

**Children and Young People
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

8 January 2024



**Support for Children and
Families on the Edge of Care**

**Report of John Pearce, Corporate Director for Children and Young
People's Services**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the support available for Children and Families on the Edge of Care, the programmes, and projects to help families, an understanding of the referral process, and any opportunities, successes and future plans.

Executive summary

- 2 Children's Services hold the lead responsibility for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children. Our key aim is to provide early help for children and families whilst protecting those that need it. Therefore, there are a range of programmes and services to support children remaining at home, at all levels.
- 3 Our Family Hubs provide early help through offering direct support, advice and a range of activities for children and young people from 0-19 years and their families.
- 4 The One Point Service has seven Intense Family Support teams who provide a range of support to families who have multiple complex needs and need intense support.
- 5 Our Families First service provide support to children, young people and families with complex needs and where there are concerns for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, or where families need intensive support.

- 6 Durham also has a range of innovative specialist services that support children who live with their families, helping prevent the need for children to become looked after. These teams work alongside our Families First Teams and include: Emergency Duty Team, who provide an emergency out of hours services, therapeutic services, community-based support to families in crisis, specialist exploitation teams (ASET and Erase), and Rapid Response who provide support to children who have been admitted or at risk of admission under the Mental Health Act. For those children who do come into our care, our Full Circle Therapeutic Team are available to provide direct or indirect support for our children and young people in care.
- 7 We are now further developing the Edge of Care service to provide multi-agency targeted support, including a range of accommodation options, to prevent children coming into our care, prevent family breakdown and support children to be returned home/move into independent living.

Recommendations

- 8 Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the contents of the report.

Range of services available to families on the Edge of Care

One Point Service

- 9 The One Point Service offers a number of evidence-based parenting programmes aimed at supporting family relationships and promoting positive parenting practices:
- (a) **Teen Triple P** - parenting programme for parents with young people 12-16 years. Triple P explores good communication and problem-solving to create and maintain a calm, positive family environment. Triple P is valuable to all parents, particularly those that are experiencing challenges with family relationships.
 - (b) **Triple P Stepping Stones** - for families where child has SEND.
 - (c) **Triple P Fearless programmes** - supports parents to help their child who is very anxious especially relating to school attendance.
 - (d) **Strengthening Families** - for families with children aged 10-14 years. This programme will help parents and young people prepare for their teenage years. Parent and young people attend sessions together.
 - (e) **Staying Cool** - for parents, carers, parent-figures and their teenager/s. Parents will work with their teenager to understand their emotions and how to deal with them. Parents will learn to understand their teenager's emotions and support them to manage their anger/frustration in a positive way. Parents learn how to support their teenager to take responsibility for their actions.
 - (f) **Staying Cool** - for parents and carers only. This course provides parents/carers with the knowledge and skills to manage their anger/frustration, by helping to increase their understanding and self-awareness of their emotions.
- 10 One Point have a number of other programmes to support parenting and family relationships which focus on younger children; listed below is a selection of these programmes:
- (a) **Parental Conflict** – support is also available for parents in conflict.
 - (b) **Parenting when separated programme** - this is a practical and positive evidence-based course for parents who are preparing for, going through or have gone through a separation or divorce. The course supports parents in 'Parental Coping and Self Care', 'Parenting' and the 'Co-parental Relationship'.

- (c) **Getting it Right for Children** - this course is for separating or separated parents experiencing high levels of conflict.
- (d) **Arguing Better** - this online course is for parents experiencing high levels of stress and couple conflict. It is all about finding helpful ways to communicate during stressful times.
- (e) **Emotional wellbeing support for young people**
- (f) **Chill Kids** - for primary aged children; 6 weeks programmes (1hr) supporting children to recognise their feeling and emotional and learn relaxation techniques in order to better manage their behaviours and emotions.
- (g) **Teen Zone** – for secondary age young people; 6 weeks programmes (1hr) - group activities include self-esteem, building confidence, and managing emotions. This group will allow young people to understand changes in adolescence and how this may impact on their behaviours and emotions, whilst mixing and building social skills with other young people.
- (h) **Safer Choices** - for secondary age young people; 6 weeks programme – group activity allows young people to come together in small groups to discuss adolescence, friendship, risk taking and peer pressure, and to understand and consider how the choices they make could have negative consequences. The group look at how young people make safer choices in life and feel confident to do this.
- (i) **Staying Cool Teens** - this course is for teens, it provides knowledge, skills and ideas to understand and address their emotions. The sessions help to understand anger/ frustration and how to deal with it, to prevent it turning into aggression.
- (j) **Domestic Abuse** – in collaboration with Harbour, the One Point Service provide access to a range of support programmes addressing domestic abuse.
- (k) **Inspire programme** – for victims of Domestic abuse, addresses coercive control, confidence building, etc.
- (l) **DART (Domestic Abuse Recovery Together)** – child and parent attend programme together and look at emotional wellbeing, communication, etc.
- (m) **RYPP (Respect Young People Programme)** - addressing CAPVA (Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse). RYPP is an intervention for families where children or young people aged between 8 and 18 are abusive or violent towards the people close to them, particularly their parents or carers.

- (n) **School holiday provision** - school holidays can be an added pressure for families.
 - (o) **Fun and Food programme** - and now a specific offer for young people 11+ <https://www.durham.gov.uk/funandfood>
- 11 Full details of available programmes can be found in Appendix 2, the Family Hubs Activity and Programme Guide (attached under separate cover).
- 12 The One Point Service also have a Social Inclusion Team which can provide frontline practitioners with a range of information about Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) provision across the county. They attend a range of meetings like Early Help Conversations and link to Step up/ down meetings. They can be contacted direct and advice on VCS provision requested on a range of different topics/ support, etc.

