

Public Document Pack



NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting	Corporate Parenting Board
Date and Time	Tuesday, 28th March, 2023 at 10.00 am
Place	Ashburton Hall - HCC
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 and available for repeat viewing, it may also be recorded and filmed by the press and public. Filming or recording is only permitted in the meeting room whilst the meeting is taking place so must stop when the meeting is either adjourned or closed. Filming is not permitted elsewhere in the building at any time. 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 - 12)

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. FEEDBACK FROM OFSTED FOCUSED VISIT ON CHILDREN IN CARE

To receive a verbal update from the Deputy Director for Children's Services (Children and Families).

8. NATIONAL REVIEW - CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND COMPLEX HEALTH NEEDS PLACED IN RESIDENTIAL SETTINGS - SUMMARY REPORT (Pages 13 - 28)

To consider a report from the Director of Children's Services with oversight of the Hampshire response to a request from the Child Safeguarding Review Panel.

9. ANNUAL REPORT - CARE LEAVERS (Pages 29 - 46)

To receive an annual report of the Director of Children's Services on the activity of the Care Leavers Service from January 2022 to December 2022 inclusive.

10. CARE PLAN AUDIT AND IRS UPDATE (Pages 47 - 56)

To receive a presentation on the Care Plan Audit.

11. CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE IN CARE (Pages 57 - 62)

To receive a report of the Director of Children's Services to inform the Board about the provision of placements for children with disabilities who are in the care of the Local Authority.

12. UPDATE ON THE PARTICIPATION ACTION PLAN FOR 2023 (Pages 63 - 74)

To consider a report of the Director of Children's Services providing an update on Participation. The report also provides an update on the progress made against the Participation Strategy and plans for further developments in 2023.

13. HAMPSHIRE HIVES (Pages 75 - 88)

To receive a presentation from the Director of Children's Services about the Hampshire Hives – a review of the last months and future development.

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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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

AT A MEETING of the Corporate Parenting Board of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Wednesday, 7th December, 2022

Chairman:

* Councillor Ann Briggs

* Councillor Phil North
* Councillor Fran Carpenter
* Councillor Pal Hayre
* Councillor Juliet Henderson

* Councillor Wayne Irish
* Councillor Arun Mummalaneni
* Councillor Jacky Tustain
* Councillor Malcolm Wade

35. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

All Members were present and no apologies were noted. Cllrs Davies and Crawford were also in attendance.

36. **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 5 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.

No declarations were made.

37. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

38. **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations.

39. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman referred to a list of briefings that Hannah Leat had circulated and stressed how important it was that members of the Committee engage with these and with the HIVES as much as possible.

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

Cllr Carpenter reported that she had attended two Looked After Children reviews related to children in care preparing for independence and to leave care, which included an independent reviewing officers and social workers. Positive experiences were observed, with examples such as driving tests achieved.

She had also attended a Missing, Exploited, and Trafficked Children Team meeting which had a wide membership including headteachers, the Youth Offending Team, the Willow Team and Hampshire Constabulary. 18 cases had been discussed, including the following topics; county lines, theft, shoplifting, drug dealing, 'muling' and sexual exploitations.

Cllr Wade had also attended a Looked After Children review, which included mainstream activities and centred around an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Cllr Hayre had visited two Family Centres. She reported that whole families were involved and praised the contributions of the County Council staff.

Cllr Briggs had visited a centre for a reconciliation meeting. She reported that it was performed sensitively, with the use of an interpreter.

Cllr Crawford had received an invitation from Wellington Primary School. He had also taken the opportunity to promote the 'Open Your Door' campaign on social media.

41. **HAMPSHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER ANNUAL REPORT**

The Board received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the Virtual School's work and focus during the academic year 2020-2021.

The Board heard about:

- The role of the Virtual School Head, the statutory responsibilities and the collective responsibility to improve educational outcomes.
- The aspirations, including ensuring that teams can support children in school, improve stability and that all children attend a good or outstanding school.
- The priorities, which include provision of good advice and guidance to ensure children can progress into further education, employment and training.
- A policy document, published by the school, which makes the expectations and arrangements clear around Pupil Premium Plus funding for looked after children.

- Improvement, which had been seen and sustained in GCSE results for the children in care cohort.
- Absence rates, which were below the national average. No Hampshire child had been permanently excluded, but there had been 93 suspensions. The reduction in fixed term exclusions remains a key priority.
- All children in care should have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and the PEP audits had helped to drive improvement by looking at things such as whether the plans were suited to the child.
- An Education Plan for Adopted Children, which had been developed to ensure that requirements are embedded for previously looked after children.
- The Virtual College is well established and the percentage of looked after young people securing a place in post 16 education, employment or training is higher than that achieved nationally.

In response to questions from Members, the Board heard that:

- It is currently difficult to benchmark attainment and that the aim was to ensure all children were progressing well.
- Educational attainment can be dependent on how long a child has been looked after and that Hampshire fares well against other Authorities. Targets are difficult to set because of the varying number and needs of the children in the cohorts.
- The Virtual School headteacher and her team work with the Inclusion Support Service, Educational Psychology and are informed of any exclusions – they also continually monitor attendance to reduce fixed term exclusions.
- The PEP system is in the process of being reviewed to allow better auditing and monitoring.
- The drop in key stage 4 performance in 2019 was related to a change in the way exam results are published and graded. It is difficult to compare year on year results.

Resolved

The content of the report was noted and the Board noted the absence of formal assessment and use of other assessment methodologies in 2021 requires a qualitative approach to reporting.

42. **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN HEALTH ASSESSMENTS - UPDATE**

The Board received a presentation from the designated nurse for Looked After Children. She explained the Rapid Improvement Event that had taken place in October 2020, which identified a backlog of health assessments. A dataset had been provided by the Local Authority which helped identify the scale of the backlog and an improvement plan which has been established by the Integrated Care Board.

Members heard that:

- 386 children have outstanding initial health assessments (including refusals and those who live outside of the area).
- 323 children have outstanding Review Health Assessments (163 of these are out of the area).
- Actions have been taken to address the backlog, including; GP capacity being increased in the Hub, a referral pathway and the development of a contract has resulted in children now starting to be seen.

A joint review of looked after children health assessments found that a more consistent model was required with clarity on how the needs of the children are going to be met. Findings have been fed back to providers The next steps and future model were described to Members, including the national statutory responsibilities and guidance.

In response to a question from Members regarding timelines for clearing the backlog, it was confirmed that a contract would be in place in April 2023 and the backlog would be cleared by September 2023 and that expectations were written into the contract.

The Board wanted to feel confident that there is a solution, but warned about the lack of capacity of other partners such as CAMHS.

Resolved

The Corporate Parenting Board noted the content of the presentation.

43. **MODERNISING PLACEMENTS PROGRAMME**

The Board received a presentation from the Strategic/Operational Lead on the Modernising Placements Programme (MPP).

They heard that the programme sits under the wider transformation umbrella and looks at how 'we ensure that we only have the right children coming into care.'

Members heard that there are 10 issues that the MPP has been designed to address including:

- An increased number of children with complex needs who we are struggling to support
- Increased placement instability and in complex needs – how do we support children so they can stay with their foster carers?
- How do we focus on targeting people to become foster carers?

Key aims include:

- Increasing enquiries and conversion from enquiry to approval.
- To establish a community around foster carers. It has been agreed to grow and develop the Hive model which has been extremely successful.
- The Foster Carer Vacancy Management App, to allow foster carers to keep up to date.
- Ensuring foster carers feel valued and supported and they can be retained.
- Supporting foster carers out of hours.
- Reducing the amount spent on Independent Fostering Agencies.
- Ensuring carers have the training they need.

Resolved

The Board noted the content of the presentation.

44. **THE FAMILY CONNECTIONS SERVICE**

The Board received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services about the Family Connections Service and the work being done to keep children within their family networks, where possible.

Members heard:

That after a review of the connected carers assessment team, a single Family Connections Service was formed in 2021. This allowed the sharing of knowledge with a county wide team. Its role is to support children to stay with carers who are known to them and within their friends or family network.

- The difference between the Care Order and the Special Guardianship Order.
- About arrangements for the provision of special guardianship support services in their area to meet the needs of special guardianship carers.
- That a post has recently been recruited into to provide support required.

Resolved

The Corporate Parenting Board noted the update on the work of the Family Connections Service.

45. **MISSING, EXPLOITED AND TRAFFICKED UPDATE**

The Board received a presentation (agenda item 11 in the report pack) from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the Willow Team – making a difference.

The Board heard:

- About the current themes and risks, for example child sexual exploitation, County Lines and youth violence and how these are underpinned by trauma.
- How the Willow Team sits within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and has a wider link into the county, bringing insight from other areas, including Hampshire Constabulary, supporting communication and intelligence.
- That a specialist Police team works with the Willow team.
- 6,500 professionals have received training.
- More focus is planned on 'grooming' risk.
- There is a new process for National Referral Mechanisms (NRM).
- There is a plan to make more use of social media.

Superintendent Karen McManus (Hampshire Constabulary) reiterated the good joint working with daily meetings and that the Willow Team are always called upon when there are issues.

The Board thanked the officers for the work they were doing.

In response to Members' questions the Board heard that:

- Crimestoppers is the correct way to report crime in a non-emergency situation.
- The Police cannot always give specific feedback to residents, due to vulnerable nature of the children.
- Social media bullying and child suicide does not fall under the remit of the Willow Team.

Resolved

The Board noted the content of the presentation.

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	28 March 2023
Title:	National Review – Children with disabilities and complex health needs placed in residential settings – Summary Report
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Kieran Lyons, Area Director

Tel: 0370 779 1052

Email: Kieran.lyons@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to respond to a request from the Child Safeguarding Review Panel to the Director of Children's Services to review the placements of children in care placed in children's homes jointly registered with independent special schools.
2. This report provides a summary of the outcomes of that review.

Recommendation

3. That the contents of this report and the addendum report are noted by the Corporate Parenting Board.

Executive Summary

4. This report seeks to describe the request from Child Safeguarding Review Panel to the Director of Children's Services. This request had two actions:
 - a) A request to review the placements of Hampshire children placed in children's homes jointly registered with independent special schools. Ofsted later clarified that this relates to a total of fifty-nine schools. Hampshire had fourteen children placed in eight of those schools.

- b) A request that the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) reviews all information about those settings recorded by the LADO over the last three years and ensures that robust action was taken and all relevant LA's were contacted where necessary.
5. In regard to the first action, whilst Hampshire had fourteen children placed in eight such jointly registered children's homes and schools, it was decided to review a wider cohort of children who were placed in registered children's homes attached to and attending independent special schools despite not having joint registration.
6. This equated to 21 children and reviews were undertaken of all of those children. The reviews consisted of gathering evidence from visits, contact with parents and carers and information gathering from Independent Reviewing Officers, Special Educational Needs Officers, Commissioners and our existing records.
7. No serious or significant concerns were identified for any of the children reviewed and whilst there were a few actions from reviews needed following up and concerns raised by Ofsted inspections that required investigation these were minor and within the parameters of what you would expect in such review.
8. The one exception to this was Purbeck View School which currently has an "inadequate" Ofsted grading and the Hampshire children placed there were and are already under significant scrutiny by Hampshire Children's Services. This review did not raise any further concerns or issues to those already known about and being actively managed.
9. Regarding the second action relating to the LADO, an initial trawl of the records identified 134 allegations and 307 advice and concern cases. This volume of work required the recruitment of two temporary LADO's to effectively undertake this task and whilst it is underway and no concerns have currently been identified, it is unlikely it will be completed until the end of December. A further update will be provided to the National Panel and Ofsted when this has concluded.
10. Hampshire County Council has a robust and comprehensive approach to quality assurance of both the children's homes and schools where Hampshire children are placed and those where we do not have children placed but that operate within the Hampshire boundary. This process has informed and improved some of those processes even further and contributed to our journey of continuous improvement.

Contextual information

Introduction

11. On 23 August 2022, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel wrote to all Directors of Children's Services (DCSs) asking them to undertake two urgent actions arising from their national review into safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings.
12. This letter required DCSs to undertake the following actions:

Urgent Action One

I. Directors of Children's Services to ensure that Quality and Safety Reviews are completed for all children with complex needs and disabilities currently living within placements with the same registrations (i.e., residential specialist schools registered as children's homes) to ensure they are in safe, quality placements. Please see Appendix A for a list of relevant points and questions to support these Reviews. These reviews can be incorporated into routine care review planning processes but should ensure that all the key points and questions identified in Appendix A are properly addressed. You will wish to ensure that the Reviews are carried out by and involve appropriate professionals. Reviews should apply to all children in such settings, that is those who are resident for part of the year as well as those who are resident for all of the year.

