



## Corporate Parenting Panel

**Date** Friday 23 February 2018  
**Time** 9.30 am  
**Venue** Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham

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### Business

#### Part A

**Items during which the Press and Public are welcome to attend.  
Members of the Public can ask questions with the Chairman's  
agreement**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Substitute Members
3. Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 26 January 2018 (Pages 3 - 8)
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Number of Looked After Children - Update from Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers

#### **Theme: Performance**

6. Corporate Parenting Panel Performance Framework - Report of Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Manager (Pages 9 - 24)
7. Looked After Children Planning for Permanence: Fostering and Adoption - Report and Presentation of Operations Manager, Adoption and Fostering (Pages 25 - 30)

Performance in the following areas:

- Planning for Permanence
- Placement Stability

Key line of enquiry: Are we providing stable environments for children in our care?

8. Education Performance Report Durham Virtual School for Looked After Children - Report of Head of Virtual School (Pages 31 - 34)  
Key line of enquiry: What are outcomes like for our care leavers?
9. Children in Care Council - Update from Investing in Children

10. Development Item:
  - What are the key issues coming from the Performance Report?
  - Is there anything we need to address / respond to immediately?
  - Does the Performance Report give Members the necessary information to answer the key lines of enquiry?
11. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.
12. Any resolution relating to the exclusion of the public during the discussion of items containing exempt information.

### **Part B**

#### **Items during which it is considered the meeting will not be open to the public (consideration of exempt or confidential information).**

13. Regulation 44 visits: summary report (including responsive repairs) - Report of Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers (Pages 35 - 58)
14. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

### **Helen Lynch**

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall  
Durham  
15 February 2018

To: **The Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel**

Councillor P Brookes (Chairman)  
Councillor H Smith (Vice-Chair)

Councillors B Bainbridge, H Bennett, J Carr, J Charlton, J Considine, P Crathorne, G Darkes, J Grant, I Jewell, M McKeon, J Makepeace, O Milburn, C Potts, A Reed, G Richardson, A Savory, E Scott, M Simmons, C Wilson

#### **Co-opted Members**

M Baister  
R Edwards  
W Taylor  
J Wilson

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**Contact: Jill Parker**

**Tel: 03000 269 711**

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**Durham County Council**

At a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Panel** held in **Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham** on **Friday 26 January 2018** at **9.30 am**

**Present:**

**Councillor P Brookes in the Chair**

**Panel Members:**

Councillors B Bainbridge, H Bennett, J Carr, J Charlton, J Considine, G Darkes, J Grant, I Jewell, M McKeon, J Makepeace, C Potts, A Reed, G Richardson, A Savory, E Scott, M Simmons and H Smith

**Co-opted Members:**

W Taylor and J Wilson

**Also in attendance:**

Linda Bailey (Strategic Lead, Progression and Learning)  
Kelsey Clayton (Legal Manager, Children, Adults and Health)  
Helen Fergusson (Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers)  
Ann Haigh (Deputy Manager, Aycliffe Secure Centre)  
Karen Robb (Strategic Manager, Looked After and Permanence)  
Christine Stonehouse (Head of Virtual School)  
Jayne Watson (Senior Partnership Officer)

New Corporate Parenting Panel member Cllr Jude Grant was welcomed to the meeting. Cllr Grant has taken over from Cllr Huntington on the Panel.

The Chair explained the theme of the meeting was care leavers and he welcomed Trish Lambert, Senior Practitioner, Children and Young People's Services, and two care leavers who were in attendance to speak about their experience.

**1. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Crathorne, Milburn and Wilson and from M Baister and R Edwards.

**2. Substitute Members**

No substitute members were in attendance.

**3. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 15 December 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The following matters arising were reported:

**Item 3** - The Senior Partnership Officer encouraged members to attend the Investing in Children / CiCC mentoring training which was being held on Tuesday 30 January at County Hall at 5.00 pm.

**Item 6** - Cllr Potts informed the Panel that the presentation delivered at the meeting on 15 December, analysing the rise in the number of looked after children, was presented to the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and this had been very well received.

**Item 10** - The Senior Partnership Officer requested that members inform her if they require any additional information with regard to the key lines of enquiry contained in the Local Government Resource packs discussed at the meeting on 15 December.

#### **4. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **5. Number of Looked After Children**

The Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers reported that the current number of looked after children was 771.

#### **6. Care Leavers Update**

The Panel considered a report of the Strategic Manager for Looked After and Permanence which provided an update on care leavers. The Strategic Manager also delivered a presentation on the Local Offer for Care Leavers (for copy of report and presentation see file of minutes).

A discussion took place on some of the issues highlighted in the report. Cllr McKeon asked if care leavers were provided with financial assistance in respect of the cost of driving lessons. Members were informed that the 'Drive' project contributes half the cost of driving lessons and young people are required to fund the remainder of the cost themselves. The fund also pays for a theory and a practical test. No assistance is available for the cost of car insurance. J Wilson commented that many care leavers struggle to find part time work and he added that more assistance would be welcomed, perhaps using incentive schemes.

Members asked what support is available to care leavers with regard to housing and transport. The Strategic Manager for Looked After and Permanence replied that the service has very good links with housing providers. Members suggested that taxi companies which are used regularly by the authority could be requested to offer reduced rates to care leavers. Members commented that there should be more consideration of care leavers with regard to housing development with smaller properties being provided. Councillor Darkes suggested that parish and town councils may be able to provide assistance to care leavers.

In response to a question from Councillor Scott, the Strategic Manager for Looked After and Permanence informed members that the service currently supports 180 care leavers.

Councillor Makepeace requested clarification on the statutory duty for care leavers aged 18-25. The Strategic Manager for Looked After and Permanence replied that the authority has a statutory duty for care leavers up to the age of 25. The Panel noted that, to address the financial challenges faced by care leavers, Durham County Council offers 100% Council Tax exemption for care leavers living independently and 50% exemption for a care leaver's family member with a care leaver living within their household.

**Resolved:**

The Panel:

- i. Noted the content of the report and presentation;
- ii. Requested additional information required in relation to care leavers.

**7. Education, Employment and Training Opportunities for Care Leavers**

The Panel considered a report and presentation of the Strategic Manager for Progression and Learning which updated the Panel on the support available to care leavers to enable them to progress into education, employment and training (EET) (for copy of report and presentation see file of minutes).

The Chair asked the care leavers if they would like to give their views on the EET opportunities available to them. The care leavers commented that some young people in the care system are hampered by barriers such as a lack of confidence and anxiety issues. They added that it would be useful if there were more opportunities to work on-line, from home, in order to ease themselves into working life. The Strategic Manager for Progression and Learning responded that DurhamWorks is aware of these issues and provision for this type of work is available.

Referring to the number of young people being supported, Cllr Charlton asked what the outcomes are for the 71 young people who are not being progressed through the DurhamWorks project. The Strategic Manager for Progression and Learning responded that assistance continues to be offered to those young people, however, a small number of young people choose not to engage.

The Chair asked what targets are being achieved with regard to EET. The Strategic Manager for Progression and Learning responded that the Cabinet endorsed the Opportunities for Every Care Leaver report which included targets to encourage more employment and apprenticeship opportunities.

Cllr McKeon asked about the long-term outcomes and whether there is evidence to show that young people are gaining employment after their training. The Strategic Manager for Progression and Learning replied that 95% of those young people supported through the scheme have gained employment.

