the Virtual School's work and focus during the academic year 2019-2020, together with an analysis of educational outcomes, where published, for Hampshire's cohort of children in care. It sets out the priorities for securing improved individual and cohort progress, educational experiences, and outcomes for children in the care of Hampshire. In March 2020, schools were closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic; the result of this national school closure was the cancellation of formal examinations for KS4 and KS5 and the cancellation of KS1 and KS2 assessments. Therefore, this report will not detail outcomes in some key stages due to the absence of available data.

THE ROLE OF THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

- The Virtual School Head discharges the local authority's corporate parent role as the educational advocate for children in care, as parents are for other children.
 - Virtual Schools proactively work with others to create a culture of high expectation and aspiration around children in care and previously looked after children. Improving educational outcomes is a collective responsibility across the local authority.
 - The Virtual School continues to actively raise awareness of our shared statutory responsibilities to prioritise the education of children in care in Hampshire.
-

PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS (PEPS)

- Following PEP audits each term during 2019-20, actions to improve the PEP process and effectiveness have been implemented
 - Together with schools, social workers, and carers, we have improved the quality of PEPs through comprehensive training
 - The Virtual School's PEP Toolkit is a needs analysis resource highly valued by schools
 - The Virtual School supported the implementation of online PEPs during Covid-19. Training and guidance were provided to all designated teachers. The requirements and expectations around completion and timeliness of PEPs remained in place during this period.
-

PUPIL PREMIUM PLUS FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

- The Virtual School provides an annual report to Schools Forum around the use and impact of pupil premium plus. Arrangements are reviewed annually depending on the needs analysis of the cohort of children in care.
 - The report highlights the pupil premium plus funded 'Attachment and Trauma Aware Schools' training programme. There are 72 schools participating in Hampshire.
 - The Virtual School issued all schools with a top-up funding payment to support the needs of children in care during school closure. Pupil premium plus was also utilised to ensure children and young people had access to resources to support home learning where necessary.
-

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

- The cancellation of public examinations in the summer of 2020 resulted in students being awarded the higher of the two grades provided by their teacher and a standardisation algorithm at GCSE. In this report, we have drawn data directly from our own records, as obtained directly from schools, and this has been included with analysis and commentary, where possible. There may be slight differences between this and the published data due to some variance in the DfE process for matching

pupil data. All our outcomes were above the average for children in care nationally and in the Southeast region.

- In 2020, 28.1 % of our children achieved the 'basics' measure by achieving at least a grade 4 in maths and English, a notable improvement from 13.7% in 2019. There was an improved performance in individual subject with 31.6% achieving at least a grade 4 in maths and 38.6% in English. Average Attainment 8 score in 2020 for Hampshire children looked after was 21.43.
- Priorities going forward include the development of the 'Virtual Pre-school' and extending strong practice from the early years into key stage 1. There will be a focus on children in care with SEN particularly those with SEMH needs across the full cohort, since outcomes across all measures including attendance and exclusion are poorer for this group.
- Maintaining school stability is a major factor in improving educational outcomes and reducing persistent absence and fixed term exclusions are integral to this.

THE VIRTUAL COLLEGE AND POST 16

- In Hampshire, the Virtual College is well established as the post-16 arm of the Virtual School. As part of the Children's Services post-16 Careers and Participation team, the Virtual College is fully integrated into the wider Hampshire Futures service which supports all young people to participate successfully in formal education and training in Year 12 and 13. Since the inception of the Virtual College post-16 participation for Hampshire children in care has improved, with 87.7% in education, employment, and training in 2020 compared to 85.5% in 2019.

CHILDREN PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER (PLAC)

- This is widely regarded as an area of strength in Hampshire. Training has been embedded in our Virtual School offer to ensure our schools are meeting their statutory needs regarding previously looked after children. The EPAC (Education Plan for Adopted Children) has been developed as a high quality and comprehensive tool to support progress for previously looked after children within their education setting.
- Following last year's positive feedback, a virtual conference was again arranged with a keynote speaker, Sarah Naish, an adoptive parent, and founder of NATP (National Association of Therapeutic Parenting) delivering to our PLAC parent/carer group.

CONCLUSION

- The Virtual School remains committed to removing the inequality in educational outcomes between children in care and the wider population of children. This means working in partnership with the whole system for children across schools, education and inclusion and social care, returning constantly to the question for us as corporate parents – *'would this be good enough for my child?'*

Recommendations

- a) **That BMT notes that the absence of formal assessment and use of other assessment methodologies in 2020 due to the Covid 19 outbreak requires a qualitative approach to reporting.**
- b) **That the Virtual School's priorities are agreed by BMT to secure further improvements to the educational outcomes of Hampshire's children in care.**
- c) **That further dissemination of the report is identified and agreed**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To outline and analyse the end of key stage achievement of all children and young people, from early years to 18 in the care of Hampshire County Council (academic year 2019-20) in the context of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic locally and nationally.
- 1.2. To set out the priorities for improving the effectiveness and impact of the Virtual School so that, together with schools, settings, and post-16 providers, we secure greater individual and cohort progress, better educational experiences, and better outcomes for Hampshire's children in care.
- 1.3. To review the impact of strategies to improve the educational achievement and learning of children in our care and highlight key areas for further improvement.
- 1.4. To celebrate the achievements of children in our care and show how their voice is beginning to shape the services provided.

2. Context

- 2.1. The Virtual School sits within the Education and Inclusion Branch but works closely with the Children and Families branch of Hampshire Children's Services Department (CSD) and the Access, Resources and Business Development Branch, in relation to data, information, and admissions
- 2.2. The Executive Head Teacher is responsible for the Virtual Schools in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Close working relationships are nurtured with all other services, including SEND, Early Years Advisory Team, Hampshire Futures, and wider health services.
- 2.3. The Virtual School's role and remit may be seen in the current Virtual School brochure <http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/VirtualSchoolBrochure.pdf>
- 2.4. The Virtual School in Hampshire is small in relation to the size of cohort. Therefore, ensuring that all teams prioritise this group of children and building capacity across schools and the wider children's workforce is a key component in our strategy to improve educational outcomes.
- 2.5. Accurate information is maintained on how children in our care are progressing in their education. The Virtual School intervenes when a child or young person in Hampshire's care is not achieving as well as they can. We provide training and information for schools, foster carers, and social workers. Furthermore, the Virtual School ensures resources, including the pupil premium plus, are distributed effectively and monitors the impact on the educational experiences and achievements of children in care.
- 2.6. The 2019 inspection of Hampshire Children's Services recognised that, '*the well-regarded virtual school is ambitious for children in care, proactively supporting children to do as well as they can at school*'.
- 2.7. Since the last VSH annual report, services and processes have been further streamlined and improved, so that children, schools, and other stakeholders experience the same high standards and consistent approaches from the Virtual School.
- 2.8. Since the introduction of the new duty around children previously looked after (PLAC) in September 2018, the Virtual School's work has developed at pace. The well-established links with the Hampshire's Fostering and Adoption Team have been strengthened and links with Adopt South and other regional partners have been developed.

3. Our aspirations for children and young people looked after

- 3.1. The Virtual School and Virtual School Head have a lead role in promoting the educational achievement of children in its care. However, to meet our aspirational targets, we require all schools, the local authority and partner agencies to share the responsibility and to prioritise their needs as corporate parents.
- 3.2. Education that encourages high aspirations and individual achievements, with minimum disruption and maximum stability, is central to improving short and long-term outcomes for children in our care. This is strongly reflected in our joint work across schools and services and in our current service plan.
- 3.3. In line with DfE statutory guidance for local authorities, our aspiration is that all children and young people attend a good or outstanding school which meets their individual needs and have a good school attendance record. We want every child in care to:
 - Enjoy their education and become positive and resilient learners who know their own strengths and talents.
 - Benefit from the protective factor of being in care and make improved progress and achieve better educational outcomes once they feel stable and secure.
 - Be prioritised by schools and services in line with the collective corporate parent duty
 - Receive the same support from their foster carers as they would from any good parent.
 - Have a voice that positively impacts on the services they receive.
 - Have stability in their care and education placements.
 - Receive good advice and guidance to ensure they can progress into further education, employment, and training and, when appropriate, university.
 - Know that their achievement and successes will be celebrated.

4. Reporting arrangements and accountability

- 4.1. The Virtual School self-evaluates against the overarching Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). It is expected that key priorities are also identified by Hampshire Corporate Parenting Board which scrutinises the work of the Virtual School and holds it to account. The Virtual School Head reports annually to departmental management teams across both Education and Inclusion and Children and Families branches, with regular updates and reports through the year, including within the Inclusion Management Team.

5. Pupil Premium Plus

- 5.1. In line with the DfE statutory guidance, the Virtual School published a policy document which makes clear the expectations and arrangements in place around pupil premium plus for children looked after.
[Pupil Premium Plus and funding | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/pupil-premium-plus-and-funding)
- 5.2. For transparency, the Virtual School Head also reports specifically to Schools Forum on the use and impact of pupil premium plus. Arrangements for distributing the pupil premium plus grant are reviewed annually.
- 5.3. The Virtual School updated the pupil premium plus policy in 2020 following feedback received during the year from stakeholders and in view of the impact of COVID-19.

6. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

- 6.1. The Virtual School uses an internal (non-commercial) Personal Education Plan (PEP) template which has been developed over time. The process is managed by the Virtual School team in collaboration with social care and school-based colleagues.
- 6.2. In the last two years, the Virtual School has driven forward joint work with designated teachers and social workers to improve the percentage of PEPs completed and submitted to the Virtual School. This focus led to an increase to 79% in autumn term 2019.
- 6.3. The impact of Covid-19 and the disruption to education planning and delivery have affected the upward trajectory of our compliance data on PEP completion.
- 6.4. As a Virtual School, we recognise the priority need to improve the compliance and quality of the PEP process, as it is a key tool to drive forward progress for our children and young people. A targeted piece of work is being led by the Transforming Children's Services Team to evaluate the current PEP template, process, and effectiveness with a view to making rapid improvement.
- 6.5. The Virtual School undertakes a termly audit of PEPs which enables us to quality assure the process and to provide targeted feedback to designated teachers and social workers to improve the quality and specificity of PEPs.
- 6.6. The PEP audit undertaken in July 2020 focused on 126 PEPs of which 122 were provided with a rating using our Hampshire Virtual School audit tool. It is notable that in this audit, the inclusion of a high-quality action plan was weighted, meaning that any PEP which failed to include this was immediately judged to require development. This was the case with 24 of the PEPs audited. The majority (70.5%) had some characteristics of a good PEP although areas for further development were identified. It is pleasing that in 50 PEPs, the social worker's contribution was judged as excellent.
- 6.7. The recommendations arising from our PEP audits feed directly into our training programme for designated teachers. This has been strengthened since we have utilised our Moodle platform, which allows for bespoke and specific training to be accessed by practitioners on demand.
- 6.8. Children in care have access to a wide range of leisure activities, sports, clubs, and recreational pursuits in a similar way to their peers. These needs are considered within their statutory care plan, where their enjoyment and achievement in OOSHL (out of school hours learning) is planned for and reflected. The wider responsibility of county council services to meet the needs of children in care, as part of their corporate parenting role, is increasingly well understood and is a message reinforced by the Virtual School in all training materials

7. The role of the Virtual School during Covid-19 (March 2020 – August 2020)

The work undertaken during Covid-19 lockdowns to promote high levels of attendance by vulnerable groups, including children in care, exemplified the strong partnership working developed between social care, schools and education services in Hampshire. All schools remained open to children in care and those with a social worker. A system was developed to track vulnerable children's attendance which led to timely intervention by social care and the school improvement team. Throughout the pandemic, the attendance rate of children open to social care, including children in care, was well above national levels. The Virtual School has a key role in supporting social workers, carers, designated teachers, and schools to ensure they understand and can meet the specific educational needs of children in care at this time. We are aware of the ongoing and significant challenges. Some

children in care lost valuable time in education away from a formal school setting and many already had gaps in their learning, curriculum knowledge and skill acquisition. Children also required help to rebuild their trust in key adults, regain their sense of belonging and readjust to the routines and stability of school life when they returned.

7.2 **Strategic Approach**

During the first Covid-19 school closure, the Virtual School developed its practice, policies, and procedures to ensure key professionals were provided with appropriate guidance, training, and support in a timely way. We provided high quality individualised support and a comprehensive package of training to all involved professionals. The development of our Moodle platform has enabled practitioners to access bespoke guidance on key practice areas. Our partnership working has been critical to this success and enabled more joined up and proactive support to be provided to designated teachers and schools, such as in the development of our transition guide. We are confident that our children and young people in care were provided with appropriate educational provision during this time and that we have been responsive to the training and support needs of our social workers, carers, and schools.

The work of the Virtual School included:

- Developing a Moodle platform to facilitate a 'self-serve' model for practitioners to use flexibly according to their training and support needs. The analytics provided a facility for us to monitor demand and service needs so we could constantly update our training offer.
- Amending our PEP guidance and format to ensure it could be delivered virtually in line with statutory requirements.
- Providing guidance and a format to support schools to continue to contribute to looked after review meetings.
- Providing 'YouTube' training to designated teachers on delivering PEPs.
- Providing 'support and transition guidance' for designated teachers on supporting vulnerable students to move to a new educational setting.
- Developing a 'learning at home guide' for parents and carers that was circulated around the national network by NAVSH (National Association of Virtual School Heads).
- Working in collaboration with HIAS, HIEPS, SEN and the NHS Foundation Trust to produce 'Transition Back to School After Covid-19' guidance which focuses on how to support the emotional well-being of children and young people.
- Working jointly with HIAS to deliver the DfE/DHSC joint training materials on 'Wellbeing for Education Return' to schools and college.
- Maintaining our attendance tracking to include children and young people placed out of county via Welfare Call. This provided us with a clear picture of attendance for all year groups, across all settings,
- Adjusting the budget to allow for additional needs arising from Covid-19 to be considered. School settings can apply for additional pupil premium plus funding to meet the specific needs of children to reduce the impact of school closure and expedite progress.

7.3 **Operational Approach**

The Virtual School worked in close partnership with children's social care, schools, and education to ensure as many children in care as possible were able to attend school during the initial, and subsequent, school closures. By the end of summer term, 69% of children in care were attending school in Hampshire. The remaining children in care were educated remotely during this period with schools ensuring they had access to appropriate learning and resources at home. Hampshire schools continued to offer all children in care a school place during the Easter holidays to ensure that learning and routines were maintained during this period. Children's social care led on the assessment and decision making for each individual child and a risk assessment was undertaken on every child not attending school. During this period, the Virtual School's priority worked included:

- Providing specialist advice and guidance to social workers, carers, and schools to ensure the most appropriate educational provision was in place for each child and young person in line with their risk assessment and learning needs.
 - Weekly monitoring and reporting on the attendance data for children in care at schools/PVI settings by Education Officers in the Virtual School
 - The Virtual School provided all children in care with additional resources to access education within the first four weeks of school closure. The Virtual School supported social care teams to apply for equipment from the DfE scheme as required.
 - Continuing our schedule of corporate parent visits to schools on a virtual basis to discuss the progress of individual children based on concerns arising from data analysis, school rating, PEP quality or inclusive practice within the school.
 - Virtual delivery of a bespoke transition planning programme delivered jointly with the Educational Psychology Service providing support to Year 6 children moving to secondary school in September.
 - Delivery of scheduled designated teachers' training via Teams which included focus on supporting care experienced young people to return to school.
 - The Virtual College maintained contact remotely with all individual young people and their personal advisers to sustain links, to provide support and to proactively plan for the return to college.
 - Delivering a lockdown challenge to enable care experienced children and young people to capture and share an image of a piece of work they were proud of (such as art, cookery, or sculpture) to enhance a feeling of connection with key adults and to celebrate creativity and achievement.
 - The 'Big Activity Week' in August 2020 provided a week of new experiences, physical activities and fun in Hampshire and was free to all care experienced children in school years 4 – 9 , building on the successful programme in 2019 which had been attended by 76 children and young people.
- Examples of Covid specific activity can be found in Appendix 1.

8. Summary of performance for the academic year 2019-20

Attainment and progress of cohorts by chronological age

- 8.1. A full analysis of published results for the academic year 2018-19 may be viewed in the previous VSH annual report.
- 8.2. The following analysis refers to children in care in the 'OC2' or 'published' cohort during 2019-20 academic year. That is children who have been in care for a year or more as of 31st March 2020.
- 8.3. Data is drawn from internal Virtual School data collections due to the cancellation of summer examinations and assessments across all key stages.
- 8.4. There may be some differences between the internal local authority and verified KS4 dataset, due to rounding and some unmatched data where not all children's results have been included. Where this is the case, it is clearly indicated on the datasets used.
- 8.5. Please note that the analysis will rely on qualitative data to draw conclusions.

Outcome for Hampshire's children in care

9. EYFS results

- 9.1. A 'good level of development' or GLD is defined as having achieved the age expected level in Communication and Language (CL), Personal Social Emotional Development (PSED), Physical Development (PD) Literacy and Mathematics. In 2019, there was an improvement in outcomes across all measures. In the early years, 51.5% of children achieved a good level of development (GLD) compared with 48% nationally as indicated by NEXUS data.
- 9.2. There were no formal assessments in 2019-20 for EYFS due to COVID-19 and therefore we are unable to include formal results in this report.
- 9.3. The Year R LAC numbers indicated there were 43 children who has been in care for 12 months or more as of 31st March 2020. Of this cohort, eight were in out of county schools, one had no school place as decelerating was in process and one was decelerated.
- 9.4. The Virtual School focused on PSED (personal, social, and emotional development) in EYFS. This became a focus for county moderation and became central to the Year R project funded by the Virtual School. This involved 29 delegates from across 26 schools in Hampshire.
- 9.5. There has been an increased focus on close working with the Admissions, Inclusion and Advisory Teams to ensure that information is shared on applications in a timely way and that good schools are identified. Support provided in schools was reviewed so that priority focus could be given to specific PVI settings.
- 9.6. The Virtual School agreed a service level agreement with Services for Young Children to ensure expertise and support was provided to this cohort. A strategic group was formed with three advisory teachers. Termly meetings and support work focused on support visits to schools and settings, moderation of PEPs and transition work.
- 9.7. Data collected during Autumn Term 2020 indicates that 19 children (39.6% of children with returned PEPs) were working at the expected national level in the term following the end of their EYFS curriculum. This would indicate the need for additional in school support following school closure to expedite progress.
- 9.8. The Virtual School provided direct support to children during school closures. This support ranged from ensuring appropriate education provision was in place at a

school site, providing access to technology to assist home learning or to the provision of resources to promote progress.

10. Primary phase

- 10.1. As identified in the previous VSH annual report, one impact of the current curriculum and assessment methods in place is that there are parts of the curriculum that many children in care, due to the turbulence in their lives, have simply not had time to learn securely by the end of the key stage. This implies that their final scores may reflect the lack of time they have had to learn the content rather than their capabilities.
- 10.2. This needs to be very carefully considered this year, considering the Covid-19 impact, and given that formal assessment did not take place in 2020. The Virtual School, alongside its national association, is working with OFQUAL to raise awareness of the likely impacts on this cohort of children and will ensure that any findings or recommendations are shared with our schools and colleagues across the Education and Inclusion branch.

11. Key stage 1 performance

- 11.1. There are no DfE national published outcomes available for children in care at key stage 1 in Hampshire. This includes phonics tests in KS1.
- 11.2. There were 77 children in the 2019 - 20 cohort in KS1. 47 of the children are classified as OC2 (children who have been in care for 12 months or more as of 31st March 2020). Three children were in receipt of an EHCP.
- 11.3. Data collected during Autumn Term 2020 indicates that 22 children (25.6% of children with returned PEPs) were working at the expected national level in the term following the end of key stage 1.
- 11.4. The Virtual School will continue to use data to ensure schools and settings prioritise assessment, support, and intervention for children by effective PEP needs analysis and target setting and use of pupil premium plus.