II. This action should be led and overseen by the placing (i.e., home) local authority DCS. If a Review identifies concerns about the conduct of a member of the workforce, the placing local authority may need to share the concerns with the host Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the threshold has been met.

III. DCSs are asked to provide an overview report on key findings and issues to both their local corporate parenting board and to local safeguarding partners, together with assurance that the Quality and Safety Reviews have been completed.

IV. DCSs are also asked to send a copy of this overview report on the Quality and Safety Reviews to the relevant DfE regional improvement support lead (RISL) (see Appendix B for a list). The Panel's national review has highlighted how information may be held locally but that it is also important to develop a fuller and more comprehensive picture of quality in these type of placements. This will also allow for regional and national assurance that these actions have been undertaken.

Urgent Action Two

In relation to this group of children (as defined above), all Directors of Children's Services should ensure:

I. That the host authority LADO for each individual establishment reviews all information on any LADO referrals, complaints and concerns over the last 3 years relating to the workforce in such establishments to ensure these have been appropriately actioned.

II. The host authority LADO should then contact any local authorities who currently have children placed in the establishments in their area if there are any outstanding enquiries being carried out regarding staff employed in the home.

You are asked to confirm that urgent action two has been taken through the overview report that you will be providing to the DfE Regional Improvement Support Lead on Action One above. DfE in turn will confirm to the Panel that the Reviews have taken place.

13. This letter was followed up by a clarification letter from Ofsted dated 16 September 2022. This letter clarified the criteria for identifying which children and young people that local authorities were required to review and reduced the number of children Hampshire had initially identified. This letter identified fifty-nine schools that were included in the review parameters. However, following internal discussions, it was decided that we would continue to review all the initially identified children as it was deemed that the risks identified applied to them all. This meant that Hampshire reviewed 21 children instead of the fourteen placed at the eight providers identified by Ofsted as requiring review.

Methodology

14. Hampshire held a multi-agency meeting to plan the reviews with representation from Children's Services, police, health and education services. Information about the LADO requirement under "Urgent Action Two" are described later in the report. A list of tasks to be undertaken or evidence gathered for "Urgent Action One" was identified. A matrix is attached as Appendix A, detailing the outcomes of these tasks.
15. The tasks / evidence the multi-agency meeting identified from the National Panel request included the following:

- Confirmation of staffing ratios provided as per volume commissioned.
- Does the child have a communication plan.
- Date Comms plan last reviewed.
- Evidence of comms plan in practice.
- Child has positive behaviour plan.
- Date positive plan was last reviewed.
- Training logs provided for behaviour management.
- Staff are supported to use PBS plans.
- Review of all physical intervention records undertaken.
- Are LPS in place where required.
- Accurate and up to date medication records.
- Medications securely stored.
- Appropriate use of medication (e.g. PRN).
- Physical and MH needs of child are met and understood.
- School attendance (% attendance over last academic year).
- Clear education targets in place.
- Progress against targets is evident.
- Child has maximum contact with those who care about them (e.g. family).
- Child's view of placement.
- Family view of placement.
- Key professionals view of placement.
- School visit undertaken.
- Home visit undertaken.
- Number of safeguarding alerts made in last 12 months.
- Confirm whether appropriate follow up from alerts happened (if not, include briefing).
- Have annual reviews happened.
- Annual review written up.
- Have all actions from annual reviews happened (if no, include briefing).
- Have CLA reviews been completed and actions followed up.

16. The meeting also looked at the criteria for identifying the relevant children and agreed upon the following (acknowledging that these were far wider than was required as clarified in the later Ofsted letter). These criteria were as follows:
- Attending an independent special school.
 - Accommodated in a registered children's home (at least some of the time).
 - A Looked After Child.
 - Open to a Disabled Children's Team.
17. A cohort of 21 Hampshire children were identified as meeting criteria for this review. The fourteen children placed at the eight schools identified by Ofsted were included in that wider group. Those eight schools are:
- The Children's Trust School.
 - Purbeck View School.
 - Chailey Heritage School.
 - Overton School.
 - Southlands School.
 - Priors Court School.
 - The Shires
 - The Mulberry Bush
18. The information was gathered by a variety of methods including visits by social workers to placements, communication with parents / carers, information obtained via our commissioning teams, information held and gathered by our Special Education Needs teams (SEN), information held and gathered by our Independent Reviewing Service (IRS) and information from our exiting records.
19. All 21 children have been seen by a social worker to establish how well the arrangements are meeting their needs and keeping them safe. Most visits were undertaken as part of the usual social worker visiting pattern where possible except where Covid outbreaks and other obstacles impeded this. Alternative visits then took place in those circumstances.
20. SEN and Virtual School colleagues have contributed with their views about the quantity and quality of educational provision, and review of such provision.
21. Regulation 44 visit information and outcomes have informed the visits to the children as well as the analysis of the suitability of the placement.

22. Information from the Independent Reviewing Service has similarly informed the assessments and much of the information was scrutinised within the scheduled LAC reviews.

Finance

23. N/A

Performance

24. N/A

Urgent Action Two

25. Under urgent action 2 the national review required LADO:

- For each individual establishment reviews all information any LADO referrals, complaints and concerns over the last 3 years relating to the workforce in such establishments to ensure these have been appropriately actioned.
- The host authority LADO should then contact any local authorities who currently have children placed in the establishments in their area if there are any outstanding enquiries being carried out regarding staff employed in the home.

26. An initial data trawl identified that there were 134 allegations and 307 advice and concern cases for Hampshire County Council. Given the significant number of cases it was agreed that 2 agency LADO's could be recruited to undertake the review. They were recruited and employed from 21 October 2022.

27. An audit tool has been created to provide consistency of information for the review. Currently 10% of allegations have been reviewed and there have been no concerns to date.

28. It is anticipated that this review will be completed by the end of December and an update will be provided to both the National Panel and Ofsted at that time.

Findings and Conclusions

29. No concerns were identified with the fourteen children placed in the eight schools identified by Ofsted as the focus of the National panel requirements for this review.

30. No significant concerns were found in respect of any of the 21 children reviewed. We are confident that these children are deemed to be safe with their needs adequately met, and that there is positive engagement with providers where issues are raised.
31. SEN have established that clear educational targets are in place for all 21 children, that progress against these targets is evident, and that annual reviews are all on track. Actions from previous reviews were followed up other than in the case of 4 of the children, for whom there was no evidence available. This is being followed up.
32. In view of the current Ofsted rating, the three children placed at Purbeck View School have additional risk assessments and enhanced visiting, with a higher level of parental engagement. Regular meetings are taking place with the school and this scrutiny will continue pending further Ofsted visits and reports.
33. An issue about staffing levels and use of agency staff was highlighted prior to the commencement of this review in respect of one provider – Prior Court School (PCS) – though the issues have been resolved through regular monitoring and engagement with PCS.
34. Hampshire County Council have an agreed provider protocol that addresses any and all issues that are raised with the council about any provider within the Hampshire boundary (or where we have children placed). As part of this quality assurance process already in place in Hampshire, there is a monthly meeting of managers from social care, education and commissioning that reviews all information held about independent providers either commissioned or within the Hampshire boundary. Greater scrutiny of Regulation 44 reports provided to social workers with children placed in independent provision by this group is now in place as a result of this review. Strengthening the oversight of these providers and ensuring the resulting analysis is shared with all visiting social workers.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	no
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

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

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.)

Document

Location

None

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**Appendix A
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	28 March 2023
Title:	National Review – Children with disabilities and complex health needs placed in residential settings – Addendum Report
Report From:	Director of Children’s Services

Contact name: Kieran Lyons

Tel: 0370 779 1052

Email: Kieran.lyons@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an addendum report to the response already provided, to the request from the Child Safeguarding Review Panel to the Director of Children’s Services (DCS), to review the placements of children in care placed in children’s homes jointly registered with independent special schools.
2. This report seeks to provide the summary of the outcomes of that review in respect of action: That the host authority Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for each individual establishment reviews all information on any LADO referrals, complaints and concerns over the last 3 years relating to the workforce in such establishments to ensure these have been appropriately actioned.

Recommendations from the review

3. The inductions and training package for LADO will be reviewed to ensure that consideration of the voice of the child and the impact of their disability is comprehensively covered.
4. The findings of this review will be discussed in LADO team meetings and as part of reflective supervision sessions.
5. The LADO will review their training offer for the 9 establishments.

Executive Summary

6. This report will detail the work undertaken by the LADO service as requested by the Safeguarding Review Panel, that the DCS review the placements of

children in care placed in children's homes jointly registered with independent schools.

7. Two additional LADOs were employed to undertake this work and reviewed over 400 pieces of work comprising of allegations and LADO support and advice requests. The quality of the LADO work was of a good standard there were no instances where a child was felt to be unsafe or had not been made safe as part of the investigation. The LADO response was found to be timely with excellent quality advice provided to the establishment. In some pieces of work, it was found that the reporting/recording of the child's voice could have been stronger, and that the consideration of the child's disability could have enhanced investigations, therefore this requires improvement going forward.

Methodology

8. A total of 440 cases across 9 establishments were reviewed by the Local Authority for a three-year period from the 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2022.
9. Of those 440 cases, 134 met the threshold for LADO (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018) and 306 were reviewed under support and guidance.
10. The review was undertaken by two externally recruited LADOs which provided a level of independent scrutiny for the service.
11. The 9 establishments reviewed were:
 - Clay Hill School
 - Compass Community School
 - Coxlease
 - Fairways
 - Hill House
 - New Forest Care
 - The Loddon
 - Southlands
 - Tadley Court

Findings for LADO threshold

12. Hampshire LADO Threshold is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and includes:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed/may have harmed a child.
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020).
13. Of the 134 cases that were reviewed, it was found that overall, cases were managed by LADO in a robust manner, ensuring that they were progressed with appropriate timescales and in line with LADO guidance. Cases found to be outside timescales due to agency investigation or HR procedures, were tracked effectively and followed up at timely intervals.
 14. It was evident that the LADO challenged agencies in terms of the practices and timescales in reaching outcomes. For example, in one case (8662) parents alleged that the school was not following the child's Behavioural Support Plan or risk assessment; LADO contacted the school to ensure that that the school referred to the service and took appropriate actions in relation to the allegations. The service will review the training offer to these establishments to ensure it is as comprehensive as it can be.
 15. In terms of safeguarding children there was robust evidence to indicate close working between LADO and child safeguarding and protection teams (external and internal) and services. Evidence of this included discussions with social workers within Hampshire and from other local authorities, attendance at allegation meetings, professional meetings, and attendance at S47 strategy discussions.
 16. As would be expected when auditing so many cases, the reviewers did find a couple of areas the service could learn from. These were:
 - In a small number of cases, the views and the voice of the child could have been stronger and better evidenced on the records.
 - That the consideration of the child's disability could have enhanced some investigations and ensured a more holistic picture of the child in a few cases.
 17. It is clear from this review that 70% of the total LADO contact was in relation to seeking advice, guidance, and support. In all cases, advice provided by the LADO was deemed to be professional, proportionate and balanced with appropriate outcomes. Cases were escalated with agencies if they were deemed to meet LADO threshold for intervention.

Areas of good practice

- There was a timely response to contact and referrals.
- Cases were escalated for safeguarding and child protection purposes as required.
- There is good use of the escalation process to senior management for oversight and direction, as necessary.
- There is clear communication between LADO, establishments, and agencies.
- There is a good response to less serious concerns.

Areas for Improvement

- In a small number of cases, the views and the voice of the child could have been stronger and better evidenced on the records.
- That the consideration of the child's disability could have enhanced some investigations and ensured a more holistic picture of the child in a few cases.

Conclusions

18. There were no significant concerns found in respect of LADO and the service it provided to the 9 establishments during the review period.
19. Timeliness of response to contacts and referrals was found to be a major strength by the service, ensuring that children residing in the establishments are safeguarded and protected at the earliest opportunity.
20. The LADO response to what may have been deemed less serious concerns and/or information and advice, were escalated quickly ensuring agencies responded appropriately to safeguard the child. This includes escalation to senior managers in local authorities for oversight and direction.
21. As you would expect in such a review, we have identified some learning points which we will address as part of our continuous improvement of the service. In a few pieces of work, it was found that the reporting/recording of the child's voice could have been stronger, and auditors also thought that there were a few cases where greater consideration of the child's disability could have enhanced investigations. Actions are already being taken to ensure these points are included in the induction and training packages of our LADO's and the findings of the audits will be discussed in team meetings for further reflection.

Recommendations

22. The inductions and training package for LADO will be reviewed to ensure that consideration of the voice of the child and the impact of their disability is comprehensively covered.
23. The findings of this review will be discussed in LADO team meetings and as part of reflective supervision sessions.
24. The LADO will review their training offer for the 9 establishments.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	no
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

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

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.)