The care leavers then spoke about their experience of the care system. The young people were complimentary about the support they had received from their Young Person's Adviser and their foster placement. They reported that they would have benefitted from more support with mental health issues.

The Head of Looked After Services and Care Leavers informed members that the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services is establishing a group of senior officers and health service representatives to identify specific groups that are in need of mental health support and to ensure that the support is made available. The Strategic Manager for Looked After and Permanence informed the panel that the Full Circle Service provides emotional and psychological support. The Chair requested that regular updates be given to the Panel regarding the progress of the group.

The Chair then referred the Panel to the questions posed at the conclusion of the presentation on the Local Offer for Care Leavers and the Panel discussed these questions in small groups. A note was taken of the discussion.

Having heard the issues raised directly by the care leavers, the Panel requested the Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers to write to the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board to raise the Corporate Parenting Panel's concerns regarding mental health issues.

**Resolved:**

- i. Noted the content of the report and presentation;
- ii. Requested any additional information required in relation to education, employment and training opportunities for Care Leavers.

Linda Bailey, Trish Lambert and the care leavers left the meeting.

**8. Children in Care Council (CiCC) Update**

J Wilson provided the following update:

- Training for foster carers had recently taken place.
- With reference to the 'promise' to support looked after children, this had been amended to make it more child-friendly.
- The CiCC is doing some work on updating the Looked After Guide.
- February 16 is National Care Day and to link in with this the CiCC is launching their Care Leavers Challenge. Members were invited to participate and those wishing to take part were asked to sign up by 5 February. The challenge takes place between 12 and 25 February and the challenge is to live like a care leaver with only £57.90 per week to live on. Information packs were made available at the end of the meeting.
- The CiCC is to planning to apply for Key Funding for £500 in respect of an activities budget.
- All members were invited to attend the mentoring training on 30 January at 5 pm at County Hall.

## **9. Exclusion of the public**

### **Resolved:**

That under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

## **10. Regulation 44 visits: summary report (including responsive repairs)**

The Panel noted the report of the Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers which provided a summary of the Regulation 44 visit action plans and responsive repairs for December 2017 (for copy of report see file of minutes).

The Panel noted that all Regulation 44 visit actions had been completed and the Chair congratulated the residential services. Cllr Charlton pointed out that some of the action plans do not show the names of those members who attend the visits and the Head of Looked After Children and Care Leavers agreed to request that this information is included in the future.

With regard to the Regulation 44 inspectors and visitors, J Wilson commented that young people often find it difficult to speak openly to them as they are unfamiliar faces and he suggested that alternative communication methods are made available for the young people, for example, anonymous comments cards which are given to the inspectors. It was agreed that from April 2018, the new Regulation 44 visitors would produce a poster about themselves for display in the homes in order to familiarise themselves with the young people.

In relation to responsive repairs, the Chair informed the Panel that the next visit to Service Direct will take place in April.

### **Resolved:**

That the Regulation 44 action plans and responsive repairs for December 2017 be noted.

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**Corporate Parenting Panel**

**23 February 2018**



**CPP Performance Management Framework**

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**Report of Laura Malone, Team Leader, Performance, Co-ordination and Development**

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**Purpose of Report**

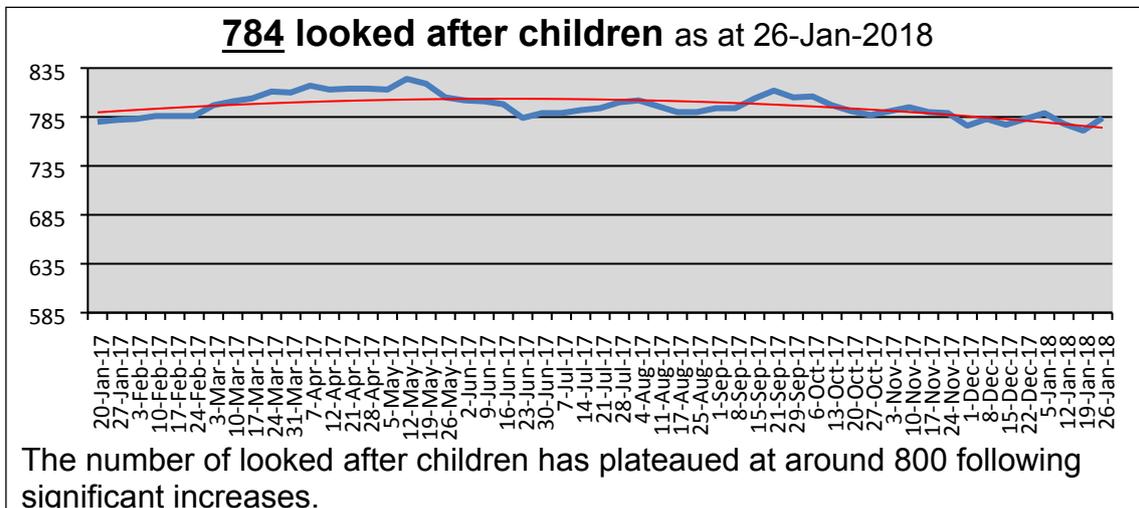
- 1 The purpose of the report is to present Corporate Parenting Panel with an overview of performance in relation to Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

**Background**

- 2 Durham County Council's Performance Team have developed a draft performance management framework for Corporate Parenting Panel based upon the Local Government Association's Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) identified for looked after children and care leavers. The full draft CPP PMF scorecard is attached at Appendix 1. Analysis of this is reported below.
- 3 Additionally, a PMF has also been developed for the Aycliffe Secure Centre sub-group.

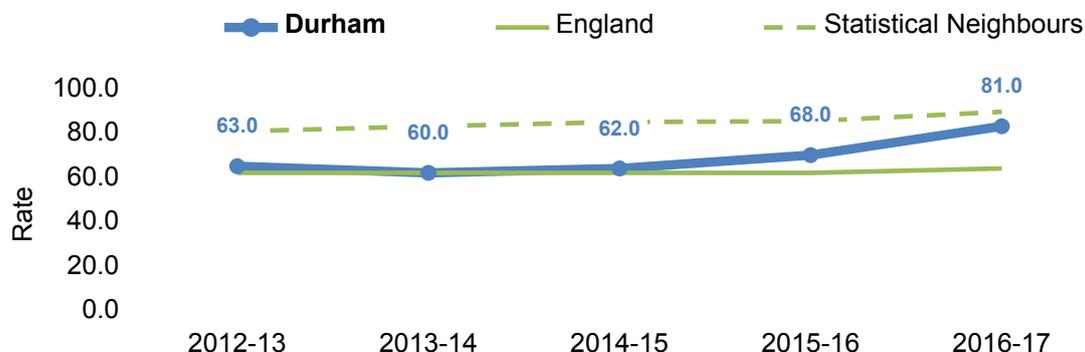
**Corporate Parenting Panel Performance Management Framework Analysis**