12. Key stage 2 performance

- 12.1. There are no DfE national published outcomes available for children in care at key stage 2 in Hampshire.
- 12.2. There were 84 children in the 2019 – 20 cohort in KS2 (Year 6) and 62 were classified as OC2. Fifteen of these children had an EHCP
- 12.3. A thorough transition support package including bespoke resources and training was implemented to support the young people moving from year 6 to year 7 in 2020. All primary and secondary schools, in and out of county, were offered training and a transition plan was developed for each child.

13. Key stage 4 performance

The cancellation of public examinations in the summer of 2020 resulted in students being awarded the higher of the two grades provided by their teacher and a standardisation algorithm.

Measure	2019 (OC2 cohort of 124)	2020 (OC2 cohort of 114)
English and maths at 5 or above	4 (3.2%)	18 (15.8%)
English and maths at 4 or above	17 (13.7%)	32 (28.1%)

- 13.1. The table above shows the outcomes drawn directly from our own data records as obtained directly from schools. In view of the changed methodology to calculate GCSE results this year, trend comparisons between years should be treated with caution. Historically we know, however, that outcomes improved continuously in Hampshire from 2015 to 2018, rising from 16.7% achieving a grade 4 or above in English and maths in 2016 to 19.1% in 2017 and 21.6% in 2018. The outcomes in 2019 were disappointing (falling to 13.7%) despite improved performance in both maths and English as individual subjects.
- 13.2. In 2020, there were significant improvements in GCSE results for our whole cohort of children in care. Of the 114 children who had been looked after continually for at least 12 months, 18 children (15.8%) achieved English and maths at grades 9-5 and 32 (28.1%) at grades 9-4. This compared to 3.2% and 13.7% in 2019 and 6.9% and 21.6% in 2018.
- 13.3. The cohort had a significantly higher number of boys (62.3%) and eleven of the young people were UASC (unaccompanied asylum-seeking children).
- 13.4. It is notable that of the overall cohort, only 54.3% attended a mainstream school by the end of key stage 2 and most children achieving GCSEs were in this group.
- 13.5. In relation to published data, Hampshire's cohort of children in care performed well at key stage 4 in comparison to our statistical neighbours. Of those local authorities who had data published, we had the highest percentage of children achieving the 'basics' 9-5 measure (16.7%) and the second highest percentage score for children achieving the 'basics' 9-4 measure (38.3%). We had a higher number of pupils than all our statistical neighbours (120) with the next largest authority (Hertfordshire) having 91. We had the fourth highest average Attainment 8 score at 22.7. All our outcomes were above the average for children in care nationally and in the Southeast region
- 13.6. The virtual school will continue to support the placement and school stability of young people in care to ensure they are supported to remain in mainstream settings wherever this is possible.

Analysis

- There were 114 in the OC2 cohort for Year 11 in 2019 - 20 (in care for one year or more as of 31st March 2020), 10 less than the previous year.
- As of March 2020, 85.1% of our key stage 4 cohort attended schools rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted. For our whole OC2 cohort (Year R to Year 11), it was 89.1%. The Virtual School continues to prioritise corporate parent visits to schools with a 'requires improvement' rating to ensure that our children and young people are making good progress in these settings.
- The cancellation of public examinations in the summer of 2020 resulted in students being awarded the higher of the two grades provided by their teacher and a standardisation algorithm. Grades awarded above a 4 rose nationally by 8.9 percentage points in 2020.

14. Factors affecting educational outcomes

- 14.1. There are several factors which impact on the educational outcomes of children in care. A study by the Rees Centre (Research in Fostering and Education, University of Oxford) noted that, controlling for all factors, there are several which consistently contribute to low educational outcomes of young people in care in secondary schools. These include the length of time children are in care, the number of changes in placement (with each additional change in placement after age 11 associated with one third of a grade less at GCSE) and the number of school changes (with young people who change school in key stage 4 scoring over five grades less than those who did not). School absence and exclusion are also significant factors as are placement and school type with young people in residential settings, special schools or pupil referral units scoring lower than those with similar characteristics in mainstream schools.
- 14.2. The Virtual School ensures that these factors inform the practice and priorities of their work as outlined in section 20 of this report. We place significant focus on ensuring, through training, that designated teachers and schools have a better understanding of children's social, emotional and mental health needs to ensure they can be supported to remain in the best mainstream schools wherever possible.
- 14.3. We monitor attendance and exclusion data for all our children in care to identify young people at risk of non-engagement and to ensure appropriate assessment, intervention and support packages are in place in a timely way where needed.
- 14.4. The Virtual School also works closely with social work colleagues to ensure that, where placement moves are essential, school moves are avoided especially in the final years of schooling.
- 14.5. We also ensure that our children and young people are prioritised to attend schools judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding'. We ensure that the network around children focus on progress over time in recognition that many children take longer to make significant progress.
- 14.6. The progress of children in care does, of course, show much variation, which suggests that interventions do need to be tailored to the characteristics and experience of individual children and should be reflected in the needs analysis and actions plans in their PEPS. It is important to remember that children in care will also experience multiple factors simultaneously and will feel the impact of these vulnerabilities in individual ways. It is evident that a number of children

enter care during their secondary school years, 273 in 2019-20, so important that our schools can identify and address gaps in a timely way.

14.7. In 2019-20, it is also evident that school closure arising from Covid-19 had a significant impact on our children and young people.

15. Post-16 The Virtual College

- 15.1. The Virtual College is the post-16 arm of the Virtual School and supports our care experienced young people on their post-16 journeys. The 2019 inspection of Children’s Services commented positively on the contribution made by the Virtual College noting that, ‘the recent establishment of a virtual college is beginning to improve the quality of provision for young people aged 16 to 18 years, with emerging evidence’.
- 15.2. As part of the Children’s Services post 16 Careers and Participation team, the Virtual College is fully integrated into the wider RPA (Raising Participation Age) statutory functions supporting all young people to participate successfully in formal education and training in year 12 and 13.
- 15.3. The Virtual College model uses a robust and wide-ranging dataset to target resources effectively and provides a dedicated ‘Education Participation Adviser’ to each young person in Hampshire, to support and enable effective transition from year 11, monitor and track their progress and to ensure they sustain their post 16 placement.
- 15.4. The Virtual College team collected key stage 5 results for August 2020 (see table below) although it should be noted that grades were awarded differently due to the pandemic.

Qualification	Pass	Withdrawn/ Not achieved	Total	Ongoing (To complete 20/21)
Entry Level	11	3	14	8
Level 1	17	5	22	3
Level 2	16	5	21	
Level 3	22	1	23	14
GCSE	2	0	2	
ESOL	2	1	3	1
TOTAL	70	15	85	26
	82.35%	17.64%	100%	

- 15.5. Early identification of the most vulnerable young people in years 10 and 11 at transition, based on indicators such as attendance, exclusion, SEN, engagement, and stability has contributed to fewer young people not in education employment and training (NEET), as seen in Table 1 below. As of April 2020, of the 88 young people in care in year 11 resident in Hampshire, 74 had applied for colleges and another 12 planned to access a training provider or

apprenticeship and only two were still undecided or refusing post 16 offers. The Virtual College has established through experience that a high number of interactions is needed with most vulnerable young people in care, before a situation is resolved and moves forward. The work therefore involves several bespoke interventions on an individual basis and is dependent on the quality of relationships, keeping in touch regularly, participation in year 11 PEPs, providing careers advice, progression coaching and linking with post 16 EET (Education, Employment and Training) providers. During the Covid-19 period, the Virtual College has provided support virtually to young people in care to Hampshire, both in and out of county.

- 15.6. There are effective and robust tracking and monitoring systems for the Hampshire cohort, capturing information on engagement, EET status and participation on a monthly basis. This ensures that no young person is missed out and early college leavers are engaged as early as possible.
- 15.7. Throughout the period January 2019 to January 2020 the level of activity undertaken by the Virtual College was as follows:
- 605 young people have received Virtual College support
 - 7,719 interactions have taken place with young people and/or their related professionals.
 - Most significant interactions include guidance interview and professional contacts. Professional contacts include involvement in looked after reviews, personal education plans, pathway plans, EHCPs, contact with social workers and personal advisers. The level of significant interaction activity highlights a) professional relationships and networks between Virtual College and other stakeholders have been consolidated and developed further; b) the nature of Virtual College work requires a high number of interactions before a young person's situation can be resolved or moved forward.
 - 683 - Guidance (interviews)
 - 4583 - Professional contact
- 15.8. Young people in England are required to participate in formal education or training until their 18th birthday, under 'Raising of the Participation Age' (RPA) legislation. Therefore, every young person in the Hampshire Virtual College cohort must have an appropriate offer of education or training. Hampshire County Council has a statutory duty to support young people aged 16 and 17 (and up to 25 for those with Special Educational Needs) to participate in education, and is held to account by the DfE for its performance against this duty on the basis of data collected as part of the September Guarantee (a statutory entitlement to a place of learning for all 16 and 17 year olds), the proportion of young people in education, employment and training (EET) or not (NEET) and the proportion of young people whose activity is unknown. Hampshire Futures delivers the council's RPA statutory duty, including for children in care, as part of the key work of the Virtual College. In 2019, 100% of young people in Virtual College had a positive September Guarantee.

15.9. The proportion of Hampshire young people within the Virtual College cohort who are not in education, employment or training is significantly lower than national average for 16–17-year-old care leavers which was 23.9% in December 2019.

Table 1 2019/2020 destination breakdown by age. Source: Annual average NCCIS monthly DfE data returns							
	EET	EET %	NEET	NEET %	Unknown	Unknown %	Total
Year 12	88	91.7%	7	7.3%	1	1%	96
Year 13	83	83.8%	15	15.2%	1	1%	99
Year 12 & 13 combined	171	87.7%	22	11.3%	2	1.0%	195

15.10. Table 1 illustrates the impact of intensive support and tracking of young people's activity provided by the Virtual College which has resulted in low levels of unknown activity. The level of unknown activity for young people in the Virtual College cohort is consistently lower than the wider Hampshire year 12 and 13 Cohort (2% in March 2020). The rate of participation in EET for young people within the Virtual College cohort is higher in year 12 compared with those in year 13. This trend is mirrored across the wider Hampshire year 12 and 13 cohorts.