Document

Location

None

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	28 March 2023
Title:	HCC Annual Report Care Leavers
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Kim Gardner

Tel: 07741262121

Email: kim.gardner@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Hampshire County Council's Corporate Parenting Board with an annual report on the activity of the Care Leavers Service from January 2022 to December 2022 inclusive. This will ensure that the Board has an overview of the achievements, progress, and challenges in meeting the needs of Hampshire's Care Leavers in 2022.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Board notes the good outcomes that are being achieved by Hampshire's Care Leavers and the plans of the Care Leaver Service to continue to improve those outcomes further in 2023.

That the Board continues to offer support and challenge to the Care Leaver Service in maximising the offer for Care Leavers.

The Board continue to promote the corporate parenting responsibility Hampshire County Council and the district borough councils hold.

Executive Summary

3. Protecting and looking after children and young people is one of the most important jobs that councils do when a child and/or young person, for whatever reason, cannot safely stay at home or with relatives or friends. Being a corporate parent means doing everything that can be done for every care experienced young person to give them the opportunities that other children and young people get.
4. Sadly, despite the ongoing focus within legislation and policy, children and young people who are care experienced have poorer outcomes compared to their peers. For example, care leavers are less likely to be in employment, education, or training post 18 and four times more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system and four times more likely to have a mental health condition. It is the Local Authority's responsibility to do everything it can to change these statistics for the better.
5. This report will seek to outline the work of Hampshire's Care Leaver service during 2022.

Who are our 'Care Leavers'?

6. Care Leavers are young people aged 18 years to 25 years of age who have been in care as a child. There are four different categories, and each category has an associated entitlement status:
 - Eligible child - 16 or 17 years old in care and have been in care for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, will meet the criteria as an 'eligible child'.
 - Relevant child - 16 or 17 years old, have left care, but were in care on or after their 16th birthday and have been in care for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14. This applies if they have been part of the youth justice system or hospitalised on or after their 16th birthday.
 - Former relevant child - 18 to 21 years old and if they were previously either an eligible or relevant child.
 - Qualifying child - 16 to 21 years old and have been in care or, if disabled, have been privately fostered after reaching 16, but do not qualify as eligible, relevant, or former relevant (have spent less than 13 weeks in care). May also qualify if subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and were looked after immediately before the SGO was made, or, if previously an eligible child, but returned to live with someone with parental responsibility (PR) for more than six months before your 18th birthday.

- From April 2018 the Children & Social Work Act 2017 introduced a new duty on local authorities, to provide Personal Advisor (PA) support to all Care Leavers up to age 25, if they want this support. Under previous legislation, local authorities were required to only provide Care Leaver with support from a PA until they reach age 21, with that support continuing up to age 25 only if a Care Leaver was engaged in education or training.

Hampshire Demographic

7. There are currently **786** Care Leavers (18+) open to Hampshire Children's Services.

Age and Gender

484 Males
299 Females
3 Other ¹

Ethnic background

White 538
Mixed 19
Asian or Asian British 34
Black or Black British 115
Other Ethnic group 80²

Eligibility Category

Relevant: 8
Former Relevant: 750
Qualifying: 28

Corporate Parenting and Statutory Responsibilities to Care Leavers

8. Hampshire County Council (HCC) believes that it is everyone's responsibility to help those who have been in care to overcome the difficulties that they experienced in their childhoods so that they can lead successful adult lives. However, as a council we have statutory responsibilities set out in the Children Act 1989, the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to Care Leavers that we are legally required to meet.
9. HCC has developed a 'Pledge to Care Leavers'. The Pledge is our promise to all our young people leaving care based on what we recognise are the additional challenges faced by care experienced people. Our pledge can

¹ These are young people recorded as gender indeterminate on the record.

² Other ethnic group is made of any groups that do not come under the first 4 categories for e.g. Arab, Gypsy/Romany, Persian etc.

be accessed here: [Appendix A - Pledge to Care Leavers.pdf \(hants.gov.uk\)](#) and can be accessed by care leavers via an internet search. The Care Leaver Service are in the process of updating of the branding and design of the Pledge based on the feedback of our care leavers.

10. As a Local Authority we have also consulted with Care Leavers and stakeholders and developed a 'local Offer' which provides detailed information about the service and support available to Care Leavers, including information about both their statutory entitlements as well as any discretionary support we provide. This is provided to young people leaving care at age 16 and can be accessed via the internet. [Appendix B - Local offer for Care Leavers.pdf \(hants.gov.uk\)](#). The Care Leaver Service are in the process of updating the Local Offer and this will be presented to the Board in due course.
11. The HCC local offer is centred on the below principles:
 - My Life My Future Plan to independence and a successful future
 - My health and wellbeing
 - My relationships
 - My education and training
 - My employment, including my money
 - My accommodation (experiencing stability and feeling safe and secure)
 - My participation in society, including getting my voice heard

Means of Delivery

12. Hampshire Care Leavers benefit from a stable, committed, and creative staff team who have offered consistency over a long period of time. We have four Care Leavers Teams in the county, one in each area North West (Test Valley, Basingstoke and Deane), North East (Hart, Rushmoor and East Hants), South East (Havant, Fareham and Gosport) and South West (Eastleigh, Winchester, Totton and New Forest). Each team consists of an experienced Team Manager, Senior Practitioner, Personal Advisors (PA) and Admin staff.
13. Care Leavers are supported by the team closest to where they lived upon entering care. They are allocated a PA at age 15 years 9 months whose role is to work alongside the young person and the allocated 'children in care' social worker until the young person reaches the age of 18. Strong communication loops exist across the Care Leaver Teams, Children in Care and Child, Assessment and Safeguarding Teams. This results in, overall, well planned transitions across these services. The early input of the Care Leaver Service encourages a greater focus on the adults the young people will become. The role of senior practitioners has been particularly effective for more complex cases whereby the young people are receiving extremely high levels of support within residential accommodation and High support needs placements prior to 18 and ensuring a smooth transition to the care leaver service. Positive transition

planning is aided through PAs attending all 'My life my future' planning meetings and CLA reviews, with Team Managers or Senior Practitioners attending and chairing final meetings

14. The PA, once allocated, contacts the Children in Care social worker and they will plan a joint visit to the young person. PA visits to the young person are then conducted every 8 weeks and more frequently if required if there is a significant event. Visiting and communication with the young person typically increases as they progress to 18 years of age ready for the transition to leaving Care.

Role of Care Leaver teams and PAs

15. The role in Hampshire is as follows:
 - Complete timely pathway plans, co-produced with young people and reviewed every 6 months or more frequently depending on need. HCC has adopted a strength-based methodology (the Hampshire Approach) and as part of this has reviewed and rewritten the pathway plan which is now called 'My Life My Future plan'. This aspect of service development means that children and young people have one plan that will see them through their journey in and through into adulthood.
 - Keep in touch with our care leaving young people.
 - Support our Care Leavers to access relevant services e.g. Health Services
 - Support Care Leavers in preparing for adulthood and independent living.
 - Support Care Leavers to access suitable housing.
 - Support Care Leavers in accessing Education, Employment or Training
 - Support care leavers in budget planning finances where appropriate.
 - HCC promotes its offer of extended support for Care Leavers up to the age of 25 by writing to all young people who are closed to make them aware that they can request further support, advice, and guidance until their 25th birthday.
16. Care Leavers continue to provide very positive feedback regarding the support provided by PAs which is obtained via audit feedback and from participation events i.e National Care Leavers week October 2022.

Proportion of Care leavers aged 19-21 who were 'In Touch'

Year	Quarter	Hampshire	South East
2021-22	Q2	85.0%	92.1%
2021-22	Q3	85.1%	90.5%
2021-22	Q4	83.9%	92.2%
2022-23	Q1	84.1%	92.2%

2022-23	Q2	84.0%	91.2%
2022-23	Q3	84.2%	Not yet published

Accommodation stability / suitability

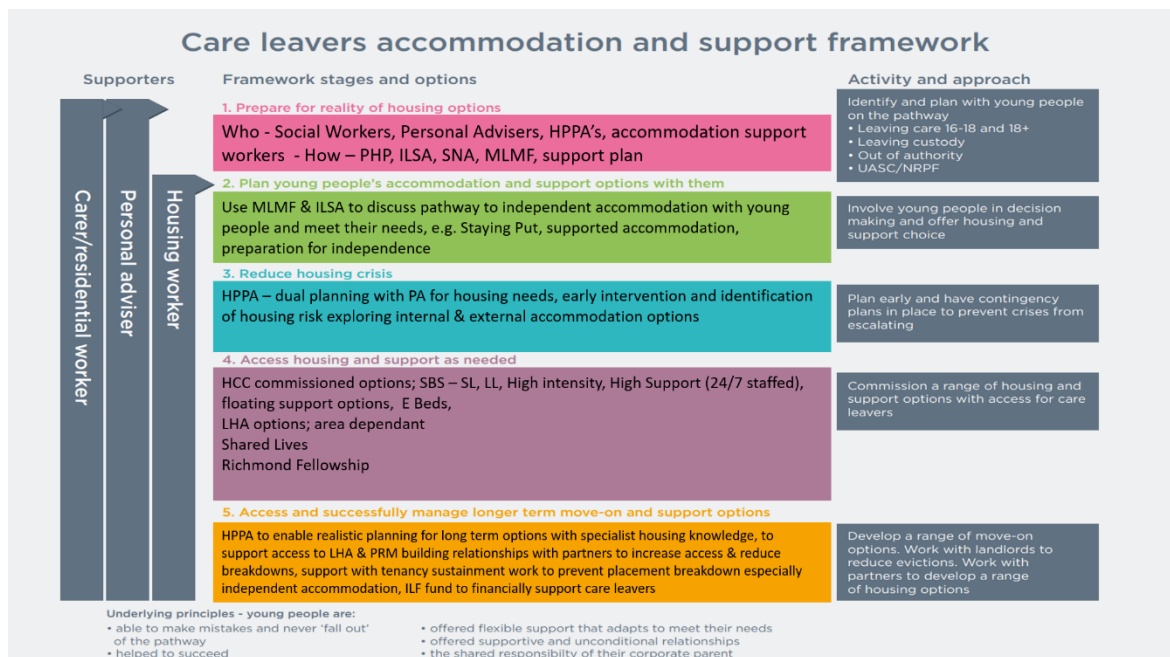
17. Young people leaving care need somewhere safe, stable, and suitable to live to help them make a positive transition into adulthood.
18. Hampshire also have a robust framework for supported accommodation and commission significant levels of accommodation to meet the needs of our young people who are not ready to live independently. This is reflected in our data relating to suitable accommodation for 18 year olds which has improved from 2021 by 23% in 2022. Accommodation suitability has been maintained for 19 year olds for the last three years however there has been a reduction in performance in this area for 20 and 21 year olds. This may be explained by the fact that we commission a lower number of accommodations providers for this age group and there is a greater expectation for them to access social housing, which can prove to be more challenging to manage for young people.

HCC Suitable Accommodation Data - a relates to the birthday window - 3 months before and one month after the young person's birthday.

Age	Suitable accommodation				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
18	61%	63%	64%	50%	73%
19	79%	72%	78%	79%	79%
20	66%	73%	74%	88%	79%
21	71%	57%	74%	75%	71%

19. It is hoped that the development of a joint housing protocol for care leavers setting out our corporate parenting commitment and how these will be delivered in practice, including our district housing partners, will strengthen our accommodation support to young people. It is anticipated that the new protocol will launch in June 2023. To compliment the protocol, we have also developed a new accommodation/ housing information pack for young people.

Post 16 framework



Staying Put

20. Staying Put arrangements are where a Former Relevant child, after ceasing to be Looked After, remains living in the former foster home where they were placed immediately before they ceased to be Looked After. The intention of Staying Put arrangements is to ensure that young people can remain with their former foster carers until they are prepared for adulthood and can experience a transition akin to their peers. Staying put is heavily promoted by the Care Leaver Teams however this is not a straightforward option for young people and their foster carers for multiple reasons. HCC staying put arrangements were set to be reviewed as part of the Modernising Placements Agenda at the beginning of 2021 however this work has been delayed and will be undertaken in 2023.
21. As at December 2022, 81 young people in staying put arrangements (66 in December 2017, 84 in November 2018, 62 in December 2019, 91 in December 2020, 77 in December 2021) which is a small increase from the previous year.