***What are the characteristics of our cohort of children in care and care leavers?***



Durham's **LAC rate** as at 26-Jan-18 is **78.2**

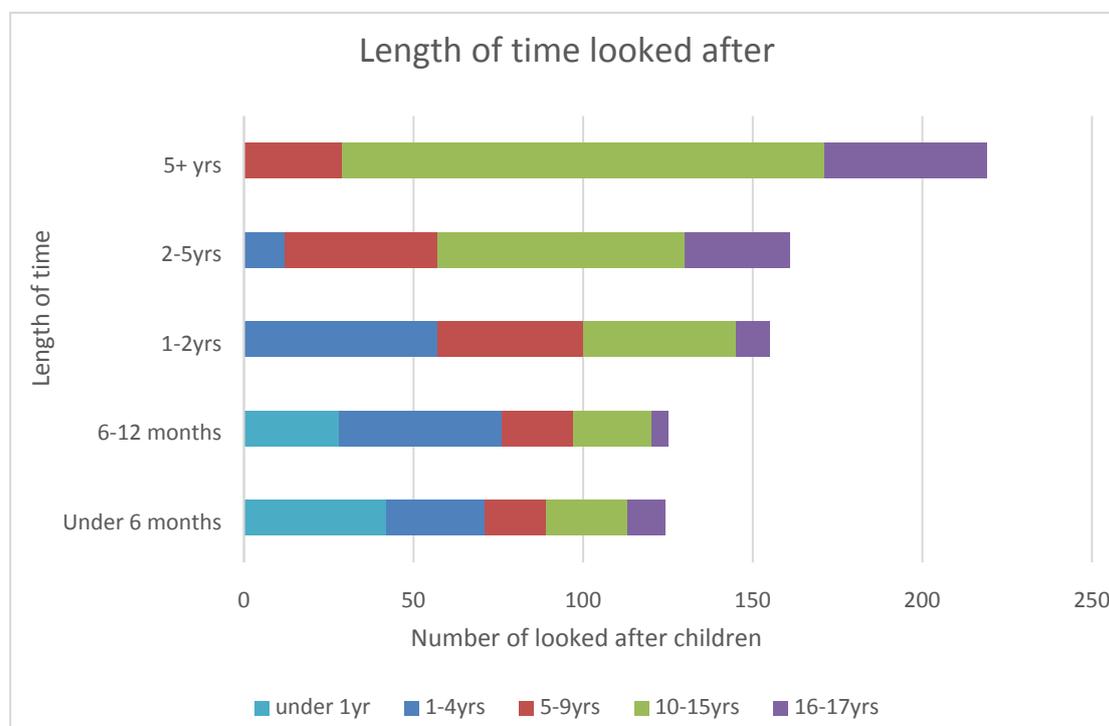
**Rate of children looked after at 31 March per 10,000 children aged under 18 years**



The LAC rate is higher than in England but lower than our statistical and regional neighbours.

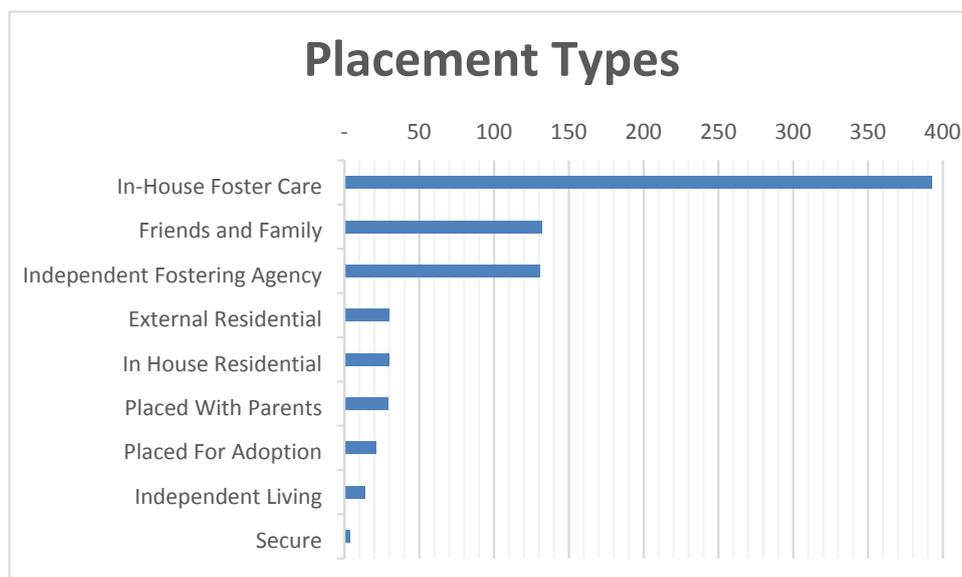
There are over **200** children who have who have been looked after for **more than 5 years**, the majority are aged 10-15 years old.

Under 1s make up the highest proportion of those looked after for less than 6 months.



In 2016/17, Durham had a higher proportion of under 1's than comparator groups (9% compared to 5% in England, 6% in statistical neighbours and 7% in the North East).

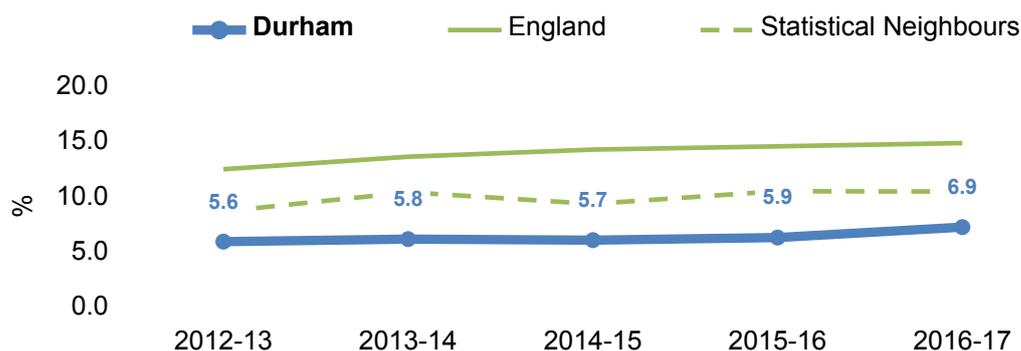
More than **8 in 10** of our LAC (84%) are living in **foster placements**



**External residential placements**, which are generally high cost, have increased to **30**. In April 2015, there were only 15. The majority of these young people are in residential school provision which is consistent with their Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).

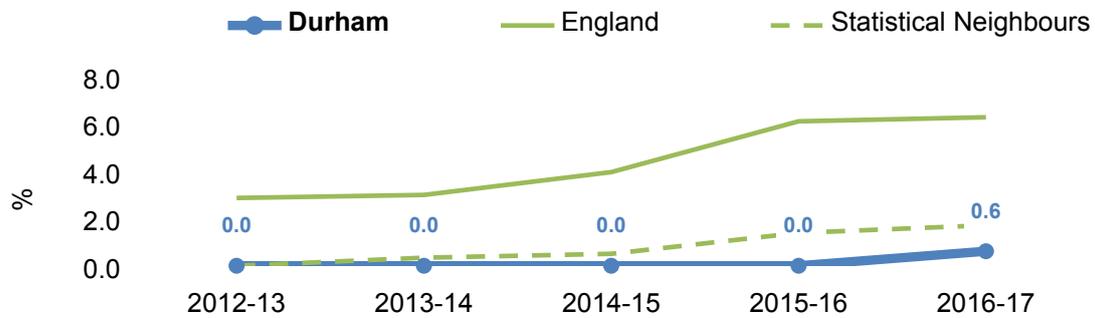
The proportion of LAC **placed over 20 miles** outside of the LA boundary remains consistently **lower** than in comparator LAs