Table 2 compares the Virtual College destination data Feb 2019 – 2020. Source: NCCIS Monthly DfE data returns							
	EET	EET %	NEET	NEET %	Unknown	Unknown %	Total
Feb 2019 Cohort	196	85.5%	30	13.1%	3	1.3%	229
Feb 2020 Cohort	171	87.7%	22	11.3%	2	1.0	195

15.11. Table 2 shows the impact of the Virtual College upon rates of participation, NEET and unknown activity. Rates of participation in EET increased from 85.5% in 2019 to 87.7% in 2020. The proportion of young people within the Virtual College cohort who were not in education, employment and training decreased from 13.1% in 2019 to 11.3% in 2020. Rates of unknown activity also decreased between 2019 and 2020.

15.12. The Virtual School collects an update from Hampshire and neighbouring local authority colleges annually around their specific offer for children in care, so this is visible to young people and their carers as they make their post 16 choices. The 2021 edition of 'What's Next' is now available online <http://documents.hants.gov.uk/cic-virtual-college/cic-virtual-college-what-next.pdf>

16. Children with SEN

- 16.1. The Virtual School works closely, and effectively, with Hampshire's SEN team and communicates at an early stage around any changes which may impact on a child or young person's education.
- 16.2. In the academic year 2019-2020, of the overall cohort of 1205 children in care, 19.7 % (237 children) had a current Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and 8 (0.7%) had a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Forty-five children had been the subject of a request or were currently being assessed or awaiting their plans to be finalised (4.4%). There were 915 children (75.9%) with no EHCP.

17. Previously looked after children (PLAC)

- 17.1. Previously looked after children are those who are no longer looked after by a local authority in England because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship (SGO) or child arrangement (CAO) order.
- 17.2. DfE statutory guidance requires Virtual Schools to promote the educational achievement of this group of children by providing advice and guidance to those with parental responsibility as well as to schools and services as part of their statutory duty. The DfE provides a time limited grant to support this work and our activities have focused on building capacity and developing an information and resource base which will be sustainable once the funding has ceased.
- 17.3. In Hampshire, the grant has been used to fund a specialist Education Officer focusing on previously looked after children. The post holder has built a wide network of local and regional partners, including Adopt South, and has successfully developed the offer to schools and parents jointly across the region.
- 17.4. To meet the requirements of the statutory duty, the Virtual School conducted a survey with adoptive parents and guardians across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight in March 2019 which generated 356 individual responses and 284 fully completed surveys. Findings have informed the work of the Virtual School and Education Officer in this area and have been shared widely. They can be viewed here. <http://documents.hants.gov.uk/cic-virtual-college/report-results-plac-survey-2019.pdf>
- 17.5. As a result of the survey, the Virtual School hosted a conference (December 2019) attended by around 80 adoptive parents, guardians, foster carers and connected carers focusing on therapeutic parenting. This success was built upon in 2020 through a webinar hosted by Sarah Naish, adoptive parent, and founder of NATP (National Association of Therapeutic Parenting). The webinar welcomed delegates from across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.
- 17.6. Feedback from this conference was overwhelmingly positive with one delegate stating '*I feel like I have finally found something that will help me to help these children and meet their needs*'.
- 17.7. Whilst there is no requirement, or capacity, to provide direct casework, inevitably this has been part of the work, with the post holder supporting a range of queries from parents expressing concerns around individual children, and has proactively signposted them to appropriate services, such as SEN, school transport and the Inclusion Support Service. These queries have also helped shape the resources and information that are being offered centrally to parents via the Virtual School

website and Moodle. This has contributed to a constant flow of information and helped to reduce frustration whilst parents seek the help they need for their children.

18. Attendance

18.1. Attendance reporting was formally suspended by the DfE during the first national lockdown in March 2020. The Virtual School continued to monitor our children in care's attendance during this period. We also collaborated with social care and school-based colleagues to ensure children were accessing school provision where appropriate. The DfE published updated attendance codes to allow for accurate accounting during periods of both bubble and school closures.

18.2. The table below reflects our attendance data for children in care across the last three academic years, 2018 – 2020

	2020		2019		2018	
Present Category	Number of Pupils	% of Pupils	Number of Pupils	% of Pupils	Number of Pupils	% of Pupils
100% Present	136	15.5%	99	11.8%	61	7.7%
95% and above	577	65.6%	579	69.2%	542	68.7%
90% and above	688	78.3%	668	79.8%	635	80.5%
less than 90% Present	183	20.8%	163	19.5%	144	18.3%
Unknown / Not Recorded	8	0.9%	6	0.7%	10	1.3%
Grand Total	879	100.0%	837	100.0%	789	100.0%

18.3. The attendance data included in the above table relates only to pupils who have been in care for at least 12 months as of 31st March 2020. It is pleasing that the percentage of children in this cohort who have achieved 100% attendance has increased from 11.8% to 15.5% which represents 37 more children than the previous year.

18.4. There has however been a slight decrease in the percentage of children achieving over 95% this year (65.6% currently and was 69.2% in 2019). The percentage figure for those persistently absent (attending less than 90%) has also increased slightly (to 20.8% from 19.5% in 2019). There has also been a slight increase in those children with less than 90% attendance (20.8% currently from 19.5% in 2019).

18.5. During the lockdown, attendance was monitored closely to ensure children in care were accessing school provision where possible. Risk assessments were completed by social workers to identify the reasons why a child may or may not be accessing school provision. The attendance of children in care at school slowly rose week on week from March 2020 to July 2020. By the end of summer term, 69% of children in care were attending school in Hampshire and 28% of the children placed and educated out of county. The remaining children in care were educated remotely

during this period with schools ensuring they had access to appropriate learning and resources at home.

- 18.6. The Virtual School will continue to monitor attendance carefully to ensure that we target children and young people who are at risk of persistence absence. This is especially important in the context of supporting our most vulnerable students to transition back into school following the challenges of Covid-19

19. Exclusion

- 19.1. No Hampshire child in care was permanently excluded in 2019 – 20 whilst in care.
- 19.2. During the academic year 2019-20, exclusions were monitored by the Virtual School. 188 young people were subject to exclusion, of which 107 were in the OC2 cohort and in care at the time of the exclusion.
- 19.3. The majority of exclusions were for secondary age pupils who were subject to exclusion for one day or less. Of the total 482 instances of exclusion, 300 were for one day or less (62.2%) and 38 instances (7.9%) were for five days or more.
- 19.4. For the OC2 cohort, there were 247 instances of exclusion, 141 were for one day or less (57.08%) and 18 instances (7.28%) were for five days or more. This would suggest that our work with designated teachers and schools is able to be impactful for children who remain in care for a longer period and reflects the increased risk of trauma on behaviour and engagement experienced by children new to care.

20. The Virtual School's approach to improving educational outcomes

- 20.1. During 2021-22 and beyond, the Hampshire Virtual School and College will consolidate its approach as an 'all through' integrated service with a view to ensuring consistency of approach and promoting collaborative working to improve educational experiences and outcomes. Priorities are summarised below but captured in more detail within the service plan:
- 20.2. **Raising awareness of corporate parent duty:** The Virtual School will continue to work with a range of teams and services to explore what good corporate parenting looks like in different contexts, raising awareness, developing the evidence base of good practice, and developing increased accountability around the statutory duty, so children in care are consistently prioritised.
- 20.3. **High quality training and development in relation to designated teachers for children in care:** The quality of bespoke training and support for designated teachers in their statutory role has contributed significantly to the capacity and expertise that exists in our schools in meeting the needs of care experienced children. This core element of the Virtual School's work has featured strongly in recent inspections. Our training offer is wide, from core training using the Hampshire PEP Toolkit, to our Attachment and Trauma Aware Schools and Settings (ATAS) programme, which is being evaluated by the Rees Centre at Oxford University. Designated teachers with Hampshire children on their school roll are senior leaders, in line with DfE statutory guidance. The emphasis going forward is on designated teachers disseminating their knowledge and expertise widely within their school community through training, development, and peer

support. It is expected that approaches, such as emotional coaching will be shared with key members of staff to promote a whole school ethos. As a result, designated teachers can influence what happens in the classroom in real time, supporting colleagues to co-regulate with children who struggle with their emotions, which may de-escalate situations which could result in sanctions, such as a fixed-term exclusion. We will continue to develop our virtual offer to designated teachers and widen use of the Virtual School Moodle.

- 20.4. **Training and support for foster carers:** The Virtual School is collaborating with colleagues across Hampshire to develop our online training offer for foster carers. Guidance and support are offered on a bespoke basis at present as face-to-face training was suspended due to Covid 19.
- 20.5. **Early Years:** The partnership with the Advisory Teacher Team within the Early Years Advisory Team (EYAT) has been strengthened, resulting in a joint approach, targeting intervention at those children most vulnerable at point of transition into year R. The focus this year will be to continue to increase the number of children securing a Good Level of Development (GLD) according to teacher assessment. This data will not be formally reported for 20/21. A specific training course for teachers of Year R children will run online in 2021. We hope this will build professional knowledge across settings and schools, around the impact of attachment and trauma on our youngest children and how to best meet their development needs.
- 20.6. **Key stage 1:** Over the coming year, there will need to be an emphasis on mitigating the impact of Covid 19 in terms of addressing any gaps in the learning and identifying the emotional and developmental needs of the cohort. The Virtual School will draw particularly on the expertise of our EYAT colleagues to help develop approaches which support care experienced children back into school.
- 20.7. **Key stage 2:** Approaches outlined above will also extend to children in key stage 2. Whilst there will undoubtedly be negative impacts from Covid 19, there is also an opportunity to think creatively and build on the relationships developed during school closures.
- 20.8. **Key stage 4:** The Virtual School will continue to review the progress and outcomes of care experienced children in year 10 and 11. We are working closely with designated teachers and the SEN team to support our cohort; focusing on ensuring targets within PEPs are SMART and supported by bespoke intervention. We are working closely with the Virtual College to ensure post-16 routes are supported and encouraged for those young people at the end of key stage 4.
- 20.9. **Key Stage 5:** Together with the Virtual College, we will support foster carers and social workers to provide the right advice and guidance for young people in key stage 4 to succeed in their learning and beyond. This will include ensuring that each young person receives bespoke careers advice and guidance which is flexible enough to withstand unexpected changes in their circumstances.
- 20.10. **Maintaining school stability:** The Virtual School continues to work closely with social workers and their managers on maintaining school stability. Wherever possible and appropriate, children have continued at their school whilst care placement changes have taken place. This work is underpinned by the Virtual