Homelessness Prevention Personal Advisor

22. As a direct result of a government initiative and funding (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government), HCC created four new specialist posts in 2019, focused on promoting accommodation stability for young people – Homelessness Prevention Personal Advisors (HPPA). HPPAs play a vital part in the transition from adulthood and assist with housing options as they approach 18 years of age. The HPPAs, since

being in post, have worked to develop stronger partnerships with partners in particular District and Borough Housing Departments and Post 16 accommodation providers to enable early intervention with Care Leavers, to and identify any potential risks of homelessness. The HPPAs have also developed tools (Independent Living Skills Assessment – ILSA) to assess young peoples’ skills, to inform appropriate and successful move on and enhance placement stability overall and prevent homelessness through targeted tenancy sustainment work. HPPA support is accessible by request of the children in care social workers and PAs. The PAs also take the lead on supporting young people to submit an application to the local housing register and provide supporting documents.

Journey to independence

23. The Care Leaver service have a number of project streams which aid transition including housing, independence, Education, Employment, Training (EET) and mental health and wellbeing. All activity is open to children in care/care experienced aged 16 and over.

Independence workstream:

24. Personal Advisors work with the foster carer / post 16 provider / residential provider and the young person to identify independent skills to focus on and improve. The foster carer / support provider will work ‘with’ the young person so that they can practice these skills and learn from any mistakes whilst still in a very supportive environment.
25. Partnerships have been built with organisations who provide education and training to enhance young people’s knowledge and skills in relation to money and finance. Several online courses have been successfully delivered during 2022, with the most recent taking place during National Care Leavers Week (24th to 28th of October 2022).
26. The Care Leaver Service has identified Personal Advisors to act as link workers to the Hampshire Fostering Hives to strengthen working relationships between the Care Leaver Service and the Fostering Service focusing on Standard 12 - promoting independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care.
27. HCC Children’s Services has continually encouraged District Councils in light of their new corporate parenting responsibilities, to consider using their discretionary powers as the billing authority to apply Council Tax exemptions for all Care Leavers living within Hampshire, as part of the local offer. Several District Councils have implemented Council Tax exemption/discounted rates specific to Care Leavers these include:

District	Discount
Basingstoke	18-21 years old (100% discount) 22 years old (75% discount) 23 years old (50% discount) 24 years old (25% discount) 25 years old (no discount)
East Hampshire	18-25 years old (100% discount)
Test Valley	18-25 years old (100% discount)
Eastleigh	18-21 years old (100% discount) 21-25 years old (50% discount)
Hart	Hart have an exemption as of Feb 2023
Winchester	18-25 years old (100% discount)
New Forest	18-25 years old (100% discount)
Gosport	No designated offer to care leavers
Havant	18-25 years old (100% discount)
Rushmoor	No designated offer to care leavers

Education, Employment and Training workstream

28. HCC is committed to helping Care Leavers realise their potential. Central to this is Care Leavers ability to engage and succeed within education, employment, and training. Sadly, despite continued focus within government policy for over 20 years Care Leavers continue to experience poorer outcomes in these areas compared to their non-care experienced peers. This can be for a number of reasons, including poorer academic success within school due to disrupted education prior to becoming looked after, self-esteem and mental health needs, a lack of skills or experience to find and maintain employment.
29. The table below shows care leavers NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) during their birthday window by age band as at December 2018 to October 2022.

Age	NEET				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
18	19%	13%	18%	11%	18%
19	29%	21%	28%	17%	26%
20	28%	31%	27%	31%	27%
21	37%	26%	32%	30%	21%

HCC Virtual College and Hampshire Futures

30. The Care Leaver teams continue to work closely with HCC Virtual College, Hampshire Futures (careers service) with there being an allocated carers advisor allocated to each District CL team.
31. The Virtual College, Hampshire Futures (Careers Service) aims to provide consistent, high quality support to young people in care and care leavers including early intervention when young people are at risk of becoming NEET. There is a continuing focus on increasing the collective ambition & aspiration. There has been a high level of promotion of the support available from the Virtual College during 2022 around the cohort of YP, challenging low expectations and underachievement. There continues to be a joint focus on seeking to increase the number of CLA and care leavers who progress into traineeships, apprenticeship, and Higher Education (HE).

HCC Higher Education (University) Offer

32. The Care Leaver Service has committed to increasing university attendance within their 2022/2023 Service Plan. As of October 2022, there are 79 young people anticipated to commence/continue their study at university while this has reduced by 3 from the previous year this continues to be significantly high number which we attribute in part to the positive financial offer in place for HE. Since the offer was increased, we have had on average 30 more young people a year on roll. The ethos behind the policy is to reduce the levels of student debt acquired during study meaning Care Leavers no longer being dependent on a maintenance loan to meet weekly living costs. The university offer is actively promoted within the My Life My Future planning process (pathway plan), advertised on the Virtual College website, as well as firm links having been established with local universities, who provide taster days to promote university life.

Department of Work and Pension (DWP) joint working

33. The Care Leaver service continues to work closely with the DWP who recognise that Care Leavers have additional support needs when transitioning into adulthood. The Service continue to meet regularly with the DWP Employer and Partnership Manager and a training session was offered by the DWP to the Care Leaver Service to increase staff awareness of the support available for young people to aid them in gaining employment and practical help regarding applications for Universal Credit.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Fund Access

34. Hampshire are actively promoting applications to the following funds:
35. **Mace funds:** up to £400 for 18-25 year olds formerly in the care of HCC to pursue further education, with an emphasis on courses covering drama or

poetry (but not exclusively). Applications to facilitate further education, higher education, internships, apprenticeships, employment and some extracurricular activities can be considered. More information and application form here: <https://www.hiwcf.org.uk/grant/maceeducationaltrust/>

36. **HOIRST Funds:** up to £500 for 18-25 year olds formerly in the care of HCC to facilitate access to further education (eg Further Education at A Level and above, BTEC Extended Diploma Level 3, NVQ 3, Higher Education - Degree Level and above, HNC, HND, T-Levels, Internships, Apprenticeships, employment and associated extracurricular activities. Funds can be for equipment, travel or driving lessons to enable participation/progression. More information and application form here: <https://www.hiwcf.org.uk/grant/hampshire-old-industrial-reformatory-schools-fund-hoirst/>.

Health and Wellbeing workstream

37. The Care Leaver Service continue to seek to promote young people's awareness of key support services in terms of mental health and wellbeing. Staff have attended information sessions with key agencies such as CAMHS, KOOTH, MIND, ITALK to ensure they remain up to date in terms of the support available to young people. The workstream will be an area of focus in 2023 given feedback from young people last year regarding their emotional health and wellbeing with 29% of those who responded to the survey reporting low life satisfaction as opposed to 3% of the general population (as captured within the Bright Spots Survey -see paragraph 50).

Health Histories

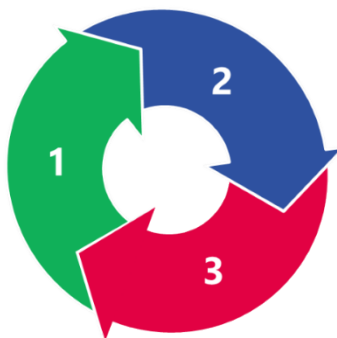
39. Health and Social Care teams have a responsibility to provide care leavers with information about their health, and to support them to manage their health independently. To fulfil this responsibility and in collaboration with young people in care, care leavers, carers, our health partners and workers from our children in care and care leavers team the health history pack was developed. The care leaver health history pack is a set of documents shared with young people in care as they turn 18 years old and become care leavers. The aim of the health history pack is to ensure young people can understand their health history and manage their health independently after their time in care:

1. A record

Summarising key info about the care leaver's:

1. Past, current & future health needs;
2. Physical, mental & emotional health.

NOT a duplication of detailed NHS records.



2. A conversation starter

Between the young person and Health professionals, with support from their:

1. Social Worker
2. Personal Advisor
3. Carer

To promote wellbeing and explore the relevance of past health to the future.

3. A guide

Outlining next steps for care leavers to learn more about:

1. Their health history;
2. Their birth family's health history;
3. What this means for them;
4. How to improve their health.

40. The care leaver teams are ensuring the health history pack offer is made to all open cases with the children in care teams ensuring the offer is made to all young people prior to turning 18.
41. Of Hampshire's 780 care leavers reflected in the Data for December 2022:
 - 155 (19.9%) have received a health passport (full or lite)
 - 387 (49.6%) have declined the offer of a health passport
 - 73 (9.4%) have accepted the offer
 - 137 (17.6%) of care leavers records do not show if they have received, accepted or declined the offer of a health passport
 - 26 (3.3%) young people have no offer recorded

Participation and engagement with Care Leavers

42. **Care Leavers week 2022** - National Care Leavers Week provides an opportunity to raise awareness but importantly celebrate our amazing young people and further promote their opportunities. In 2022, the Care Leaver Teams collaborated with the Virtual College and the University of Winchester as well as post 16 accommodation providers to offer a bumper week of activities / workshops and events for our care leavers:
43. **Online interactive learning** - Including learning how to manage your money, understanding how to access housing, and finding out what support can be available to care leavers who choose to go to university.
44. **Face to Face fun and connections** - Opportunities to meet with other care leavers is important and for that reason we arranged a number of events including team building activities at an activity centre in Farnborough, a chilled-out coffee-morning in Winchester, an Open Night

Mike night and an opportunity for London based young people to connect and meet up and attend a London attraction.

Crate building!



Feedback on the events held:

45. Care Leaver PA: We had 10 young people attend, whereby they were able to try out some instruments; piano, guitar and do some karaoke! It was clear that all attendees enjoyed spending time together, evidenced by the smiles and laughter from all the young people. The takeaway pizza was also a HIT!
46. Care Leavers:
 - "A fun night was nice to be normal and spend time with other people that has experience being in care"
 - " I loved the singing; Pizza was nice too"
 - "I haven't used a guitar for some time was nice to play some music again, and show off my skills, I enjoyed meeting new people"
47. Care Leaver PA: We met on Wednesday 26th October at Totton and Eling Community Centre. The aim was to gather a few of our care leavers together to relax, meet each other, meet the team. In addition to this we also had 2 staff from Safe New Futures come and talk to us all about their CBT programme that they run, as part of our Health and Wellbeing agenda. We had seven of our care leavers come and join us, along with a foster carer, two dogs and a baby!

48. Care Leavers:
- Was amazing time, very knowledgeable. Defo recommended, I VOTE WE SHOULD DO THIS AGAIN!!
 - 'I loved seeing Mandi she's brilliant! Meeting amazing people, especially how much foster carers have done for children in the New Forest!'



49. **Gillian Keegan Secretary of Education met with Hampshire Care Leavers** - Four experienced young people had the opportunity to meet with the Secretary of Education, this was a news reported event and empowered the young people to voice their views and ask questions.

Bright Spots Survey:

50. HCC commissioned an independent survey called the Bright Spots Programme in 2022 to seek the view of care leavers about the support they are offered from the Local Authority but also on the wider issues affecting them. The Bright Spots Programme is a partnership between Coram Voice and the University of Oxford and is commissioned by a number of local authorities enabling themes to be identified nationally but a means for LAs to benchmark and compare their support offered to care leavers. The survey was operational between April 2022 and July 2022. 171 young people responded fully to the survey from a care leaver population of 713 this is a response rate of 24%. This is an improvement from the previous survey undertaken in 2019/20 which achieved a response rate of 21%. A report will be shared with the Corporate Parenting Board in due course.

Christmas

51. Hampshire Children's Services provide all Care Leavers with a Christmas gift in the form of a gift voucher to the value of £25.00 every year. Additionally, through the generous donations of Hampshire colleagues and local charities and businesses, Care Leavers receive a wrapped and

personally chosen gift based on their interests and likes as well as a selection of tasty food treats. Care Leavers who are living semi independently and likely to be in most need, also received a personal contact over the Christmas period and in person visiting.

Vicky Gregory, Anouska Thomas, and Paula Hall (NECLT Team) are just 3 of our HCC Xmas elves!

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C13v4Tsolqb/>



Conclusions

52. As a Care Leaver service there remains a focus on our statutory duties to Hampshire Care Leavers. The performance data and survey data contained within this report demonstrates that the service performs well in terms of key indicators including keeping in touch data, EET and suitable accommodation. Notwithstanding this, it is important to recognise that there remains work to do to achieve the levelling up nationally we need to achieve.
53. The Care Leaver Service are keen to be as creative and aspirational as possible for our Care Leavers however within this we are challenged by the pressures faced by all Local Authorities in terms of increasing care populations and funding allocation.