**CLA at 31 March by placement location: % CLA placed over 20 miles: Outside LA boundary**



**There are 5 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.**

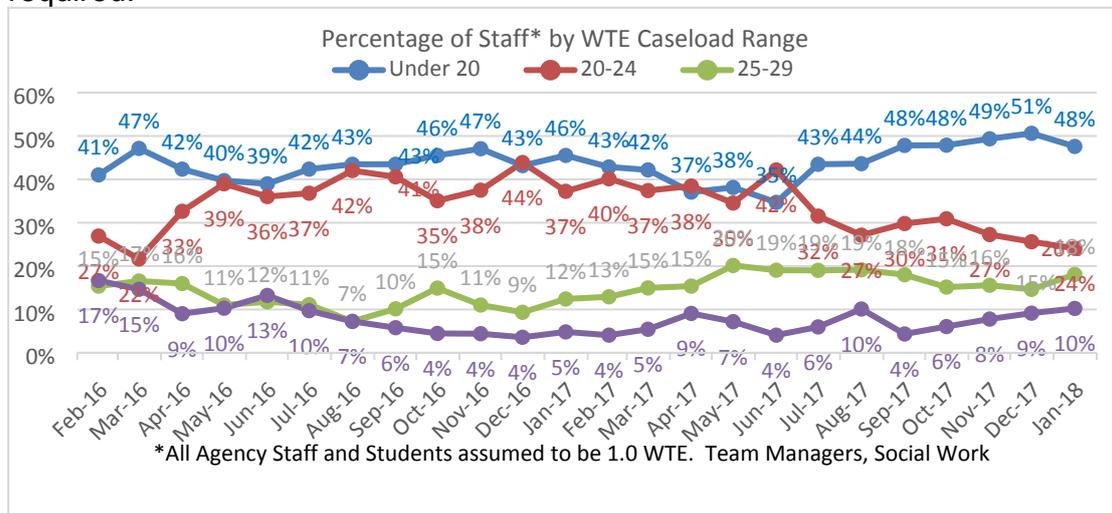
**% of children looked after at 31 March who are unaccompanied asylum seeking children**



Durham has a lower proportion of UASC than in England and statistical neighbour LAs.

**48% of Social Workers have a caseload of less than 20.**

17 FTE staff have a caseload of 30 or more. None of these are within the Looked After and Care Leavers service. This a lower percentage than in Feb16 when the Ofsted inspection was held but further improvement is required.



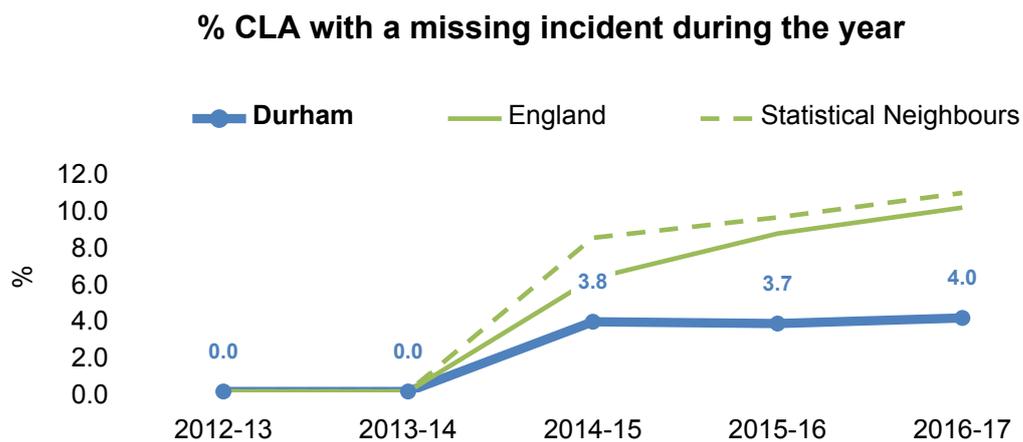
**Do our partner agencies understand their role in supporting us as corporate parents?**

Performance in relation to the **educational attainment** of looked after children is difficult to quantify at the moment as no 2017 benchmarking data is yet available. However, comparing to last year's benchmarking data shows a positive picture in relation to Key Stage 2 and attendance and exclusion data.

Due to changes at Key Stage 4 (Attainment 8 – former GCSE) data is not comparable.

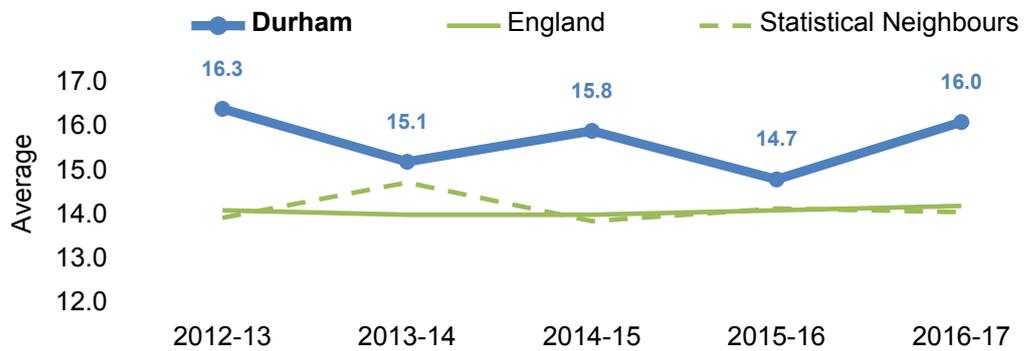
A detailed report on educational attainment of looked after children will be presented by the Virtual School Head Teacher.

The proportion of LAC missing during the year remains lower than in comparator groups. Additionally, **96%** have had a **Return to Home Interview** (RTHI) completed in the year to 31-Dec-17.



In the 2016/17 Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), Durham's LAC scored an average of 16; this has increased from 14.8 last year and is higher than in in England and the North East.

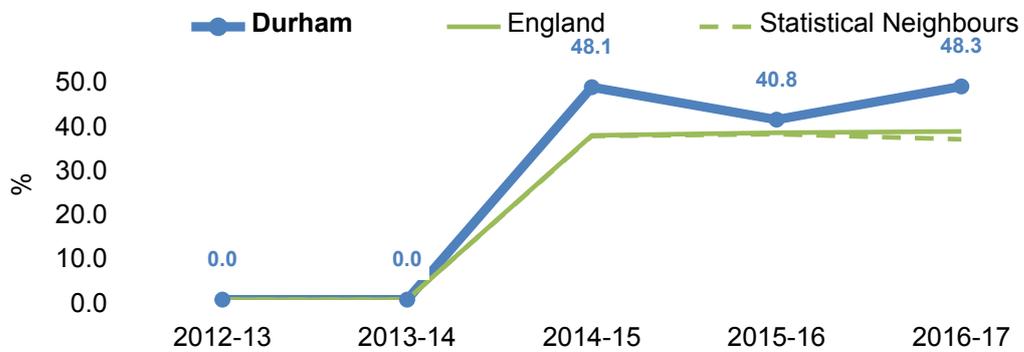
### Average SDQ score per child



90% of LAC with a raised score are already known to the Full Circle Team and are receiving therapeutic support (with 67% obtaining a lower score when re-tested). Many of the 10% of children not known to Full Circle have severe learning disabilities rather than emotional difficulties. For the remainder of this unknown group, a letter is sent to their carer and social worker and a consultation is offered with the Senior Practitioner to explore the issues leading to the raised score and plan for additional support.

Those identified as being a 'concern' was higher in Durham.