School's protocol around school provision.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/virtual-school/guidance>

Conclusion

The Virtual School remains committed to removing the inequality in educational outcomes between children in care and the wider population of children. This means working in partnership with the whole system for children across schools, education and inclusion and social care, returning constantly to the question for us as corporate parents – ‘*Would this be good enough for my child?*’

Appendix 1

Covid specific activity and resources:

- Lockdown Challenge 2020
- Learning at home guide – attached
- Transition guide – attached
- Training for new designated teachers https://youtu.be/OzK_Tthm_cw

- Transition following Covid-19 <https://youtu.be/bgbmwcNbO6Y>
- Transition back to school after Covid-19 <https://cscommunications.hants.gov.uk/schoolcommunications/details.php?ref=17818>

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NHS Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	21 October 2021
Title:	Review Health Assessment Backlog Update
Report From:	Dr Melissa Phillips (Designated Doctor for Looked After Children) and Siobhan West (Designated Nurse for Looked After Children)

Contact name: Siobhan West

Tel: 07876 002173 **Email:** Siobhan.west@nhs.net

1. Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Corporate Parenting Board as to the current discussions taking place in relation to addressing the identified statutory health assessment backlog for Looked After Children in Hampshire.

2. Recommendations

For the Corporate Parenting Board to continue to support the current plans in place and joint working with Health and Social Care

3. Executive Summary

In Hampshire, the county council and health partners have always prioritised the health of children in care and care leavers, have sought to support children, and have worked jointly to improve health assessments. However, during Ofsted's inspection in April 2019, timely completion of health assessments was an area acknowledged as requiring improvement. A virtual rapid improvement event, attended by multi-agency partners, was held in September 2020 and identified a series of areas for improvement (not unique to Hampshire), including:

- Management information available to understand the precise status of all health assessments
- Activity to promote understanding of the value and importance of health assessments, and therefore engagement with the process
- Complexity of processes which include multiple workers and agencies
- Capacity to meet demand

Local authority and health colleagues have since developed a joint project tracker to monitor the progress of the work streams identified as part of the rapid improvement event. The CCG team have also developed an internal improvement

plan to ensure that actions specific to health (both identified during the rapid improvement event and other separate issues) are monitored and shared with senior colleagues. The Associate Director for Safeguarding is aware of these project/action trackers and has supported the team in escalating them to Chief Nurse level.

The rapid improvement event identified a significant back log of statutory health assessments for looked after children. Local authority and health partners have been meeting regularly to collaboratively discuss plans to address this backlog, as well as working to ensure that this issue is avoided in the future.

In July 2021, an options paper to address the backlog was shared with the CCG health safeguarding and LAC Committee. A number of potential solutions may be suitable pending confirmed data relating to the number and type of assessments that are overdue.

In order to ensure clinical safety and to manage risk within the backlog cohort, a prioritisation document is being developed by the CCG team. The last care plans of 20 children have been provided by Local Authority colleagues in order to inform this tool. The first priority groups had originally been identified as those children and young people in care who are under 5 years of age and over 17 years of age (totalling 62 children/young people). The prioritisation tool may alter the original priority groups as in order to safely manage the risk, the tool will look to practise based on clinical need rather than age alone. The tool will also help to inform whether the assessments must take place face to face, or if virtual assessments or health assessment questionnaires can be utilised. Additional administrative hours will be required in order to support this work and this will need to be jointly explored with health and local authority colleagues.

The CCG team continues to explore alternative options to support the backlog in the medium and long term, with a view to ensuring that a robust health offer exists for children in care within Hampshire. This includes strengthening and developing existing looked after children health provider service specifications, exploring potential investment opportunities that will support increased capacity, and working with Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton health colleagues to begin considering what a system wide looked after children's health offer may look like in the long term.

It is proposed that a further update should be given to the Corporate Parenting Board in January 2022.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- (a) why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or
- (b) will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	21 October 2021
Title:	Modernising Placements Programme
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Amber James

Tel: 07595 495728

Email: amber.james@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Corporate Parenting Board about the progress of the Modernising Placements Programme (MPP).

Recommendations

2. That the Board notes the progress of the programme.
3. That the Board notes the work proposed to expand the wider understanding of shared partnerships, companies, businesses and communities of children in care and the foster carer role, and considers the contribution that Councillors could make in this area.
4. That an update is provided to the Board in January 2022.

Executive Summary

5. This report seeks to provide the Board with an update on the progress on the key developments of the Modernising Placements Programme since corporate funding was agreed in February 2021 and describe the next steps in the timeline.

Contextual information

6. The Modernising Placements Programme was introduced to the Corporate Parenting Board in January 2021. It is part of the transformation journey for

Children's social care, building on and complementing the work completed in Transforming Social Care.

7. The following issues that MPP has been structured to focus on are:
 - Meeting the care needs of children with complex needs.
 - Increasing the number of Hampshire County Council foster carers.
 - Increasing the number of children placed in our residential children's homes.
 - The need to make improvements for staff recruitment and retention in our residential homes.
 - Improving placement stability.
 - Responding to the needs of children who require urgent placements.
8. Corporate funding was approved by Cabinet in February 2021 with funding secured against the MPP business case.
9. Since this approval, work has focussed on progressing the new developments which has included recruitment to roles and further detailed planning.
10. **The Hampshire Hives**



MPP has developed a support network for HCC fostering families that is based around an extended family model for children in care. The aim of the fostering network is to increase the support available to foster carers resulting in increased placement stability, and an increase in foster carers' confidence to support children.

This model has been developed with the support of Hampshire foster carers and brings together 6 – 8 fostering households offering mutual support in a natural extended family environment. Each Hive of fostering families is supported by a Hive Carer Support Worker (an experienced foster carer) who in conjunction with support from the fostering service social workers, provides coaching, training, social events, flexible telephone support and sleepovers.

Six Hive Carer Support Workers were recruited in April 2021 and cohort one of the Hives was launched in May. These are current foster carers with significant experience who have been employed alongside their fostering role. Supporting Hive Carer Support Workers are Hive Link Carers who are available for sleepovers and day care.

The six Hives are currently supporting 80 children in care, 56 fostering families and 23 birth children of foster carers. The Hive Carer Support Workers have been providing a high level of 1:1 support and feedback is overwhelmingly positive. The Hives are also attracting interest for prospective foster carers wanting to foster for Hampshire so to date the objectives that the Hives set out to achieve, are being met.

In response to this success and need from prospective foster carers in assessment, two additional Hives have been agreed in year. Cohort 2 of a further 4 Hives will commence shortly also with the aim of these being in place for April 2022.

11. Paying Foster Carers

The processes we use to pay foster carers have been reviewed following foster carer feedback. Foster carers now have access to an online form which they can submit reducing delay that was sometimes experienced through the previous paper-based system. Feedback has been positive from foster carers.

The skills criteria that are applied to the payment that a foster carer receives in addition to the fostering allowance for the child is being reviewed currently to ensure that foster carers are rewarded for the skills, knowledge, and experience that they have in caring for Hampshire's children. Foster carers will be invited to give their views on this, and it is anticipated that this will be in place before the end of the calendar year.

12. Training Pathway

The foster carer training pathway has been revised and refreshed. Hampshire Approach training will shortly be rolled out to all foster carers. The training pathway has identified and made available shared learning with children's home staff that will bring benefits to all.

13. Foster Carer Approvals

The marketing strategy has been updated and developed using the learning from the discovery phase of the programme. Significant work has been carried out by the Fostering Recruitment and Assessment Team to streamline their processes and ensure that the customer experience they offer is high quality and engaging. A recent mystery shopper survey which was undertaken as part of the South East Sector Led Improvement Partnership (SESLIP) with a group of south east local authority fostering services, judged Hampshire to be the top performing authority.

The Fostering Recruitment and Assessment Team has received additional investment to bring additional roles and skills including a dedicated Head of Service for two years to establish new approaches and developments to support the required increased recruitment of new foster carers. The new Head of Service started in role on 9 August 2021.

One focus of the work will be on expanding our reach internally through Hampshire County Council and our shared partnerships, with companies and businesses and in the community to expand understanding of the needs of children in care, the role of foster carers and how businesses can support Hampshire Fostering Children and contribute to their corporate social responsibilities.

Corporate Parenting Board are asked to consider what contribution and impact they can make to this area of work?

14. The Psychological Service and Trauma Informed Approach

A new psychological service, led by a clinical psychologist, will enhance how looked after children are parented by foster carers and residential care staff. It will support the implementation of trauma informed and therapeutically minded parenting and will provide a consultation service to those involved in caring for children. This will lead to an increase in staff and carers' resilience, confidence and capability to support children with more challenging behaviour.

We want the Lead Clinical Psychologist to design, deliver and embed Trauma informed parenting across Children's Services and develop the consultation approach. We were unsuccessful in recruiting to this role in the first two rounds of interviews but are working with our partners in Health to progress this. In the meantime, we are looking to recruit to a Psychologist role and a Mental Health Coordinator for our residential service (including Urgent Care as described in the next paragraph). The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is supporting this service financially and also through clinical supervision arrangements.

15. Urgent Care Service

The Urgent Care Service has been designed to support young people with very complex needs. The service will deliver urgent care in the form of a 12-week assessment placement, repurposing a Hampshire children's home, seeking to stabilise children through providing the opportunity to effectively assess their needs and plan a move to a permanent placement. This will be a multi-agency resource. The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has agreed funding to embed practitioners from Health disciplines into the home. Police have been very positive with a clear commitment to support the development and educational pathways will also be established to ensure that children in the home have access to meaningful educational activities.

Recruitment continues to fill the additional roles that the service has created. The service needs to be registered with Ofsted before it can go live as the purpose it will be used for differs from the current registration.