54. Within the workstreams of the Care Leaver Service as outlined within this report, there remains scope for further development and strengthening of the offer making full utilisation of district council resources, charities and local business. The Care Leaver Service seek the support of the Board in this respect.
55. Overall, we consider the strengths of the service to be as follows:
- Strong performance with regard to Personal Advisor contacts with young people being achieved within timescales
 - Good performance in terms of ensuring young people have opportunities to maintain them in education, employment, and training.
 - Placement stability for young people and progression of accommodation plans despite the challenges in the accommodation market.
 - Homeless Prevention Personal Advisor role has proven successful in improving relationships with local housing departments and successes of accommodating care leavers within housing.
56. Our next steps for 2023 are as follows:
- Further improving the numbers of young people in education, employment and or training.
 - Increased numbers of young people living in accommodation deemed suitable in line with the DFE's criteria around this.
 - The take up and engagement of care experienced young people remains an issue in terms of the opportunities identified and developed. In recognition of this we are seeking to encourage post 16 accommodation and support providers to have a larger role within this and act as key stakeholders within all the project streams.

Consultation and Equalities

57. The implications of this are covered in the main body of the report.

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

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.)

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

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*

Independent Reviewing Service

Annual Care Plan Audit 2022

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Sophie Butt and Karen Cairns

Agenda Item 10

Background

The Independent Reviewing Service undertook the audit during August 2022.

An audit was undertaken after every Child Looked After Review that took place within a time period.

240 audits were completed and covered:

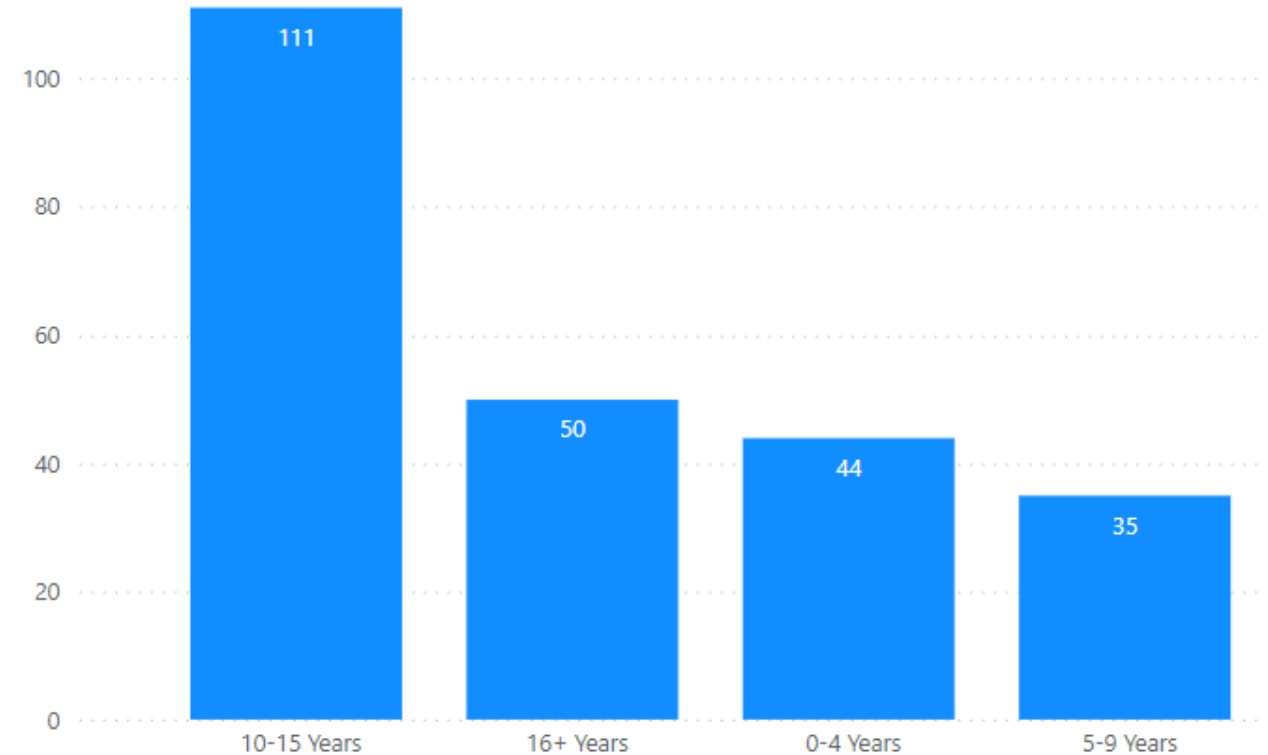
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- Survey Population
- The Care Plan
- Overall Needs of the child
- The Personal Education Plan (PEP)
- The Health Assessment (HA)
- Equality and Diversity
- The Care Plan Review

Findings: Population

This data helps us understand the broad age brackets of the children in care who were being reviewed, so that we can put the findings of the audit into context.

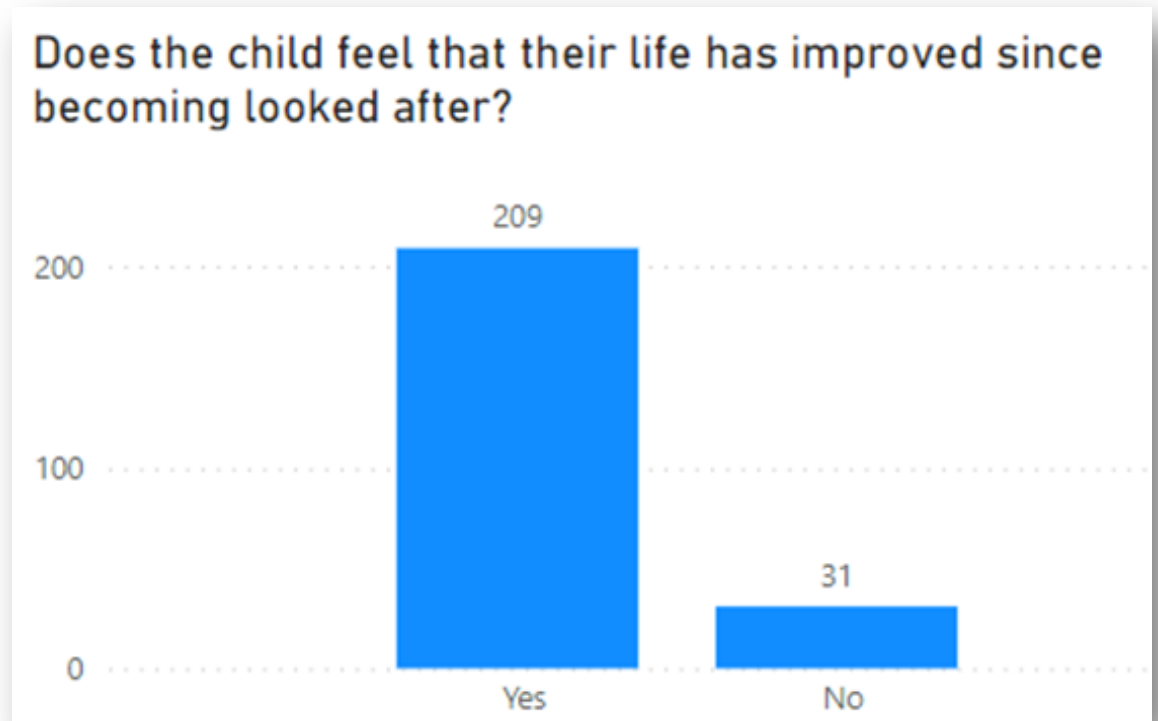
What is the age of child ?



Findings: Impact on child's life

Does the child feel that their life has improved since becoming looked after?

- 209 (87%) children feel their **life has improved** since being cared for by the local authority. This is an improvement from last year's 83% audit results.
- 173 parents (72%) believed their child's life had improved, this is a significant improvement from last year's audit.
- In 230 cases (95%) the IRO was satisfied that quality of life has improved for the child/young person since being looked after.
- This is a strong reflection of the quality of care arrangements that are in place for children in Hampshire, and that care plans are meeting the needs of individual children.



Findings: The Care Plan

Does the care plan reflect the child's day to day life?

225 (93%) care plans reflect the child's day to day life, education, health, routine, family time, culture and identity.

This demonstrates that by using the Hampshire Approach and the My Life My Future Care practitioners are able to concentrate on all aspects of children's lives, and really get to understand what is important to them.

Does the care plan reflect the child's needs?

96% of care plans reflected the needs of the child, an increase of 3% increase compared to 2020/2021 and a 30% increase from the 66% recorded in the 2019 audit results.

Does the care plan reflect permanence planning?

There was an improvement of how the permanence plan will be achieved in 86% of cases, a 3% increase compared with 2020/2021 audit results.

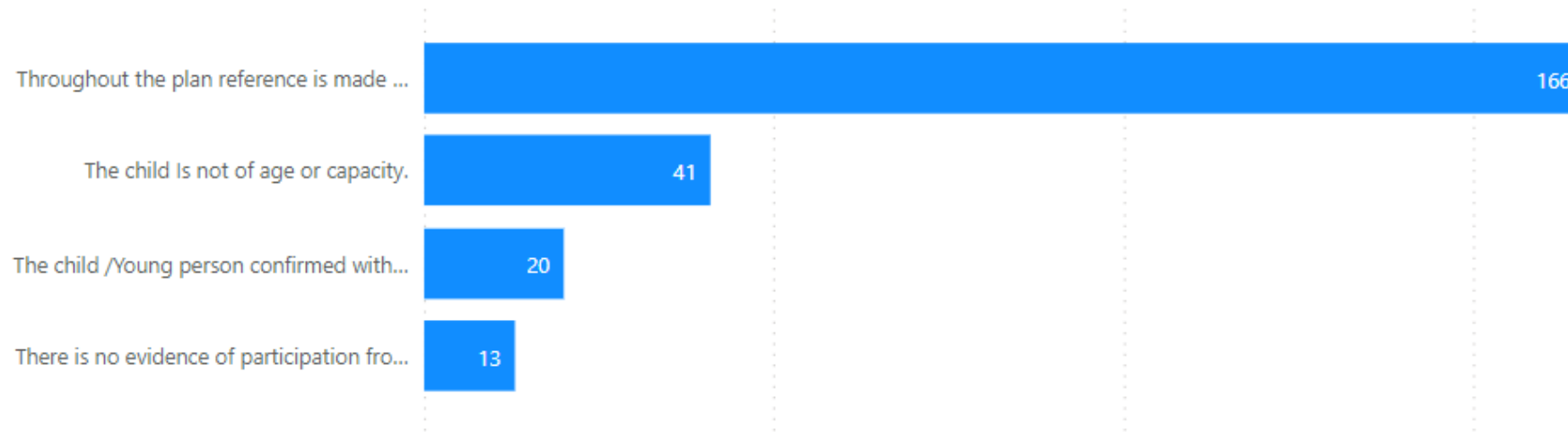
Does the care plan reflect permanence planning?

Out of 240 care plans, 156 (65%) were not signed by children and 184 care plans had not been signed by parents, team manager or social worker which is a significant drop from previous audits.

This will be an area of focus for social care teams in their work for children in care and their families, and for the IRS service to quality assure that children and their carers are happy with, and signing care plans.

Findings: Evidence of participation

How is the child/young person's participation evidenced?



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- In 166 audits children were seen to participate in their care planning.
- In 193 audits it was established that life story work has been completed with the child.
- 117 parents had their views recorded within the care plan and participated within the process of care planning. However, 123 parents did not contribute. It was not clear from the audit whether the parents were not asked to contribute or were asked to but declined the opportunity.

This will be an area of focus for the IRS service over this year, and we will review the audit tool to help us understand the data from this question more in the future.

Findings: Personal Education Plans (PEP)

The Virtual School and Transforming Social Care Programme are delivering a project designed to improve the quality, compliance and impact of Personal Education Plans (PEP). The findings of this audit are in line with previous PEP review exercises and highlight the opportunity to improve how PEPs are used to improve outcomes for children. Highlights include:

- PEP meetings were held in 49% of relevant cases
- Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) score was evidenced in 57% the PEPs
- Where PEP documents could be seen, it was judged that the key people, including the child had attended the PEP meeting in 93% of cases
- Children made good progress since becoming looked after. 65 children became active in participating in outside activities, attendance improved for 58, social skills improved for 61, for 63 children their experience of school was positive, for 61 children their attainment levels had increased since becoming looked after.
- Schools are utilising the Pupil Premium in the interest and development of the child.
- 67% did not have Emotional/ Mental Health Needs that required professional services. Of the children requiring professional support, 73% had measures in place and were having their needs met.

Findings: Health Assessments

- Across the county wide, 63% of health assessments were completed. This remains in line with 2021 results.
- In 69% of these cases the health plan was available on ICS (children services system). This is a good improvement from last year's audit at 53%. For those plans which were not available in 39 cases the social worker was waiting for health plan or had received it, but it was not uploaded onto ICS.
- In 98% health plans were adequate and demonstrated the child's health needs fully.
- Of the 167, 110 children had their health improved since becoming looked after.
- Of the 167, 113 children have regular physical activity, 109 children had an attachment to their primary carer, 109 children had a good bedtime routine and 112 children had a healthy diet.