### % Banded SDQ Score: Concern



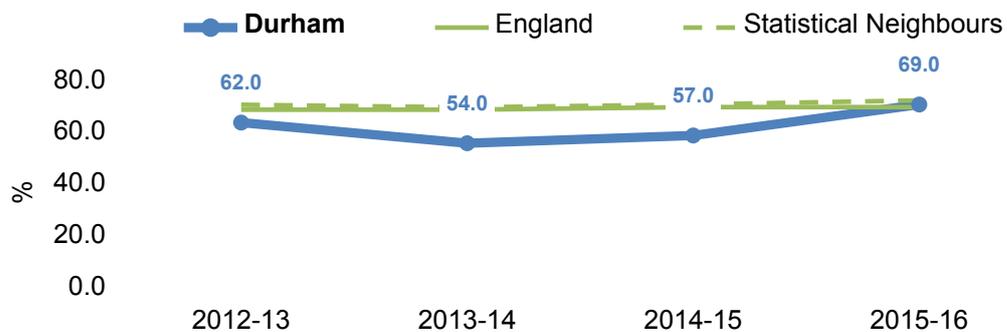
**How are we giving children and young people the chance to express their views, wishes and feelings? How do we know those are being acted on?**

As at 31-Dec-17, **9** looked after children were **accessing an Independent Visitor**. Independent Visitors are volunteers who befriend and spend time with a child or young person within local authority care. All local authorities have a statutory duty to provide an Independent Visitor's service and all of our LAC are offered; however, some neither need nor want an Independent Visitor.

**Are we providing stable environments for children in our care?**

As at 31-Dec-17, **74.1%** of LAC under 16 who have been in care for at least 2 years have been in the **same placement for 2 years or more**

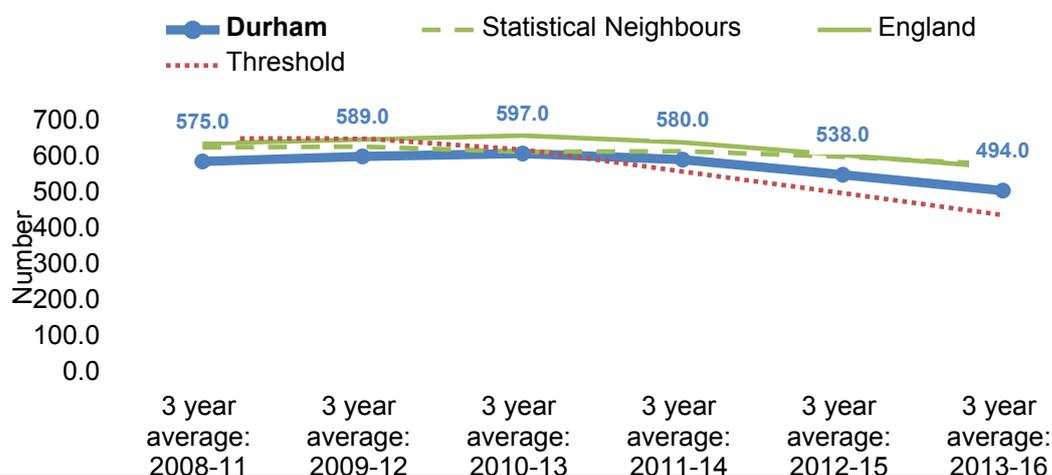
**Children looked after for at least 2.5 years and aged under 16 who have been in the same placement for at least 2 years**



The percentage of LAC with 3 or more placements is better than comparators.

The **average number of days** between Durham a child entering care and them moving in with their **adoptive family** is above the council's target of 450 days (**468** at 31-Dec-17) but remains better than comparators.

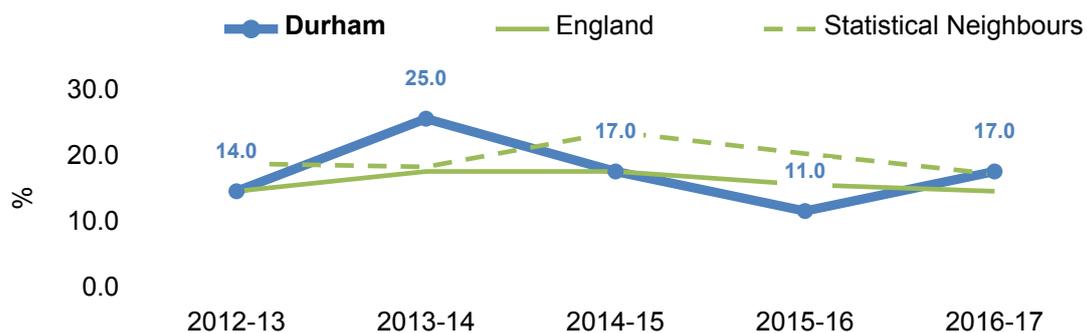
**A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days)**



Between April-Dec 2017, **37 children have been adopted from care**. This is 13% of all children who have left care, which is lower than last year and comparators.

There are 21 children waiting for adoption as at 26-Jan-18. This is monitored monthly and this has identified that a lot of these children are difficult to place due to complex needs/disability or being part of sibling groups.

**Percentage of looked after children adopted during the year**



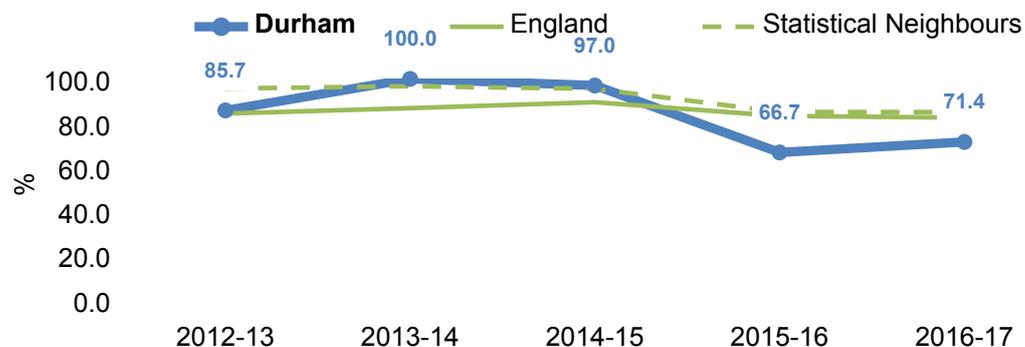
***What are we doing to look after the health and wellbeing of children in our care?***

There have been significant improvements in the number of looked after children who receive an Initial Health Assessment within 20 days and those who have had their annual health assessment and dental checks following close working between the council and health colleagues.

Measure	2016/17	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Q3 2017/18	DoT
Percentage of children looked after continuously for 12 months or more who had a dental check	87.1%	82.5%	90.3%	95%	↑
Percentage of children looked after continuously for 12 months or more who have had the required number of health assessments	84.8%	86.4%	83.8%	90.2%	↑
Completion of Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) within the statutory timescale of 20 working days	63.9% Jan-Mar17	82.7% Apr-Jun17	69.2% Jul-Sep17	82.4% Oct-Dec17	↑

An area for improvement identified relates to looked after children's **development assessments**, which increased in 2016/17 but remain below comparators. This is not something which has previously been monitored within the council and this will be raised with health colleagues.

#### % CLA whose development assessments were up to date



*NB: Development assessment data is collected for children aged 4 and under at 31 March who were looked after continuously for at least 12 months, excluding children in respite care. This measures whether the child's Health Surveillance or Health Promotion Checks were up-to-date.*

#### What are outcomes like for our care leavers?

As reported to the CPP in January 2018, performance overall for our care leavers remains a success; with continued positive outcomes achieved for our care leavers in relation to suitable accommodation and education.