16. Extended Care Service

Extended Care will be delivered as an outreach service which will support the transition for children living in the Urgent Care setting to a permanent placement - including transition back to family (where appropriate) and time-unlimited support to prevent the placement breaking down.

The Extended Care Service will also provide support to HCC's other children's homes to prevent placements breaking down, and transition to fostering or supporting living placements where appropriate.

A Deputy Manager and the first Extended Care Worker for the service have been appointed. The focus of the work will begin within our existing children's homes.

17. Voice of the Child

The views of children are paramount to the development of the services we are creating and in determining further work that needs to be undertaken. A survey was co-produced with children aged 14 to 20 years who have experience of being in care to understand what is important to them. This survey was live between 26 April and 31 May 2021 and was sent out to all social workers and foster carers to encourage completion, also supported by the Independent Reviewing Service.

68 responses were received, 18 from children aged 4 to 7 years and 50 from children aged 8 to 18 years.

The key findings from the survey were:

- Most children in care see their social worker often enough with a preference for face-to-face meetings.
- Children want to understand why they are in care and to be told the truth, using language they can understand.
- Most children wanted the place where they live to stay the same. When things change, such as moving home or changing school, children would like to have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the new setting before the move happens.
- Children experience a range of negative and positive emotions when coming into care. Just over half received an explanation of why they were coming into care and most of them could understand this information.
- Children aged 16 and over had mixed feelings about moving out of care and living independently, with some feeling that they had sufficient support and some who felt they hadn't.

These findings are now being shared with senior managers and every team to agree the actions that we will take. A letter has been sent to children thanking them for their response and advising them of the next steps. When actions

are agreed, these will also be shared with the children as well as communicated more widely.

18. Voice of the Family

In addition to the views of children, the discovery phase of the programme found little research of what is important to families when their children are in care. The Modernising Placements Programme commissioned research through The Rees Centre, University of Oxford, to undertake a literature review and then engage families of children in Hampshire's care in interviews to understand Hampshire's current practice and support future developments. Interviews were undertaken in July and August 2021 with 17 parents of 16 families. The researchers have advised that some valuable information has been gained for Hampshire within these interviews.

This information is now being analysed with a report anticipated in October 2021.

Finance

19. A business case was approved by Cabinet in February 2021 for the work of the Modernising Placements Programme.
20. Additional funding is also available through the DfE Partners in Practice Understanding Excellence grant.

Performance

21. A full set of key performance indicators have been established to measure each aspect of the programme. These are being monitored and reviewed with the support of a dashboard. Governance is through the monthly MPP Steering Group, Children & Families Management Team, the Children & Families Departmental Management Team (CSDMT) and the Children & Families financial resilience meetings.

Consultation and Equalities

22. *No consultation has been required for the developments to date.*

Conclusions

23. The Modernising Placements Programme is a substantial three year transformation programme of change building on positive changes already achieved and embedded through the Hampshire Approach and is based on

evidence and research. Its aim is to improve the choice and sufficiency of placements available to children in Hampshire's care through increasing the capability and skills of staff and carers, thus creating better stability and outcomes locally.

24. Following the approval of funding, progress has been made to take forward the new service developments with the launch of the Hampshire Hive and significant recruitment activity in the other areas. The voice of children in care is informing the work both of the programme and wider Children & Families work and analysis of families' voices should be available in October.
25. It is recommended that a further update is provided to the Board in January 2022.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

0. Equality Duty

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- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

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- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <http://intranet.hants.gov.uk/equality/equality-assessments.htm>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

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- (b) will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions

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Corporate Parenting Board

Modernising Placements Programme Update

21 October 2021

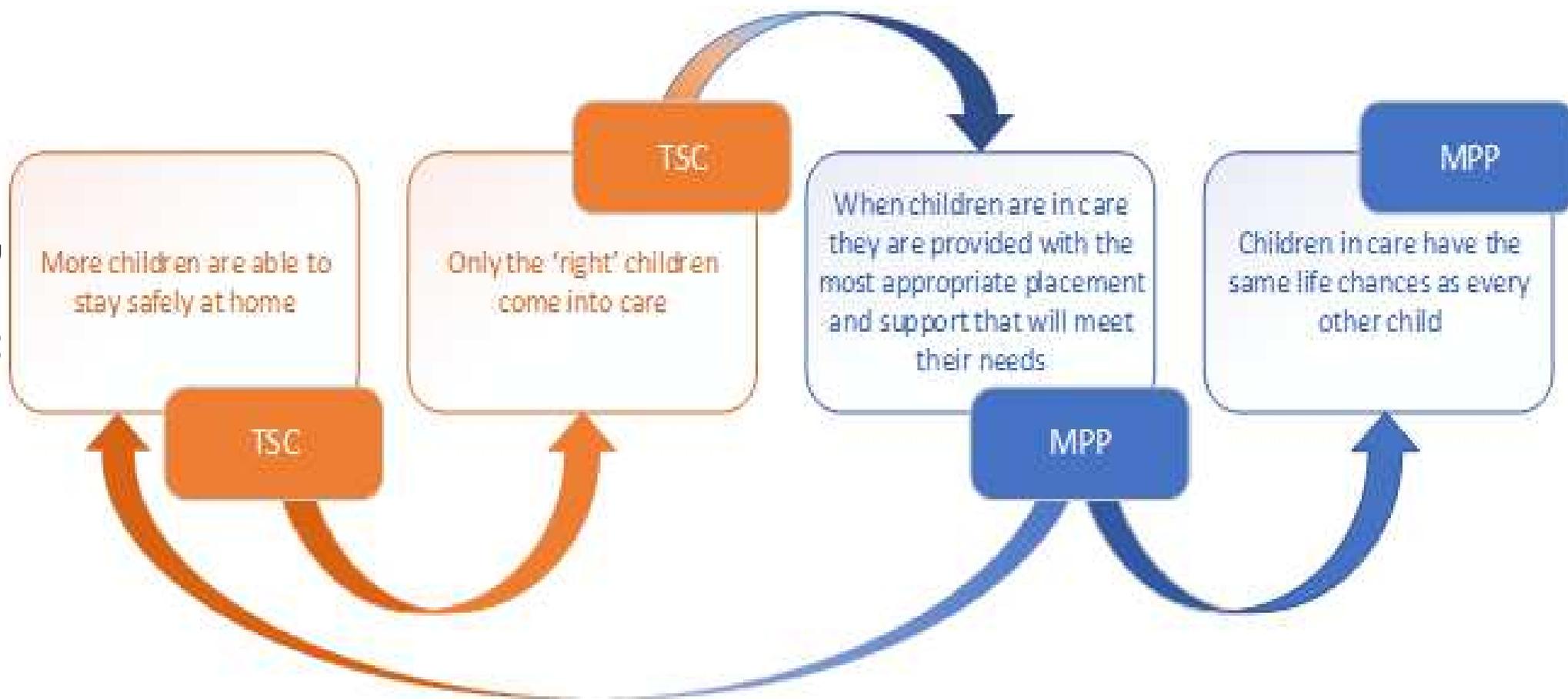
Steph How – Strategic Programme Lead

Stuart Ashley – Deputy Director, Children and Families

**MODERNISING
PLACEMENTS
PROGRAMME**



- Context of the Modernising Placements Programme (MPP)
- The Hampshire Hives
- Payments to foster carers
- Training pathways for foster carers
- Foster carer recruitment
- The Psychological Service and Trauma Informed Approach
- Urgent Care Service
- Extended Care Service
- Voice of the Child
- 0. Voice of the Family
- 1. Recommendations



The aim of the Modernising Placements Programme is to develop a continuum of care which can provide the right accommodation and support at the right time for our children in care in Hampshire.

Our children in care need:

Us all to understand how to support them with the trauma they have experienced to achieve their best life chances

More Hampshire foster carers so they can stay local to friends and family and still attend their school

Hampshire children's homes to offer the full number of beds that they have so they can stay local to family and friends and still attend school

Us all to work together for them, valuing every person who is involved with them equally for the skills and experience they bring

Us to invest in our foster carers and all staff to be the best they can in supporting, nurturing and caring about them. They need foster carers and children's homes staff to be supported by everyone around them so they can stay living in their home for as long as they need it

Us to do everything we can to support them in overcoming adversity and having the same opportunities for positive health, wellbeing and lifestyle as children who are not in care

Us to have settings available where staff and the environment keep them safe when this is at short notice and they are experiencing immediate distress

Us to put their needs first when making decisions about where they live

Hampshire Hives

fundamental elements that the Hampshire Hives will
provide are:

To facilitate regular support groups and social activities for Foster Carers in the Hive.

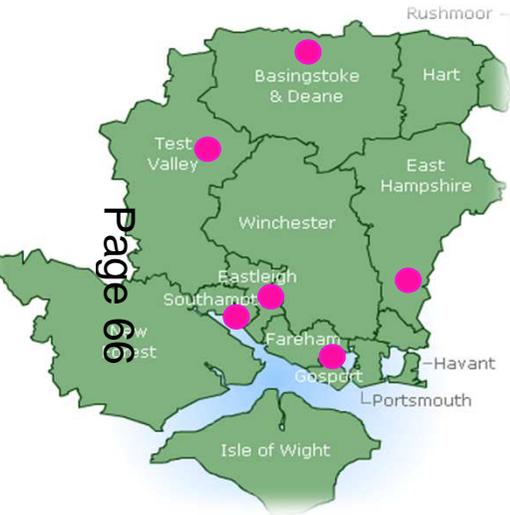
To provide flexible day care and sleepovers to children in placement for Foster Carers in the Hive.

To offer needs led, one to one support and advice in a befriending/mentoring capacity to Foster Carers in the Hive.

To work alongside a range of professionals in supporting the child/ren in placement with Foster Carers in the Hive.