Findings: Equality

- There was clear reference to equality and diversity in 58 audits. Culture was highest at 27 (21%) followed by Language 24 (19%), Race/Ethnicity at 22 (17%).
- IROs were satisfied that equality and diversity needs were being met in 95% of cases audited which is higher than the previous year at 89%.
- Page 55 In 41 (17%) of audits, which were all cases relating to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC), the care plan captured the immigration/legal status of the child. The remaining 198 cases audited did not relate to children who are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).
- This will be an area of focus for both the IRS service and social care teams over the coming year as we look to improve our recording of equality and diversity.

Recommendations

1. Social workers to continue to take steps to ensure that children and young people and parents are always involved in the creation/updating of their care plan.
2. Social workers and IROs, in consultation with all stakeholders, to ensure contingency plans are in place for the child should 'Plan A' prove unachievable.
3. Virtual School to continue to work with schools to ensure PEP outcomes and to oversee how funds are being used.
4. Social workers and IROs ensure that the care plan captures the immigration/legal status and that UASC receive adequate support to manage the challenge of the immigration process.
5. Explore if CLA reviews can be combined with other meetings to avoid the child having to attend several meetings.
6. IRO's will undertake midpoint progress checks between reviews to enhance IRO footprint consistently across the service and to ensure plans remain on track.
7. IRO's to demonstrate within CLA minutes how the child's views have been considered within their decision making.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Panel:	Corporate Parenting Board.
Date:	28 March 2023
Title:	Children with Disabilities who are in care
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Andrew Lund, Service Development Lead.

Tel: 07834 123 423

Email: Andrew.lund@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Board about the provision of placements for children with disabilities who are in the care of the Local Authority, as requested by the Chair of the Board at the January Board meeting.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Corporate Board notes the content of this report.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to respond to questions raised by the Board in January 2023 as to whether children with disabilities receive the same or a different service, as other Children Looked After (CLA) regarding placement choice, availability, matching, and meeting of need generally. In essence, there is little difference in the way disabled children are provided for compared with non-disabled children. A needs assessment determines the kind of care provision that is needed. Placement choice is limited for all children given the national pressures on placements, and disabled children are not significantly more disadvantaged by this than non-disabled children. Social Workers in our specialist teams are very attuned to the needs of our children and are diligent in ensuring the children's needs are met in placement, and that our children remain safe. Risk assessments are conducted where concerns are raised, and timely action is taken to respond to any new or increased risks.

Contextual information

4. The Board will be aware that sufficiency of placements for children in care is a major national issue impacting on all Local Authorities who are often competing for the same placements. This is even more acute when considering children with the highest levels of need, which obviously includes our children with disabilities. Despite this, we are satisfied that all our children with disabilities are placed in appropriate placements where their needs are well met.

Finance

5. Not applicable to the content of this report

Performance

6. Disabled children are a very small proportion of our overall number of looked after children in Hampshire. Of 1831 looked after children (as of 23 February 2023) only 63 are open to our four Disabled Children's Teams. There will of course be a further cohort of children who have additional needs and disabilities, but they are not assessed as meeting the criteria for provision from the Disabled Children's Teams, and their additional needs will not be the primary reason for them being looked after.
7. The service provided to these children is the same as for other (non-disabled) CLA in that once identified as needing to come into full time Local Authority care, a placement search is initiated. For any child needing a placement, the search is based on an assessment of their needs and risks. Though the complex nature of the needs of our disabled children makes them more difficult to match with the right care provision, some of our non-disabled children can be equally difficult to place due their needs and risks.
8. Our Placement Commissioning Team will share the referral with all providers on the Framework whose provisions may be suitable for the child in question. Depending on the type of provision that the social worker has determined the child needs, this might be foster care, residential care, or may be a residential school placement which we are seeking jointly with our Special Educational Needs (SEN) colleagues. Of course, there are certain providers and types of provisions that are more likely to be able to meet the more complex needs of our most disabled children, and so referrals will be targeted to those.
9. In making their assessment of need for young people our social workers are very skilled at engaging children and families to enable them to participate fully in the assessment process. The Hampshire Approach is well-embedded in our Disabled Children's Teams and the staff group is relatively very stable.

Social workers have many direct work tools to help them to engage more meaningfully with disabled children whose means of communication may be very different and much more limited than those of non-disabled children. These can be paper-based tools using pictorial aids or technological devices and software applications. Social workers can use such tools to develop social stories and elicit views, wishes and feelings from verbal and non-verbal children, more than they otherwise would be able to do.

10. There are of course some issues specific to children with disabilities which can make matching more difficult. It can be more challenging to identify foster placements for these children, and specialist health placements can also be hard to find. Where there is no appropriate school that can meet need locally, this can result in child becoming looked after in a residential school. When children are placed at distance, we will often provide practical and financial support to enable parents and carers to maintain regular, good quality contact with their child, ensuring as far as possible that distance is not a barrier to contact.
11. Of our 63 disabled children currently in care, 12 are placed with in-house foster carers, 11 with independent fostering agencies, 15 are placed in non-county residential placements, 4 in residential schools in Hampshire, and 14 are placed in out of county independent non-maintained special schools. 7 are placed within the family whilst care proceedings are on-going.
12. In terms of meeting the needs of our disabled children in care, again, this is no different from non-disabled looked after children, in that every child has his or her "My Life, My Future" plan which sets out their needs and how these needs will be met. Therefore, the practice and principles are the same. The only difference is that the more complex needs of the disabled children will often require a higher level of provision, for example a higher ratio of staffing might be required in order to manage moving and handling needs or very challenging behavioural needs. Accordingly, the cost of provisions for disabled children can be much higher than for non-disabled children.
13. Increasingly we are finding it necessary to create bespoke provisions to ensure needs are adequately met. This can range from commissioning a single additional service to come into the care provision to fill a gap that the provider cannot meet, to identifying and securing appropriate premises and staff team in order to make provision for a child. However, this can apply equally to both disabled and non-disabled children.
14. Disabled children can be more vulnerable to abuse than non-disabled children by virtue of their reduced ability to self-protect or to tell someone what is happening to them. Social workers are very aware of this and visit their children regularly, making sure that they engage meaningfully with the child and ensure the care provider is adhering to all requirements. Where any concern is raised about a provider, we conduct risk assessments in respect of

all of our children that might be placed in that provision to establish whether we are satisfied that our child remains safe and their needs adequately met, or whether additional mitigating measures are needed, or indeed whether we would want to remove our child from the placement. A good example of this kind of work is the recently undertaken National Review of Children with Disabilities and complex health needs placed in residential settings (there is a separate report to the Board on this matter). This illustrates Hampshire County Council's robust and comprehensive approach to quality assurance of children's placements, as well as our ability to learn and adapt our practices in response to such learning.

Consultation and Equalities

15. The main body of the report covers this.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

16. Not applicable to the content of this report

Conclusions

17. Our cohort of disabled children in care is relatively very small. 63 are currently in care, although the Disabled Children's Teams support a further 623 (as at 23 February 2023) children who are being supported at home.

18. It is true that there are fewer providers with the skills and knowledge required to properly care for this cohort of children and this means that children are often placed outside of Hampshire. However, the support and scrutiny provided both by their families and friends and their social work teams and other professionals to these placements is robust and reviews provide us and families the assurance we need.

19. As with the mainstream CLA, our disabled children are placed in a variety of different types of provisions, according to their needs.

20. The needs of disabled children in care are met in accordance with their assessments and care plans.

21. We have a specialist and very skilled workforce in our Disabled Children's Teams who are able to meaningfully engage with our disabled children and their families, and to advocate strongly for them.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:

This report is provided to the Corporate Parenting Board only in response to its request for information about provision for children with disabilities who are Looked After.

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

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.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

22. 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.

23. 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

Not applicable for this report.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

For information

Board:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	28 March 2023
Title:	Update on Participation Action Plan for 2023
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Sarah Plummer, Service Improvement Lead

Email: Sarah.plummer@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Participation since the last update to Corporate Parenting Board in the summer of 2022. It also provides an update on the progress made against the Participation Strategy and plans for further developments in 2023.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board:

Notes the contents of this report.

Continues to endorse the priorities for participation in 2023.

Executive Summary

3. HCC has a well-established business as usual approach to hearing and responding to the voices of the children, young people, and families we work with. We are strong at ensuring that everyone we work with is able to influence their own individual plans and the service they receive. Participation measures are also included in service plans, the QUIP (Quality and Improvement Plan) and transformation activity.
4. However, we want to do more to ensure that these voices also influence at a strategic level. 2022 saw the review and update of our Participation Strategy, which was informed by consultation with children and young people led by our Independent Reviewing Service. The updated Participation Strategy for 2022-2025 is now in place and a key focus of the Strategy is to provide more routes

for this strategic influence.

5. As part of the strategy review, we also made the decision to evolve our Care Ambassador model into two independently facilitated Councils. This is because we wanted to ensure a wider range of voices are heard and can more robustly shape our service. In addition, we found that our group of Ambassadors were 'growing out' of the service and together with the impact of Covid, 2021 provided an ideal opportunity to reconsider our model.
6. Introducing two new independent Councils for Children in Care and Care Experienced Adults is a critical part of our action plan and has been informed by a survey of our care experienced HCC staff. These Councils will both provide representative groups of young people in Hampshire, to contribute their views on a strategic level to the Corporate Parenting Board and to senior leaders. They will be supported and empowered by giving them the skills to provide a voice to children and other care experienced young people to make changes that matter at a local level.
7. In addition to the Councils, we will be building on our participation offer in a range of ways. For example, we are creating a Participation Network to share learning, resources and better demonstrate our impact. In addition, we will work across the service to review the processes by which we collate family and child feedback, to ensure the wealth of information collected locally, is more systematically used to inform transformation and service improvements. This will include an analysis of providers in this area (e.g., Bright Spots, Mind of My Own) as well as our emerging in-house capability through Mosaic and portals.
8. The remainder of the report provides an overview of the Participation activity and events that have taken place in 2022.

Contextual Information

9. Hampshire has a strong history of participation and weaving the voice of children and young people into all that we do. All assessment and planning documents place a strong emphasis on child and family voice. For example, embedding strength based direct work tools like the 'what's working, what's not' into the C&F Assessment ensures all voices are captured and inform the social worker analysis.
10. Another example is the My Life My Future Care and Pathway Plan (which was named by children in care) which has evolved over the past four years to increasingly highlight the child's voice. The child's perspective is embedded throughout the document and features age-appropriate scaling as both a direct work tool and also to demonstrate change over time.
11. In recent years the responsibility for Participation has moved from a standalone role sat centrally, to every district and service. The rationale for this shift is the recognition that participation is everyone's responsibility and that

we should incorporate it in business-as-usual activity.

12. Local teams have continued to deliver a broad and varied range of participation events and activities throughout 2022. The section 'Participation throughout 2022' provides further details of these events and their impact.
13. The voice of children and young people is also embedded within our case recording. We have moved away from standalone 'Participation Case Notes' and instead practitioners integrate the voice of children and young people across all recording including supervision notes.

Participation Strategy 2022 – 2025

14. The beginning of 2022 saw the review and update of our Participation Strategy, which was informed by consultation with children and young people led by our IRO Service. The updated Participation Strategy was signed off in the summer of 2022 and describes:
 - a. That Participation is everyone's business and is managed as 'Business as Usual (BAU).
 - b. A priority for 2023 is to commission a Children in Care Council and a Care Experienced Adult Council – these will be a more formal vehicle for children and young people to shape and influence services
15. The Lead for Participation moved from the Principle Social Worker to the Service Improvement Lead in September 2022. A discussion was taken to Strategic CFMT in November 2022 to agree the action plan which would drive forward the Participation Strategy in 2023 and beyond.
16. The remainder of this report details the work undertaken since September to commission the new Councils and deliver the action plan.

Commissioning of Children in Care (CIC) and Care Experienced Adult Council (CEA)

17. In December 2022 we began the tender for the implementation and management of two new CIC and CEA Councils. The contract has now been awarded to Motiv8, an organisation with a wealth of experience supporting and empowering children and young people in Hampshire. We are currently in the pre-go-live mobilisation phase and planning the logistics of how the Councils will operate and link into operations, senior management and the Corporate Parenting Board.
18. Both Councils aim to:

Facilitate a representative voice for the full range of children in care and care experienced adults in Hampshire.

Which can then influence and hold to account Hampshire County Council as the Corporate Parent and the members of the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure they deliver the best experience for children in care, and adults previously in care.