An area to be explored further is the number of female care leavers aged 17-21 who are **pregnant or mothers** which is currently **39% (42 care leavers)**. This is a particular focus of the Care Leavers Strategic Group and support will be offered through the Vulnerable Parent Pathway.

#### Next Steps

- 4 It is proposed that the agreed Corporate Parenting Panel PMF will be reported on an exception basis on a quarterly cycle.
- 5 CPP Members are requested to identify any additional performance measures and/or ways to evidence each of the LGA's KLOEs.

#### Recommendations

- 6 Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are recommended to:
  - Note the latest performance in relation looked after children and care leavers in County Durham.
  - Identify any additional performance measures for inclusion in the PMF.

- Consider ways to evidence each of the KLOEs, including those not monitored through the CPP PMF.

**Contact: Laura Malone, Team Leader, Performance, Co-ordination and Development Email: [laura.malone@durham.gov.uk](mailto:laura.malone@durham.gov.uk) / Tel: 03000 267 348**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance – N/A**

**Staffing –** Staffing within Children’s Services will impact upon Social Worker caseloads

**Risk –** Reputational risk to the Council and Corporate Parenting Panel if it is not judged to be performing effectively by Ofsted.

**Equality and diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty – N/A**

**Accommodation – N/A**

**Crime and disorder – N/A**

**Human rights – N/A**

**Consultation – N/A**

**Procurement – N/A**

**Disability Issues – N/A**

**Legal Implications - N/A**

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## County Durham Corporate Parenting Panel: Performance Management Framework

### What are the characteristics of our cohort of children in care and care leavers?

Measure	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Latest data	Date	Target	England	North East	Stat Neighbour
Rate of LAC per 10,000 u18 population	63	60	62	68	81	<b>78.2</b>	26-Jan-18	N/A	<b>62</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>87.5</b>
Age and length of time in care						See report		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
LAC Placement breakdown						See report		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
LAC placed over 20 miles (outside LA boundary)	5.6	5.8	5.7	5.9	6.9	<b>6.9</b>	31-Mar-17	N/A	<b>14.5</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>10.1</b>
Number of children awaiting adoption						<b>21</b>	26-Jan-18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of children adopted from care during the year	14.0	25.0	17.0	11.0	17.0	<b>12.8</b>	Apr-Dec17	15%	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16.6</b>
Percentage of unaccompanied asylum seeking children [Number]					0.6% [5]	<b>0.6%</b> [5]	31-Mar-17	N/A	6.3	1	1.7
Social worker caseloads						See report		<20	N/A	N/A	N/A

### Do all of our councillors and officers know about their corporate parenting responsibilities?

Measure	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Latest data	Date	Target	England	North East	Stat Neighbour
Number of elected members who have attended Corporate Parenting Panel training						<b>TBC</b>	TBC	TBC			

### Do our partner agencies understand their role in supporting us as corporate parents?

Measure	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Latest data	Date	Target	England	North East	Stat Neighbour
Number of LAC reported as missing or absent from care [occurrences]			39 [117]	36 [158]	44 [193]	<b>28</b> [98]	Apr-Dec17	N/A			
Percentage of Return to Home Interviews completed with LAC				70	94.8	<b>96.6</b>	Apr-Dec17	N/A			
Percentage of LAC with a missing incident during the year			3.8	3.7	4.0	<b>4</b>	2016/17	N/A	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10.8</b>
Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire - Average score	15.3	15.5	15.8	14.7	16.0	<b>16</b>	2016/17	N/A	<b>14.1</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>14</b>
Percentage of LAC achieving the expected <u>KS1</u> standard in:				61%	33%	<b>33%</b>		N/A	<b>50%</b> (2015/16)	<b>61%</b> (2015/16)	
Reading											
Writing				48%	24%	<b>24%</b>	2016/17 Ac Yr	N/A	<b>37%</b> (2015/16)	<b>45%</b>	
Maths				57%	43%	<b>43%</b>		N/A	<b>46%</b> (2015/16)	<b>58%</b> (2015/16)	
Percentage of LAC achieving the expected <u>KS2</u> standard in Reading, Writing and Maths				44%	35%	<b>35%</b>	2016/17 Ac Yr	N/A	<b>25%</b> (2015/16)	<b>27%</b> (2015/16)	<b>29%</b> (2015/16)
Average Attainment 8 score of Looked After Children ( <u>KS4</u> )						<b>22.1</b>	2016/17 Ac Yr	N/A			

Measure	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Latest data	Date	Target	England	North East	Stat Neighbour
Exclusion from school of Looked After Children - Percentage of children permanently excluded	0%	0.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2016/17 Ac Yr	N/A	0.14% (2014/15)		
Exclusion from school of Looked After Children - percentage of children with at least one fixed exclusion	9%	7.0%	9.5%	5%	9%	9%	2016/17 Ac Yr	N/A	10% (2014/15)	9% (2014/15)	10% (2014/15)
Attendance at school (Maintained) of Looked After Children - Percentage classed as persistent absentees				4.7%	7.7%	7.7%	2016/17 Ac Yr	N/A	9.1% (2015/16)	6.7% (2015/16)	7.1% (2015/16)
Percentage of children looked after continuously for 12 months or more aged 10+ who received a conviction [number of children]	10.2% [25]	5.9% [15]	3.8% [10]	3.6% [10]	4.4% [14]	4.6% [16]	@31Dec17	N/A	4.5%	6.3%	6.5%

Further detail on educational attainment, exclusions, absence in the Virtual School Headteacher's Annual Report

#### How are we giving children and young people the chance to express their views, wishes and feelings? How do we know those are being acted on?

Measure	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Latest data	Date	Target	England	North East	Stat Neighbour
Percentage of LAC accessing an independent visitor [Number]					1.23% [10]	1.14% [9]	31-Dec-17	N/A			

Children's Services Survey due to begin Mar18

#### How do we show children in our care that we have high aspirations for them?

Not evidenced through performance measures

VSH Annual Report to CPP?

## Are we providing stable environments for children in our care?

Measure	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Latest data	Date	Target	England	North East	Stat Neighbour
Percentage of LAC with 3 or more placements during the year	14	13	7	6	6.1	6.9	2017	5%	10	9	10
Percentage of CLA continuously for 2.5 years or more aged under 16 who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years	62	54	57	69	72.6	74.1	2017	72%	68	72	70.6
Average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted		533	449	420	477	468	31-Dec-17	450	522 (2015/16)	563 (2015/16)	
Average number of days between an LA receiving court authority to place a child and the LA deciding on a match to an adoptive family, for children		238	211	173	196	217	31-Dec-17	220	244 (2015/16)	211 (2015/16)	
Percentage of children adopted from care (as % of total children leaving care) [number of children adopted shown in brackets]		25.4% [73]	17.3% [45]	11.1% [28]	17.3% [53]	12.8% [37]	31-Dec-17	15%	14	14	16.6
Number of Mainstream Foster Carers (Approved in period)		26	24	22	25	20	Apr-Dec17	N/A	13 (2015/16)	11 (2015/16)	12 (2015/16)
Number of Friends and Family Foster Carers (Approved in period)		25	41	40	46	40	Apr-Dec17	N/A	18 (2014/15)	17 (2014/15)	18 (2014/15)
Number of Friends and Family Carers Temporarily Approved as Foster					132	84	Apr-Dec17	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of Adopters (Approved in period)		58	42	35	22	18	Apr-Dec17	N/A	22 (2014/15)	22 (2014/15)	20 (2014/15)

Children's Commissioner Stability Index – Placement moves, School moves, changes in SW

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### What are we doing to look after the health and wellbeing of children in our care?