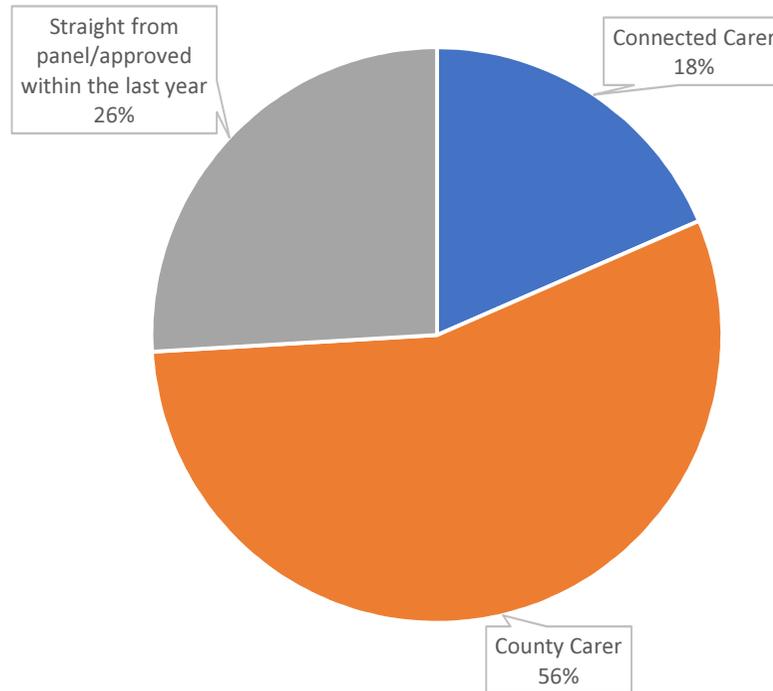


Locations of the 6 Hives

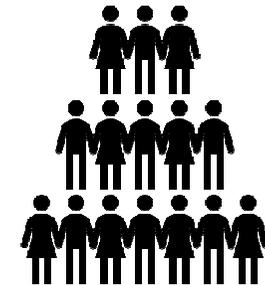


- 📍 Basingstoke
- 📍 Andover
- 📍 Waterlooville
- 📍 Eastleigh
- 📍 Bitterne/ Hedge End, Southampton
- 📍 Gosport

Composition of the Hives



The Hampshire Hive is currently supporting...



- 80 Children in Care
- 100 Foster carers / 56 Fostering families
- 23 Birth children (13 under the age of 12)

Achievements of the Hive

Success	Evidence
Hives are in high demand	The Hampshire Hive has been positively received by key stakeholders. We only have 4 spaces remaining across the Hives. We currently have 26 fostering families on our waiting list who wish to join a Hive, but are unable to due to lack of availability in the area. 9 of these carers are IFA transfers.
Success in providing foster families with needs led support	The HCSWs have been providing a high level of 1:1 support to their Hive families as a listening ear but also for general advice. Foster families report a high level of satisfaction with this unique support. HCSWs and HLCs are working well together , proactively identifying and organising sleepovers and day care when the members of their Hive need it.
Success of HCSW role within fostering	There was unprecedented interest in the role ; a sign that we are valuing foster carer's skills. The HCSWs are highly motivated to support the wider fostering service and have been able to support in recruitment, other aspects of MPP and BAU fostering service development.
Foster Carer Retention	The Hive has seen only 1 foster carer of the 56 families in the Hives de-register in the first 3 months (April- June).
Placement stability	The Hive has seen 2 children's placements end due to the foster carer giving notice, amongst a total of 78 Children in Care in the 6 Hives.
Improved Foster Carer and children's well-being	Foster Families and children they care for are reporting that they are making lots of friends which they had not been able to do previously.
Successful Marketing Campaigns	These have raised awareness of the Hive and attracted interest in Fostering Hampshire Children. Hive Carer Support Workers have been writing a monthly blog for the Fostering Facebook site. Hampshire Hive promotional video has been recorded and will be a part of the next marketing campaign. A leaflet has been produced which can be used for prospective carers.
Attracting IFA foster carers to Hampshire	Since March 2021 we have had 9 transfer requests from IFA Foster Carers. Of these foster carers the support offered by the Hampshire Hive contributed to 3 carers decision to choosing Hampshire Fostering Children. These foster carers have moved to us from Blue Sky and are in the Waterlooville/Eastleigh/Southampton area, there may be further referrals from the same agency in the future.
Attracting Hampshire Children a coverage	A press release was sent out as part of fostering fortnight and was picked up by three local newspapers and two local radio stations.

Hampshire Hives and Foster Carers



“I was incredibly excited to join a Hive because for many years I have had an interest in The Mockingbird Project , particularly the extended family aspect. I followed children’s stories of how they had a sense of belonging, feeling special and surrounding them with safe adults and children with shared experience of not living with birth parents, thereby reducing their sense of bewilderment of being in the care system. I joined because I wanted any children who came to live with us to have this opportunity.” – Foster Carer

“My expectations have been surpassed because not only do my children feel all of the above but I have experienced a sense of contentment and reduced anxiety knowing that any issue or frustration that I would benefit from unloading will be met by friendly understanding ears.” – Foster Carer

“The Hive members have a wealth of fostering experience to draw from and it is great to know that they are out there. The peer to peer support is invaluable to me allowing me to step back from the issue and hear honest balanced information - and not letting things fester.” – Foster Carer

“I don’t think they have dwelled on the fact they are in care, just loving that sense of belonging and extended family which is precisely all I hoped for for these special young people.” – Foster Carer

“My hopes and expectations have been surpassed by this initiative.” – Foster Carer

“In one particular case, the input from the Hampshire Hive has prevented us from potentially losing a fostering family. Its input has given a young person the opportunity to stay at school until a suitable placement has been found.” –
Supervising Social Worker

“Our foster carer has felt supported and valued and I have built a good Hive relationship with her.” - Hive Carer Support Worker

"Since joining the Hive my optimism has raised. It has help me manage my fears and feelings around reunification. Since speaking to others, I have much more knowledge around the process of reunification which helps me to explain it to family members, so they also understand what is involved in the process."
– Foster Carer

Hampshire Hives and Children



“I have seen growing friendship groups formed amongst the younger children and a strong friendship between children in the Hive, with older kids have spent a lot of time in each other’s company over the summer holidays. Both children had no significant long-term friend in their life prior to the Hive and being looked after.”

“I have seen the sleep over facility stabilise a placement that was strained over the summer holidays.”

“Child D was all alone and had no access to children with similar stories due to living in a rural location. She has come along to multiple events and realised that she is not alone in being looked after or somehow different.”

Payments to foster carers

In the 2020 foster carer survey, 55% of respondents said they had experienced payment issues.

We have launched a new online claim form for claiming expenses. This has improved the timeliness of payments being received, and has removed a number of steps from the process by creating an electronic solution, removing the need for paper forms to be handed to supervising social workers.

We are starting a piece of work to look at our skills level criteria and appraisal processes to ensure that foster carers are rewarded and valued for the skills, knowledge and experience they have in caring for Hampshire's children in care. Foster carers will be invited to get involved and give their views on this piece of work. We hope that this will be completed by the end of the calendar year.



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We have reviewed our training pathway to be clearer about the training courses on offer and when they should be completed. We have broadened the training topics available to increase foster carers' confidence in managing complex issues, linking with some training that was already available to residential staff.



We have also created an electronic training brochure so that foster carers can view the training courses on offer, know how to book and where to access resources.



We have also rolled out Hampshire Approach training to further support how foster carers care for children in a strengths based way.



Last September, we introduced FosterTalk which provides 24 hour helplines, tax and accountancy advice, workshops, support groups and more.



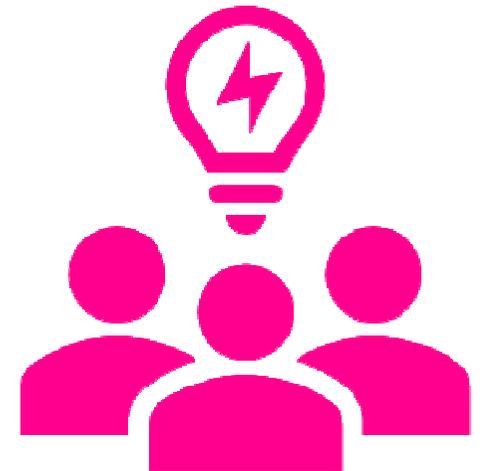
We will be introducing a new secure area for foster carers to access key policies, procedures and information



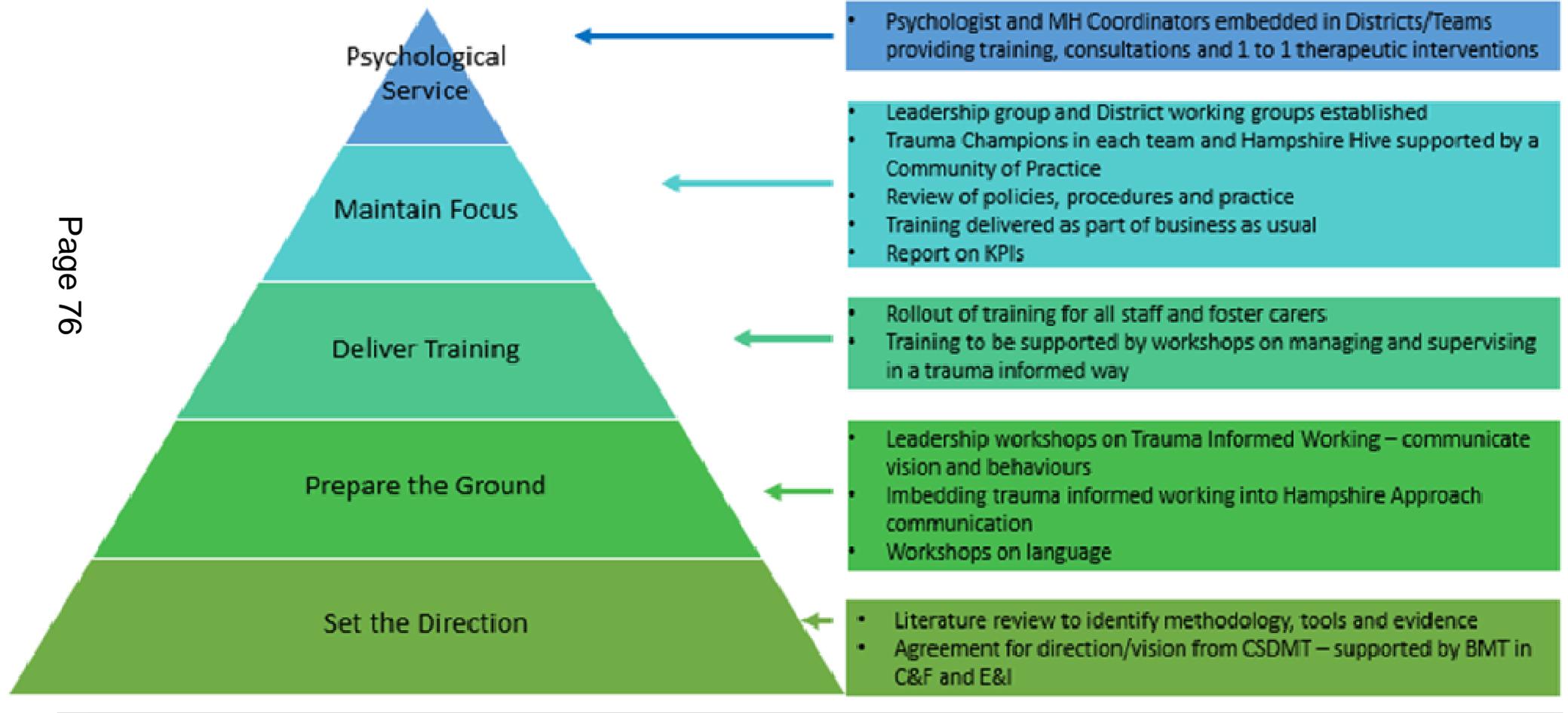
We need to grow the number of foster carers in Hampshire