And together improve outcomes for all children in care and care experienced adults.

19. In practice, both Councils will play a crucial role in
- a. Influencing the Corporate Parenting that young people receive
 - b. Providing a voice for children in care and care experienced adults
 - c. Working in partnership with Corporate Parenting partners and HCC to shape strategy and improve the care system and the wider services young people are entitled to
 - d. Shaping their own work plan as the service is mobilised and developed.
20. As a new service, we will be working collaboratively with Motiv8 and the Councils to develop and shape this offer and the way the Councils work alongside other children, young people, staff, and the Corporate Parenting Board.

Milestones

Activity	Milestone	Status
Strategy signed-off	July 2022	Complete
Tender specification signed-off	November 2022	Complete
Tender out to providers	December 2022	Complete
Response deadline	End January 2023	Complete
Award contract	End February 2023	Complete
Pre-contract mobilisation	March 2023	In progress
Go live	1 April 2023	
Mobilising Councils	April – June 2023	
Councils fully operational	August 2023	

Action Plan for 2023: the next iteration of our participation journey

21. Whilst the commissioning and mobilisation of the Councils is a key priority for the year, there are additional improvements we are in the process of making to build on our existing good practice. The following areas build on the 'business as usual' actions assigned to District and Service Managers to embed Participation within their area of work. Those tasks are captured within the QUIP and reviewed regularly.

Co-ordinate

- a. Set-up Participation Network across Hampshire and Isle of Wight with current participation leads. The Network will provide an opportunity to
 - i. Meet quarterly to share learning and inform strategy
 - ii. Have early sight of event/participation planning
 - iii. Use a dedicated Sharepoint site to share resources and ideas
- b. Support teams and services to promote and celebrate their participation activity

STATUS: In progress – first meeting booked April 2023

Collate and analyse

- c. Continue to update the Participation and Insight log to place even more emphasis on outcomes and impact
- d. Add section to Service Plans 'how has participation of CYP contributed to service plan' and collate this centrally as well
- e. Undertake an options analysis to assess the most effective way to collect feedback
- f. Continue to collate family feedback from audits
- g. Analyse responses from the above into regular thematic reporting along with other strands of insight

Opportunities to inform and be informed

- h. Use Participation and Insight Network to share information back to teams, families, and children about changes we're making because of their insight
- i. Mobilisation and embedding of CIC and CEA Councils will provide main route to gather insight and share information back to these cohorts
- j. Develop plan with the Councils and Participation and Insight Network to create more opportunities (including for families and children not in care) for 2024

Opportunities to contribute

- k. Mobilisation and embedding of CIC and CEA Councils will provide main route to engage YP in service improvements
- l. Develop plan with the Councils and Participation and Insight Network to create more opportunities (including for families and children not in care) for 2024
- m. Plans to support/enable/facilitate national participation

Evolving our methods to collect child and family feedback

22. We currently use a range of methods to understand children/young people's views of the service they receive and how it could be improved. These methods include:

- a. Feedback forms
- b. Feedback gathered/embedded within participation events
- c. Bright Spots survey

23. The Action Plan includes undertaking an options analysis to review our methods of collecting feedback. This is in recognition that technology has developed, and children/young people want to interact with our service in different ways.

24. The Options Analysis will be led by a Working Group and will involve young people who will consider Bright Spots, Mind of My Own as well as our evolving in-house capability through Mosaic and service-user portals.

Participation throughout 2022

25. There a significant number of examples of participation across our services and districts in 2022. This report aims to give a flavour of the breadth and impact of these events.

Hampshire Children and Young People's Plan, 2022 – 2025. Focus groups were carried out with 120 children and young people in Hampshire: • 77.5% were aged 11-15 years old • 14% were from ethnic minority backgrounds • 16% were identified as having Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). In addition, feedback from 479 children and young people was collated by the Hampshire Members of Youth Parliament.

Big Activity Week - this ran from the 1 - 5 August 2022 where 77 looked after children in school years 3-9 and in Hampshire County Council Local Authority Care, took part in 6 activity weeks. From the New Forest to the Brecon Beacons in Wales, these young people made lifelong memories and created friendships with young people in similar situations to themselves. The week was run by Hampshire Outdoors staff along with other staff within Children Services. The week was free for all young people with the cost partly funded by National Lottery Community Fund with most of the cost coming from Hampshire Outdoors, a part of Skills and Participation.

Care Leavers week

Care Leavers Week in Hampshire is going from strength to strength with the largest attendance across the week that we've ever had. Our teams across Hampshire arranged a series of events in collaboration with our care experienced adults.

- Open Mic Night Hosted by Step-by-Step - Aldershot.
- Wessex Dance Academy Day Event
- Money works course - Via teams.
- Meet the Southwest Care leaver Team – Totton
- Thinking of going to Uni? Support in higher education for Care experienced Young people via Teams.
- London Meet Up
- Winchester Uni tour – Winchester
- Crate Stack - Aldershot
- Halloween Spooktacular – Gosport

Developing Child Exploitation Resources for schools across Hampshire. In 2022 Hampshire County Council's Willow Team, a multi-agency team supporting children at risk of exploitation, launched a series of short films and accompanying teaching packs for schools across Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, and Southampton. The films highlight the dangers of criminal and sexual exploitation, with a particular focus on the grooming process.

The characters in the films were played by local young actors from The Young Creatives. The scripts were written in collaboration with young people being supported by the Willow Team to ensure their authenticity. The resources have been trialled with school groups by Willow and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

C&F Awards 2022 – A young people's judging panel shortlisted the final three for the 'above and beyond' award. This is a way for us to involve young people in decision making about activity in the branch (assigned but informed approach).

East Hants Youth Conference – The East Hants Family Support Service supported the annual Youth Conference which focused on young carers in 2022. The event provided activities and facilitated discussion for young people to understand their needs and what support should be offered.

Disabled Children's Team (DCT) Audit tool for children

A SNAP audit tool has been developed for use by children, to capture the child's voice. The tool includes video clip questions using Makaton with various options to return answers via video or boxes for use with switches.

Creating a multi-disciplinary residential home. Throughout 2022 we have been planning the opening of a new multi-agency health and social care residential home for young people with complex needs. The home has been **renamed** by young people as 'Hockley House' in honour of local artist John Hockley. Young People form part of the working group who can **share their views and ideas, on everything from interior design to how residents will have their voices heard, as we work towards** the opening of the home in Autumn 2023.

Family Fun Day – Havant Disabled Children’s Team had two family fun days in April and July 2022 in order to show support to their families, and to provide an opportunity for networking between families and professionals. The events were attended by over 40 children and their parents/carers and feedback confirmed the events were inclusive of their children’s needs.

Spring to spring – Test Valley, Family Support Service (FSS) held an event which included bulb planting, pictures, games, crafting, and teddy tombola. Positive feedback was received about the support offered to children and families by Family support workers.

Circus skills workshop – this took place over May/June 2022 half term; it a two-hour circus skills activity for children subject to Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) and their carers to attend. Carers felt it was good to meet other carers in their situation and it made them feel less alone. Staff signposted carers to community support available and encouraged attendance at the monthly SGO support group and parenting programmes where needed.

Theatre backstage experience at Chesil theatre, Winchester – this experience was offered to care experienced children to provide a backstage experience for 20 young people who reside in foster care or residential care locally. The activity was offered after young people had requested an activity that did not involve being onstage, singing or dancing. This evidences that staff had listened to the needs of the young people prior to providing the activity.

Art therapy pilot project age (8 - 12) - New Forest FSS co-delivered a 6-week art therapy programme with Hart art therapists. The activity had positive outcomes in that 70% of parents saw an improvement in their child’s overall emotional wellbeing. 85% of parents report feeling closer and more connected with their children. 85% of parents have seen an improvement in their child’s confidence and self-esteem.

The Big Conversation at Swanwick Lodge – The Youth Commission visited Swanwick Lodge to ensure these young people could contribute to the Big Conversation. Their report at the end of the visit fed back: *“Overall, the major points we will be taking forward centre around better training and changing attitudes to mental health and neurodivergence, as well as greater access to support. Before leaving, we were treated to a performance of a twenty-minute play that the children had been rehearsing for, which we enjoyed immensely”*

Using Arts across the Youth Offending Service – YOT and YCP offer a range of creative interventions, with Easter and Summer focused activities taking place in 2022. These events provide an opportunity for young people to express themselves through poetry and photography and also gain an Arts Award.

Findings from 2022 Bright Spots Survey

26. At the time of writing this report we have only just received the findings from the Bright Spots survey and are awaiting a full dissemination meeting with the organisers.
27. An initial review of the findings for the *Children In Care* survey has highlighted:
- Overwhelmingly **our young people have a high level of trust in their carers**, with 100% of respondents aged 4-11 responding positively and 95% of those aged 11-18.
 - The level of trust in social workers was also high** ranging from 89 – 100% across the age ranges.
 - 54% of Hampshire's 11-18 year olds had the same social worker over the year which is **higher than other local authorities at 34%**.
 - Positively the vast majority of our young people responded that their lives are improving with 83 – 92% across the age range describing their lives as 'a bit better or much better'.
28. Areas from the review which identify potential areas for improvement include
- Whilst there are a number of positive responses about contact with social works, 2 in 10 of 11-18 year olds had 3 or more social workers in the past year
 - 1 in 10 11-18 year olds described 'hardly ever' having a chance to practice life skills
 - 1 in 10 8-18 year olds hardly ever felt included in decisions about them.
29. We note that there was a relatively low response rate of 17%. We will discuss this with Bright Spots during our dissemination meeting to identify learning and opportunities for improvement. This will also inform our options analysis and decision whether to continue with Bright Spots and/or collate children's feedback via other methods.
30. A full analysis of the findings will inform service planning, transformation and service improvement projects.

Corporate Parenting Board (CPB)

31. The role and responsibilities of the CPB continues to evolve since it was introduced in 2017. In January 2020 Hampshire County Council Cabinet approved the Corporate Parenting Board becoming a Board in its own right, with the specific function to ensure that Children in Care and Care Leavers are provided with the best standard of care.
32. In fulfilling its function, the CPB must also hold partners to account to ensure Children in Care and Care Leavers are accessing all that they are entitled to. For this reason, Hampshire's Designated Nurses, CAMHS and Police all report regularly to the Board.

33. The involvement of the CPB in hearing the voices of children and young people and gaining an insight into the work of the service was recently reviewed with the Chair of the Board. As a result of this, CPB members are now provided with a timetable of branch activity (including the core statutory work carried out) in their local area and members request to visit an office or observe a meeting. This model is working well, and members report their activity to the Board to ensure this opportunity is well utilised.
34. The report from the recent Ofsted Focused Visit on 31 January and 1 February is being presented to Full Cabinet on 18 April. Following this, the report will be shared with the Corporate Parenting Board. Any recommendations in the Ofsted report in relation to the Corporate Parenting Board will be taken forward by officers and Board members over the coming months.
35. With the introduction of two independently facilitated Councils for children in care and care experienced adults, it is a good time to review how the Corporate Parenting Board can hear the voice of children and young people in order to enhance the impact it has on their lives and experiences.

Finance

36. There are no finance implications for this report.

Performance

37. There are no performance implications for this report.

Consultation and Equalities

38. Any consultation and consideration to equality impact is part of the business as usual approach for participation.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

39. There are no climate change implications to this report.

Conclusions

40. Participation is business as usual in the Children and Families branch. We make it a priority to hear the voices of children and families and this informs our planning for children.
41. We have started seeking the views and opinions of children and families in service improvement and have several examples of good practice in this area. We are clear that we now need to clearly articulate the impact of hearing the voice of children on their lives and their outcomes, so that we can measure the distance travelled, both for children and for us as a service.

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:	

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:

A EIA will produced with the new provider as part of the Mobilisation phase

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:

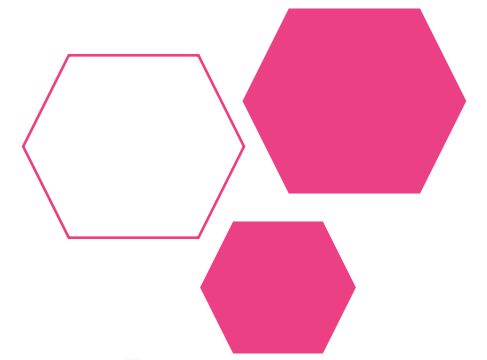
See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

*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*



Fostering
Hampshire
Children



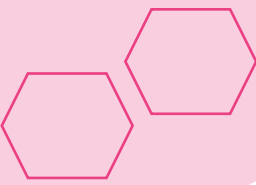
Hampshire Hives

Review of the last 12 months and future development

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March 2023



The Hampshire Hive:

As part of the Modernising Placements Programme, Hampshire piloted a bespoke support network model called the **Hampshire Hive** to provide advice, guidance, practical and emotional support to our Foster Carers and children they care for.

