

Children and Young People's Services

Independent Reviewing Officer Looked After Children Annual Report 2017/18

**14th December 2018
Corporate Parenting Panel**

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Role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

There are 2 main functions of the IROs in Durham

- Looked After Children
- Children subject to Child Protection Plans

Child Protection Chair

- The responsibilities for a conference chair are set out within the LSCB Child Protection Procedures.
- The Conference chair needs to ensure that statutory functions within child protection conferences are delivered in a robust way

Looked After Children

The responsibilities for IRO in relation to LA children are set out within the IRO Handbook;

- Quality assure care planning and review process for LA Children
- Ensure the plan are robust and everything is in place to meet the child's needs

Looked After Children in Durham

Over recent years the number of children looked after has significantly increased.

The total number of looked after children during the year has increased from 1176 in 2016/17 to 1195 in 2017/18.

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Dispute Resolution Process

IRO's have a responsibility to challenge CYPS when they feel they are not doing enough or when they disagree with a plan. They raise this through a DRP.

There were 139 disputes dealt during this period, which amounts to 11.8% of the LA population.

The main themes for disputes were in relation to delays in progressing plans and quality of assessments.

DRP's are reported to senior managers on a monthly basis

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Priorities

- Increase the numbers of Looked After Children who are actively involved in their review.
- Ongoing professional development of IRO's and the IRO Service.
- Robust quality assurance and oversight of practice and care planning to ensure stability requirements are met and good outcomes achieved for children and young people.
- Promote the IRO Service and contribute to wider service development and improvement activity.
- Implementation of Signs of Safety

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Any Questions / Feedback?



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