Measure	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Latest data	Date	Target	England	North East	Stat Neighbour
Initial Health Assessments completed within 20 working days	100.0	100.0	95.6	100.0	84.8	<b>82.7</b>	Apr-Jun17	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
LAC with the required number of health assessments	92.0	95.1	93.5	89.0	84.8	<b>90.2</b>	Apr-Dec17	N/A	89%	91%	91%
LAC who have had a dental check	92.0	90.2	97.9	95.5	87.1	<b>95.0</b>	Apr-Dec17	N/A	83%	83%	83%
LAC whose immunisations were up-to-date	100	100	95.6	100	84.8	<b>84.8</b>	2016/17	N/A	84.4	86.2	82.6
LAC whose development assessments were up to date	85.7	100.0	97.0	66.7	71.4	<b>71.4</b>	2016/17	N/A	82.5 (2016/17)	77.1 (2016/17)	84.9 (2016/17)
% CLA identified as having a substance misuse problem in the year	2.3	2.4	1.6	x	1.6	<b>1.6</b>	2016/17	N/A	4.1	4.9	5.5
Care leavers who are pregnant or mothers					31.1 [32 of 103]	<b>38.9</b> [42 of 108]	@Dec17	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

LAC Health Needs Assessment - Report to CPP?

### What are outcomes like for our care leavers?

Measure	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Latest data	Date	Target	England	North East	Stat Neighbour
Percentage of care leavers aged 17-21 in suitable accommodation				93.5% [217 of 232]	90.4% [216 of 239]	<b>88.8</b> [221 of 249]	@31Dec17	N/A	84% (2015/16)	86% (2015/16)	
Percentage of care leavers aged 17-21 in education, employment or training (EET)				57.3% [133 of 232]	69.5% [166 of 239]	<b>63.5</b> [158 of 249]	@31Dec17	N/A	52%	50%	
Percentage of care leavers aged 17-21 not in education, employment or training (NEET)				40.1% [93 of 232]	25.1% [60 of 239]	<b>29.3</b> [73 of 249]	@31Dec17	N/A	38%	40%	
Percentage of care leavers aged 17-21 in higher education				4.3% [10 of 232]	5.4% [13 of 239]	<b>5.6</b> [14 of 249]	@31Dec17	N/A	6%	6%	

### How are we planning for the future and commissioning services?

Not evidenced through performance measures

### How well do we support our foster carers?

Not evidenced through performance measures

## Corporate Parenting Panel

23 February 2018



### Looked After Children Planning for Permanence: Fostering and Adoption

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## Report of Karen Robb, Strategic Manager Looked After Children and Permanence, Children and young People's Services, Durham County Council

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### Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Corporate Parenting Panel about the current activity and performance in relation to achieving Permanence for Looked After Children and to outline the plans for service developments over the next 12 months.

### Introduction – Context of Permanence

- 2 Permanency is defined as a framework of emotional, physical and legal conditions that give a child/young person a sense of commitment, security, and continuity of care throughout their childhood and beyond.
- 3 Permanence planning is based on the philosophy that every child has the right to a permanent stable and loving home, preferably with his or her own family.
- 4 Permanence does not necessarily mean a placement outside of the family and wherever possible all family options must have been fully explored before any consideration of a placement outside of the immediate or extended family or network.
- 5 For the purposes of this report, the focus will be retained on those children for whom it has been concluded that permanence must be achieved outside of the birth family and therefore as Looked After Children for whom the Council is acting as Corporate Parents.
- 6 Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) have developed an Early Permanence Strategy as a key priority for service improvement. This aims to maintain and support children within their birth families and for those who cannot that their care plans are progressed in a timely manner without delay. The Strategy will also ensure a consistent approach across the service.

## **Permanence in Durham – The current situation**

- 7 Durham County Council are currently responsible for Looking After 790 Children and Young People and of these 400 have a care plan of permanence outside of their birth family. The plans of these children are detailed more specifically below:
- 286 have a plan of long term placement within foster care
  - 22 have a plan of long term placement in a residential setting
  - 92 have a plan of Adoption
- 8 Of the 286 Children and Young People who have a plan of long term placement within foster care 213 are in a permanent placement.
- 9 Of the 22 Children and Young People who have a plan of long term placement in a residential setting all are in placements which can provide them with permanence.
- 10 Of the 92 children with a plan of Adoption, a number of these have not yet progressed through the Court arena so their plans are not yet confirmed. There are 63 of these children who are the subject of a Placement Order. 21 of those 63 children are in their prospective adoptive placement.

## **Action Planning for those Children not in a permanent placement**

- 11 Of those children with a plan of long term foster care, there are currently 73 children who are not matched to a permanent placement. Of those children 39 are in a placement which can offer them permanence but due to the needs of the child or the carers it is not yet appropriate to formally match these children to their placement via the fostering panel. Subsequently, there are 34 children currently for whom the Local Authority are actively family finding for, as they do not have a permanent placement identified. There are significant challenges in family finding due to the complex needs the children have and the challenging behaviours they can present with. All of the 34 children have stable and consistent care arrangements at present, albeit the current carers are unable to care for the children on a permanent basis.
- 12 The Fostering Service has been recently re-structured. One of the aims of this is to improve the performance in relation to family finding and reduce drift and delay in securing long term placements for children. All of these children have an identified social worker who acts as family finder and whose role it is to identify appropriate foster carers for them. Ensuring the analysis of children's needs to inform the Recruitment and Marketing Strategy across both Fostering and Adoption is a key priority enabling us to recruit the carers we need.
- 13 In relation to children with a plan of Adoption, there are 63 children who have had their plans ratified by the Court and who are now the subject of Placement Orders. There are currently 21 of these children who are placed in their prospective adoptive placements. The other 42 children all have an allocated family finder who is continually exploring both the regional and

national pool of prospective adopters to find the right family for them. All of the 42 children have some additional or complex needs, are older children or are part of a sibling group and nationally these are recognised as significant barriers to securing timely adoptive placements. The service continues to work proactively for these children and plans are in place with the Marketing team to ensure that adopter recruitment is targeted and tailored to the needs of these children.

- 14 In addition it should be noted that the close working relationship between the adoption team and LAC3 who produce all the Child Permanence Reports for children with Care Plans of adoption ensures that this is a key focus and early identification of adopters and linking and matching takes place for these children without delay.

### **The context of OFSTED**

- 15 An identified improvement in permanence, particularly for adopter recruitment which was based on an analysis of need, was made by OFSTED in 2016 to ensure that recruitment was targeted to the needs of the children. The adoption service is working closely with marketing & communications in line with a Revised Recruitment and Marketing Strategy to develop a profile of those adopters who have adopted children with complex or additional needs and those older children, as well as sibling groups. It is hoped that a profile specifically for these carers will allow recruitment activity to be targeted and focussed to identify prospective adopters for the children who we have been unable to secure placements for.
- 16 Recruitment of adopters has declined significantly nationally which is confirmed by the figures presented by the Adoption Leadership Board and is insufficient to meet the needs of the numbers of children with a care plan of adoption. The service is progressing with its plan to become part of Regional Adoption Agency, and a project manager is currently being recruited to progress this process. The service is also seeking to further develop its strategy with regard to fostering to adopt and this will be a crucial element of the new early permanence strategy and in the development plan of the new pre-birth intervention team.