Referral Routes to One Point Service

- 13 Parents can self-refer by telephone (03000 261 111), by locating their local Family Hub on the DCC website (<https://www.durham.gov.uk/FamilyHubs>), or via the First Contact Service (03000 267 979).
- 14 Frontline practitioners can call the local Family Hub Team Manager or complete a request for programme form.

Statutory Services for Children in Need or at risk of harm (Child Protection)

Supporting Solutions Service

- 15 Supporting Solutions are our specialist Edge of Care Service for children on the Edge of Care (EoC), by which point these children will already be allocated a Social Worker. Supporting Solutions work alongside the multi-agency care team offering intensive interventions to young people, parents and carers where there has been a relationship breakdown and without this support it is likely that the young person may need to become looked after or experience a placement move. This was initially designed for young people 12+, however, following a pilot for younger children, the service is now available to children from 7 plus. Children are referred to the Supporting Solutions Service via their Social Worker.
- 16 Family Group Conference (FGC) Team is also a part of our Edge of Care Support. FGC Team work with families to identify and establish a sustainable plan to meet the needs of children and young people within their family unit. Referrals for Family Group Conferences are made by the child's Social Worker. In 2023/24, 191 Family Group Conferences and 84 Reviews took place.

- 17 Out of hours support is provided by the Supporting Solutions Service alongside the Emergency Duty Team (EDT)
- 18 During 2022/23, Supporting Solutions has successfully supported 83% (of children open to their service) to remain at home, either with family or long-term placements.
- 19 The outcomes for children and young people open to Supporting Solutions is monitored to through the use of Teen Star Model which measures progress in relation to; drug& alcohol, Well-being, Safety & Security, Structure & Education, Behaviour & Citizenship and Family/Adults. Young people are asked to score themselves at the start, during intervention, and at the point of closure. This is telling us that interventions create improvements in all areas for children and young people.
- 20 Following the success of Supporting Solutions working with children 12+, the team started work with younger children aged 7+. The team supported an additional 56 children aged 7-11 this year; 77% of those remained with family, a further 20% remained with their long-term carers. Only 3% needed to come into our care or move to a new placement.
- 21 The plan now is to build on the existing Edge of Care service, creating a multi-agency team that provides a range of accommodation options and outreach support to children, young people and their families.

Rapid Response Service (RRS)

- 22 The RRS service was developed in response to an identified need for additional services to support young people and their families where there is a high level of risk and need, and particularly where there has been previous or there is a current risk of admission under the Mental Health Act. RRS is delivered in partnership with TEWV CAMH's and Rollercoaster.
- 23 The RRS was launched in July 2021 and are currently working with 47 young people. Referral routes to Rapid Response Service has been via the child's Social Worker, however due to the success of the service they are now broadening their reach. The Rapid Response Service is now providing support to children who are working with the One Point Service and delivering early intervention group work with young people in the Family Hubs.
- 24 The Rapid Response Service also use the Teen Start Outcome Model to measure success, the data tells us that young people working with them have improved in almost all areas by the point of closure. In the last year there were no re-referrals for children/young people who no longer required RRS support, and no young people have required hospital admission after closure.

- 25 RRS were awarded their Investors in Children status in April 2022, this has recently been renewed, recognising the continued effort and positive outcomes for the team.

Erase Service

- 26 The Erase team is responsible for co-ordination and delivery of services for children who are Missing from Home or our care (MFH), and specialist Child Exploitation Workers. The aims of the Erase team are:
- (a) to help and support young people in reducing the risk of exploitation and missing from home;
 - (b) to provide young people with a safe space to share their views and wishes, while working holistically with other professionals to disrupt, safety plan and help increase safety and happiness for our young people;
 - (c) to support young people in building their understanding of exploitation, building their resilience and empowering them to identify signs of grooming and exploitation;
 - (d) to support parents and carers to spot warning signs of exploitation, implement rules and boundaries, safety planning and understand how to respond to their young people to support in the aim of reducing the risk of exploitation and keep them safe.

Edge of Care – Future Developments

- 27 The aim of the service is to work in a multi-agency context to prevent children on the edge of care coming into care. The service will bring together a range of accommodation options, services, and outreach to support young people. It's our ambition to develop multi-agency input such as Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) and clinical psychology.
- 28 The support will be targeted for young people who are looked after or on the edge of care, at risk of family or placement breakdown, stepping down from residential care to family-based care or transitioning to independent living.
- 29 The edge of care service will provide short-term interventions. We are developing a bespoke practice model for the edge of care service, which will align to the Signs of Safety model and Care home regulations.

Conclusion

- 30 There are a wide range of services available to children, young people and their families, at all levels throughout children's services. Depending on the level of support required will depend on whether this is a self-referral or referral from their Key/Social Worker. There is work

underway to further develop the Edge of Care support, to provide targeted interventions to the right children at the right time.

Background papers

- None

Other useful documents

- None

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Report includes number of young people detailed under the Mental Health Act. Duties under Children & SW Act / Children's Act to act in the best interests of CYP, etc.

Finance

No implications.

Consultation

Children and young people are involved in consultation where necessary.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

No implications.

Climate Change

No implications.

Human Rights

All CYP are supported to identify suitable alternative care arrangements where they cannot continue to remain at home safely. CYP have access to the DCC complaints process.

Crime and Disorder

No implications.

Staffing

No implications.

Accommodation

Should CYP come into the care of the LA, there is a need to ensure there is sufficient suitable placements.

Risk

The risk of not supporting CYP and their families and carers meant that we are increasing the risk of the young people becoming looked after, or needing to change placements which could cause disruption to the young people.

Procurement

No implications.