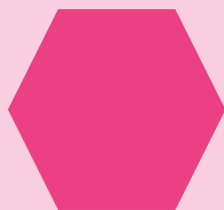
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The objectives of the Hampshire Hive are to:

Increase in house
foster carer
households

Improve placement
stability for children

Improve foster carer
retention



Hive overview

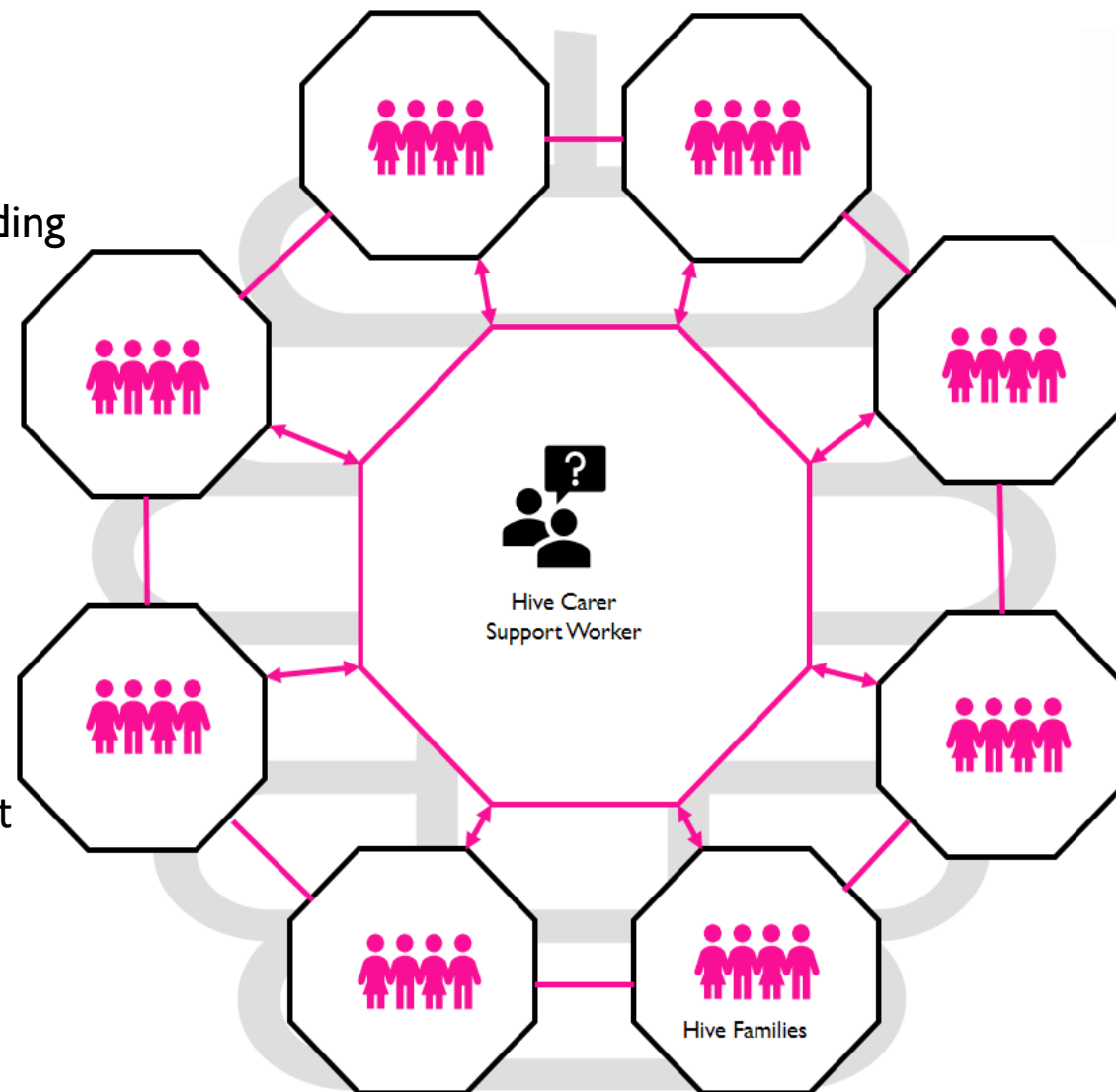


- Each Hive consists of 15-20 fostering families
- A Hive Carer Support Worker (HCSW) co-ordinates and supports Hive Families, providing support and offering advice including out of normal office hours
- They co-ordinate group meetings and whole Hive family events.

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The Hive Model was created before the Care review; however, the recommendations are in line with this support offer;

- Mission 1: No young person should leave care without at least two loving relationships, by 2027.
- All local authorities should develop a model of foster carer support based on the principles of Mockingbird.



Where are Hampshire's Hives?

To date we have **16 Hives** have across Hampshire supporting more than **234 fostering families** and over **307 children in care**. In the Hives are also 231 carers own children

That's nearly half of our fostering community choosing to join their local Hive.

A further 7 hives are planned for April 2023 bring the total to 23 Hives.

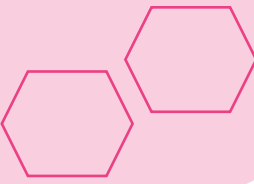
We will continue to grow organically to meet expected demand through our recruitment drive and through existing carers wish to join local hives.

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How have Hives developed and what's next?



How Hives have developed:

1. HCSW roles are now permanent.
2. Carers in Hives that become Special Guardians or offer Staying Put only can also continue attending family events.

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What's next?

1. More Hives are being created, meaning **more children placed with Hampshire Foster Carers will benefit** from Hive Family Events, make friends can access day care and overnight stays
2. **Residential Homes will be linked to Hives**, so children living in residential homes can attend Hive family events.
3. **Care leavers** can choose to continue attending family events.
4. Total capacity for Hives once 7 new hives are up and running is 482 fostering families, the majority of our fostering community.



The impact of Hives, 1 year in...



More carers in Hives report feeling valued



Since joining Hives, carers report feeling more satisfied with support and more confident in caring for Hampshire children

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Children in Hives are making friends



Fewer referrals were made to Placement Commissioning Team, for placement breakdowns, for Hive families



County carer de-registrations are lower in Hives

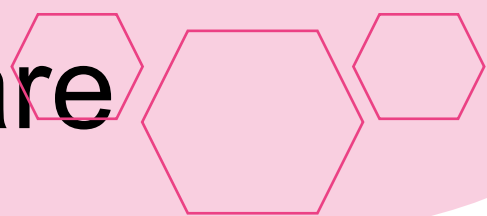


Carers in Hives are more likely to recommend fostering for Hampshire County Council

Key Performance Indicators (Feb 2022 to Feb 2023)

312 Support groups
177 Family Sessions
1559 1:1 sessions

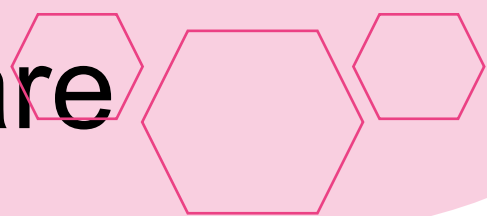
Case Studies – how the Hives are making a difference



A carer was struggling to encourage good school attendance, impacting on the carers work commitments and ultimately a breakdown in placement was inevitable if something didn't change. This was avoided due to the HCSW encouraging the child's attendance at school, spending time with the child completing craft activities in her home. This worked well and soon the majority of children in the Hive were attending this afterschool club which the children love.

Two young children new in care had a number of emergency carers in a short period of time. Although they experienced several moves, the HCSW remained a consistent figure during this time and got to know them very well. He provided day-care, ensuring they did not have more people in their lives unnecessarily and helped share information about the children with carers whilst a long term placement was looked for.

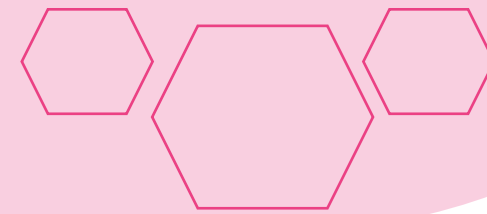
Case Studies – how the Hives are making a difference



A child's placement was breaking down as it was not the best match. Two hives worked together to identify a good match for this child, introductions took place over a weekend when this was less disruptive for school and without emergency carers being required. The child is now settled with her new foster carer.

A young person new into care was due to be cared for by family who were being assessed as connected carers, the HCSW took this child into her care as a bridging placement and oversaw the transitions, no further placement moves, the carers were linked into a hive in their town. This was a huge success and although it has been challenging, the carers have commented they would not have been able to proceed if it wasn't for the support of the two Hive carers.

Views of fostering families



- *This evening I didn't feel alone. I felt supported and helped and I haven't even met you, I can't thank you enough (carer Waterloo 2 hive)*
- *The Hives are the best thing Childrens Services have done for carers (carer in Ringwood Hive).*
- *Thank you so much for this evening, both boys had a great time, it was lovely to curl up with my girl and watch a movie she has been desperate to watch with me for months (carer in Ringwood hive, time spend with birth child)*
- *She was such a kind, caring, knowledgeable and understanding person and felt that she really cared about her and the wider family, Becky was the best support that she had received from anyone in HCC. She believed that Becky was there for her and loved the fact that she kept checking in on her, especially on a weekend".(carer Winchester Hive)*
- *Being a large family / connected carers we have found the Hive and yourself a great support network. The people we've met so far, have been and are amazing. We hope to meet more of the group in 2023 (Carer Basingstoke Hive)*
- ***"Can we do this all the time? I have made more best friends in the two times i have seen everyone then i have in the two years i have been in Gosport" - 16yr old girl.***



Quotes from our Hive Carer Support Workers



"Fostering is the most satisfying and challenging career I have ever had, and I love it. I was introduced to Therapeutic Parenting when I was struggling with my eldest and it helped me, and the children more than I can say, and I am now a passionate advocate for it."

Orlanda- SW
New Forest
HCSW

"Fostering for me is a journey that I often describe as a roller coaster ride sometimes you can just enjoy the moments , you never really what's round the corner ,when you reach the bumpy bits you have to just hold on really tight and work through ,and most of the time it's FUN !!"

Heidi - Fareham
HCSW

Quotes from our Hive Carer Support Workers



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"I am absolutely thrilled to be leading the Ringwood Hive and eager to begin nurturing relationships between children, young people and foster families to build a resilient and compassionate Hive where we can support and encourage each other."

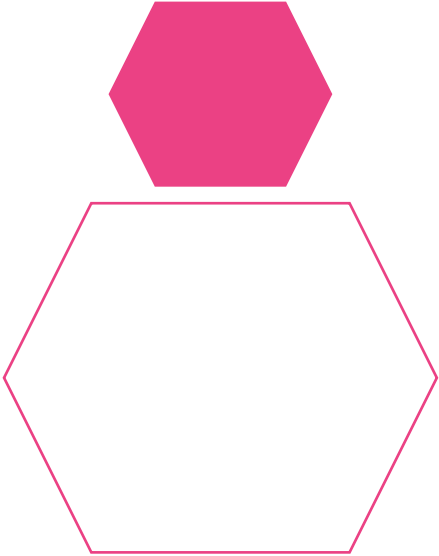
————— Sian - Ringwood
HCSW

"We have found foster care a very rewarding experience as does our family. Foster care has inspired our granddaughter to want to become a social worker."

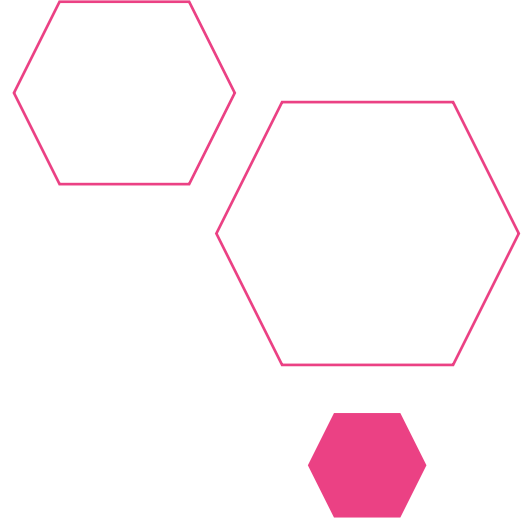
————— Johnny -
Waterlooville
HCSW

"Our Hive in Winchester will be a fantastic opportunity to meet other families, connected carers and foster carer families. It will offer support and friendship so that we can all share the good times and support each other in the tougher times too."

————— Becki -
Winchester
HCSW



Q&A



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