We are doing this by:

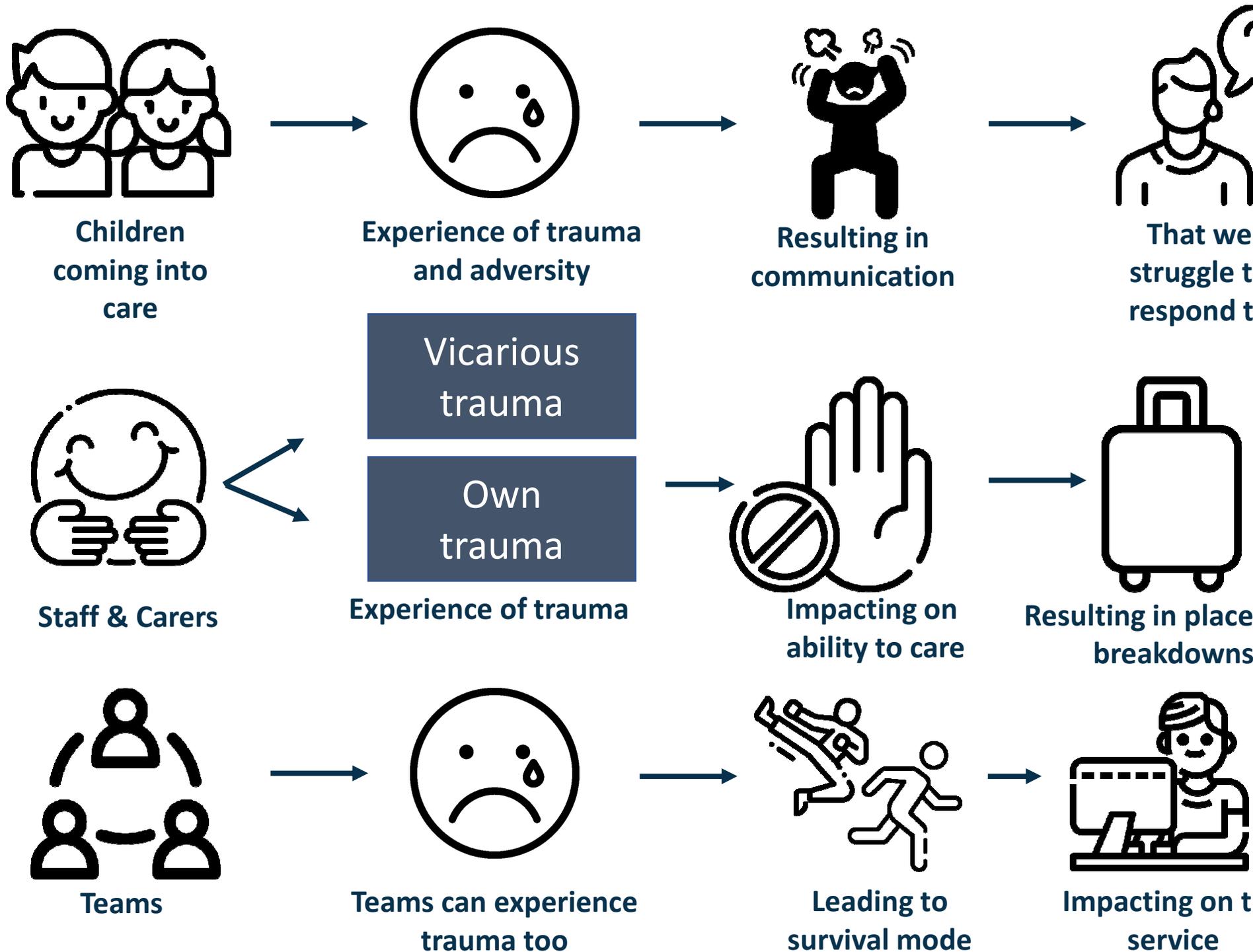
- Investing in and growing the team
- Increasing and targeting marketing
- Improving the journey for our prospective foster carers
- Creating partnerships within the Council, external companies and businesses, and communities
- Strengthening our training and support



What contribution and impact can the Corporate Parenting Board make to this area of work?



Why trauma formed working is important



ent Care Service

Children in short-term (or emergency) care settings where:

- i) We are unsure which care setting would best suit the child, and/or
- ii) The child requires urgent support to settle into a longer term care setting

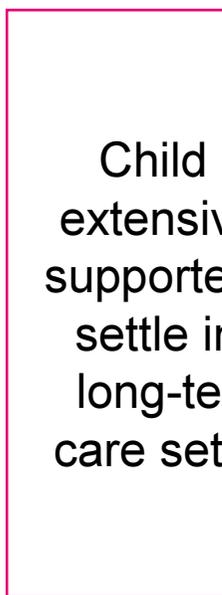
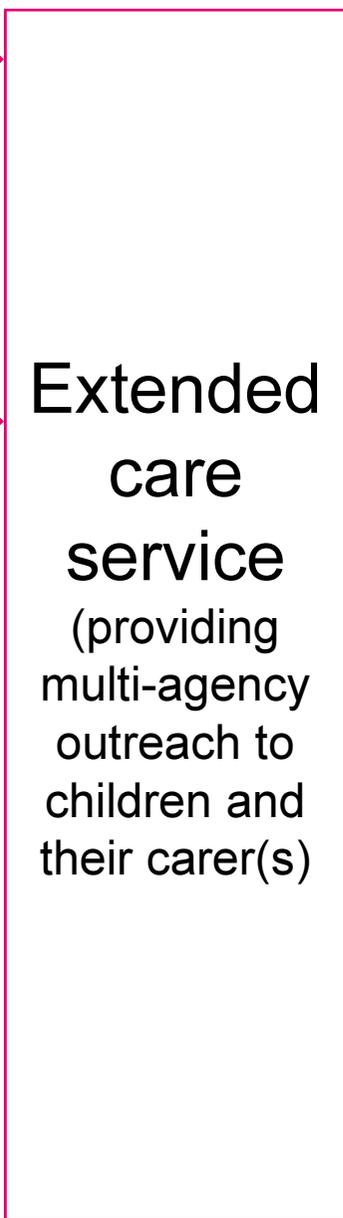
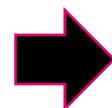
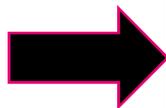
Children needing support to transition from secure settings



age 7-8

Children based in Hampshire residential care who:

- i) Require additional support to remain in current setting
- ii) Are moving care setting
- iii) Are leaving care
- iv) Are leaving a secure unit
- v) Young people (up to 19 years) who have left Hampshire residential care in the last year and require intensive support in their post-16 accommodation





Understanding the ‘voice of care experienced young people’ is integral to the work of the Modernising Placements Programme



We created a survey for young people who have experienced being in care to gain an insight into what is important about the care and support that they receive



The survey was co-designed and supported by Experts by Experience (EbEs) – young people aged 14 to 20 years old, from Hampshire who have experienced being in care



The survey ran for a five-week period between April and May 2021

68 responses were received:

- 18 from children aged 4 to 7
- 50 from children aged 8 to 18.

Key Findings

Most care experienced children see their social worker often enough.

There is a preference for face-to-face in-person meetings with social workers.



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Children and young people experience a range of both negative and positive emotions when coming in to care.

Just over half of respondents received an explanation of why they were going in to care and most of them could understand this information.

Over half of care experienced children and young people understand the information that is shared with them.

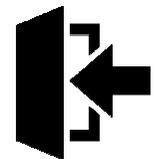
Care experienced children and young people want to understand why they are in care and be told the truth, using simple language.

Most respondents want the place where they live to stay the same, with school, friends and people they live with also featuring.

When things change in their lives (such as moving home or changing school), they would like to have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the new place before the move actually happens.

Respondents aged 16+ have mixed feelings about moving out of care and living independently, with some feeling that they have received sufficient support and some that they haven't.

Prior warning of the move into care, as well as consideration about the timing of the move and a full explanation of the reason would facilitate the move.



In addition to the views of children, the programme has commissioned The Rees Centre, University of Oxford, to undertake a literature review and interview families of children in Hampshire's care.

Interviews were undertaken in July and August 2021. 17 parents in 16 families were interviewed.

The results of these interviews are being analysed. The report should be available in October 2021 and will be used to inform future developments.

1. Corporate Parenting Board notes the progress of the programme.
2. The Board notes the work proposed to expand the wider understanding of shared partnerships, companies, businesses and communities of children in care and the foster carer role, and considers the contribution councillors can make.
3. That an update is provided to the Board in January 2022.