### **Introduction of the Early Permanence Strategy**

- 17 The main barrier to achieving permanence for children is the lack of sufficient fosters carers to meet the level of demand to effectively care for them and meet their needs. Significant resources and efforts have been put into increasing the carer population and the picture in this regard is improving. This is a national issue given the rising numbers of looked after children across the country. There are other barriers such as drift and delay in progressing children's plans and lack of realistic planning that can also contribute to a failure to realise a child's plan at the earliest opportunity. Mention the wider restructure of FF and the focus on reducing the number of change of social workers.

- 18 To seek to address this the Service has devised a new “Early Permanence Strategy”, which will be shared with all frontline children’s services workers and managers via briefing sessions within March. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that achieving permanence is for children is a centre of all social work practice and that the importance of permanence is equally recognised and prioritised at the start of the child’s journey if they do become looked after as it is at the end.
- 19 The strategy aims to raise the awareness of and the general profile of permanence and to provide workers with the information, tools and support to achieve permanence at the earliest possible stage for the child.
- 20 As part of the restructure of children’s services the scrutiny and monitoring of Special Guardianship Order plans will also be conducting within the Looked After Service and the Agency Decision Maker for Adoption will directly oversee these plans, which recognises Special Guardianship Orders as one of the key routes to permanence for children.

## **Summary**

- 21 This report highlights that despite some very good examples of achieving permanence for children, there continue to be children whose plan is permanence outside of their birth family and yet who Children’s Services have been unable to identify a permanently matched placement to meet their needs provide such a placement to meet their plan at this time. There remains further work therefore to do in this area to improve performance and achieve permanence for all children.

## **Recommendations**

- 22 Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are recommended to:
- The implementation of the Early Permanence Strategy to deliver a consistent service wide approach to Care Planning for children to remain at home with their families whenever possible and where children need to become looked after their plans are progressed in a timely manner to avoid drift and delay
  - To continue the targeted recruitment of both foster carers and adopters, based upon both the profiles of the children to ensure the provision meets the needs of the most difficult children
  - To improve effective senior management oversight of all cases where children are looked after to reduce drift and delay and that they achieve permanence at the earliest opportunity
  - To ensure a clear performance framework is developed to effectively report progress to CYPST and to Elected Members

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**Contact: Chris Bell Tel: 03000 269453**

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**Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance – N/A**

**Staffing – N/A**

**Risk – N/A**

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – N/A**

**Accommodation– N/A**

**Crime and Disorder– N/A**

**Human Rights– N/A**

**Consultation– N/A**

**Procurement– N/A**

**Disability Issues– N/A**

**Legal Implications– N/A**

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## Corporate Parenting Panel

23 February 2018



### Education Performance Report Durham Virtual School for Looked After Children

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## Report of Christine Stonehouse, Virtual School Head, Durham County Council

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### Purpose of Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the current educational performance for Durham Virtual School.

### Background

- 2 As of 6 February 2018 there are 512 looked after children of statutory school age who are the responsibility of Durham County Council. 249 are primary age and 263 are secondary age. 230 are female and 282 are male. 430 attend Durham schools and 82 attend non-Durham schools. 95 attend special school / specialist provision.
- 3 Currently 46% of Durham looked after children have an identified special educational need. 23% have an Education Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational need (SEN). 22% are supported by a SEN Support Plan.
- 4 In the Autumn term 2017 we monitored the progress of all Durham looked after children and young people and rag-rated their progress. Monitoring for key year groups was supported by representatives from the Permanence Team and Young Peoples Service.

### Target Setting

- 5 **Virtual School targets for current year 11 and 10 cohorts**  
For grade 4+ English, we set targets of 29% year 11 and 30% year 10.  
For maths, the targets are 25% year 11 and 30% year 10.  
For the Basics Measure (English and Maths at 4+), the target is 25% year 11 and 26% year 10.
- 6 **Virtual School targets for current year 5 and 6 cohorts**  
For year 6 we have set targets of expected standards in English of 42%, for writing and maths 38% and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) 33%.  
For year 5 the targets are 56% across the board.

## **Provisional Attainment and Progress Outcomes 2017**

- 7 This summary information is drawn from the NCER/NEXUS data release January 2018. The DfE have stipulated this data cannot be published before the official release of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

Initial analysis of this unvalidated data suggests that at KS2 and KS4 looked after children and young people will be at least in line with the national average and above for some measures despite a dip from 2016. At KS1 it is likely that results will be below the national average but in line with expectations.

## **Attendance and Exclusions**

- 8 There is a very positive 3-year trend 2013-16 against national and regional data for looked after children. The persistent absence percentage for Durham looked after children is better than national and regional rates, but showed an increase from 2015/16 for Oct – Dec. The attendance of looked after children and young people at Special Schools is a priority area, particularly for those in social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) settings.
- 9 We have seen a welcome decline in fixed term exclusion (FTE) trends for looked after children and young people, both in the number of children and young people excluded and in the number of days lost. However, we believe it is still too high. We have not had any permanently excluded looked after children in the last 2 years.  
Rates of FTE are highest in SEMH schools.

## **Quality Assurance of Personal Education Plan (PEP)**

- 10 The Virtual School has recently undertaken robust quality assurance (QA) of the PEPs. The scrutiny sample was more than double that of 2016-17. The QA identified a 17% dip in PEPS judged to be high quality or better. This was caused by a change to the process last year which gave more responsibility to the schools. We have reviewed this and will ensure the caseworkers have an increased input to embed practice across schools.

## **Virtual School Areas for Development**

- 11 The Virtual School team are developing a more effective system for recording and monitoring pupil progress so that we can track, analyse and intervene more swiftly.
- 12 There is an increasing government and Ofsted focus on the curriculum diet for all pupils and, as a Virtual School, we are challenging schools to review this so that looked after children and young people attend, engage and achieve.

- 13 Consultation is presently in place with Head Teachers to consider the use of Pupil Premium Plus for looked after children and the level of the funding retained by the Virtual School in 2018-19 to enable centrally managed programmes of intervention.
- 14 We are reviewing the format and process of the PEP to bring about an improvement in the quality.

### **Recommendations**

- 15 Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are recommended to:
- Note the content of the report
  - Note the presentation which will be given at the meeting
  - Request any additional information required in relation to the education performance of Looked After Children

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**Contact: Christine Stonehouse, Virtual School Head, Durham County Council. 03000 265802, [christine.stonehouse@durham.gov.uk](mailto:christine.stonehouse@durham.gov.uk) or Clive Horton, Virtual School Deputy Head, Durham County Council. 03000 267749, [clive.horton@durham.gov.uk](mailto:clive.horton@durham.gov.uk)**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** – increase to retained budget from £300 to £600

**Staffing** – none

**Risk** – none

**Equality and diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty** – none

**Accommodation** – none

**Crime and disorder** – none

**Human rights** –none

**Consultation** – with Head Teachers to agree the level of Pupil Premium Plus funding to be retained centrally by the Virtual School

**Procurement** – none

**Disability Issues** – none

**Legal Implications-** the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure the educational needs of looked after children are promoted including the requirement that all looked after children of statutory school age have a PEP in place

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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