

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday, 16 January 2020 at 1.30 pm in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

Item	Business				
1	Apologies				
2	Minutes (Pages 3 - 6) The Committee is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 17 October 2019				
3	Health of LAC Annual Report (Pages 7 - 18) Report of the Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning				
4	Missing from Care Annual Report (Pages 19 - 28) Report of the Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning				
5	Education Annual Report (Pages 29 - 52) Report of the Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning				
6	How We Assess Young People in Crisis (Pages 53 - 62) Report of the Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning				
7	Work Programme Report (Pages 63 - 66) Joint Report of the Chief Executive and Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance				
8	Exclusion of Press and Public The Committee may wish to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds indicated: <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Item</th><th>Paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>9</td><td>1</td></tr></tbody></table>	Item	Paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972	9	1
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Regulation 44 Report (Pages 67 - 72)

Report of the Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning

Contact: Rosalyn Patterson - Email: rosalynpatterson@gateshead.gov.uk,
Tel: 0191 4332088, Date: Wednesday, 8 January 2020

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING SUB OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING

Thursday, 17 October 2019

PRESENT: Councillor B Oliphant (Chair)

Councillor(s): M Hall, D Bradford, C Buckley, B Clelland,
P Craig, S Craig, M Ord, Reay and N Weatherley

CO-OPTED MEMBERS Penny St Bernard

CP10 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor McMaster, Councillor Oxberry, Councillor McCartney, Councillor Davison, Councillor Gallagher and co-opted member Malcolm Hedley.

CP11 MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting held on 4 July 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

CP12 YOUNG PEOPLE'S PRESENTATION

The Committee received a presentation from young people and representatives from One Voice. They presented to Committee the work they had undertaken, including attending Senior Officer Team meetings to speak about being corporate parents. The older care leavers also cooked for senior managers, including the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors.

It was also noted that some older care leavers became part of the interview panel to appoint staff to the Care, Wellbeing and Learning (CWL) Service, this involved appointment of Independent Reviewing Officers amongst others. It was acknowledged that this was invaluable input.

Committee then took part in a group exercise which looked at what type of information young people wanted their Social Worker to know about them.

RESOLVED - That the information presented be noted.

CP13 PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

The Committee received a report outlining performance data for the period up until end of August 2019.

It was reported that at the end of August there were 400 LAC, this was a 5.3% increase since the end of March. It was noted that this figure tends to fluctuate between 380 – 400 and as of today the number stands at 386 LAC.

The rate of LAC is currently 101 per 10,000, it is anticipated that this will be in line with the regional average. It was acknowledged that there is a small band of fluctuation in terms of admissions into care but there has been 15% less admissions over the last two years. The majority of children coming into care do so due to abuse or neglect, this equates to around 90% of those entering care.

In relation to the reasons for discharge it was reported that, over the last 12 months, fewer young people are returning home and fewer young people leaving care on their 18th birthday. Although there has been an increase in children leaving care following a child arrangement order or special guardianship order. It was noted that the number of adoptions remains consistent.

In terms of duration of care, these are generally increasing with more children are being looked after for slightly longer. 64% of LAC are in mainstream fostering placements.

Committee was advised that performance indicators are generally positive, however timescales for reviews, while remaining strong in way of overall performance when benchmarked to other areas, had declined in the most recent period. Action had been taken by the service to ensure issue did not happen again.

RESOLVED - Committee noted the content of the report.

CP14 PROGRESS IN RELATION TO REDUCING THE NUMBER OF LAC AND CHILDREN SUBJECT TO CHILD PROTECTION PLANS

A report was presented on the work underway to reduce the number of children subject to Child Protection Plans.

It was reported that the number of CPP has reduced to 244 this week, this is the lowest since July 2018. Since January 2019 there has been a change in the way the Social Work team operates; the Assessment and Intervention Service now assesses families and continue to work with them under child in need arrangements. Trends are monitored through monthly performance clinics.

In this years Ofsted inspection the service was judged as 'good' in relation to the progress of children who need help and protection.

It was reported that domestic abuse is the most significant factor in children being on CPP's for over two years. In response to this a series of Practice Innovation Groups

have been set up to look at different ways of working with families who experience domestic abuse.

It was noted that the cohort of LAC is fairly static and young people are remaining looked after for longer, therefore the impact on the service is great. In terms of the cohort the gender split has remained fairly consistent, with 56% being male. The greatest proportion of LAC are within the 10-15 year old population, although there has been an increase in the 0-4 year old age group becoming looked after.

Committee was advised that over 25% of the current LAC cohort have been in care for more than five years which is consistent with previous years.

In terms of early permanence performance is good, with double the amount of Special Guardianship Orders. Adoption numbers remain very static.

It was reported that over the last year a number of measures have been implemented to ensure care planning is right at the earliest stage. These measures include; monthly care team meetings to ensure stable and secure placements and look at section 20's, audits on performance data, bespoke packages of support and practice innovation groups.

It was acknowledged that while numbers remain consistent, data has changed, for example there are now more family and friend placements with a number of improvements in a lot of areas.

In terms of court proceedings it was reported that 62 cases were issued last year, there has been a 43% decrease this year compared with last, with only 36 cases being issued to court. This reflects the impact of work at an earlier stage to prevent them coming into Care is being effective.

It was questioned why there has been an increase in the number of 0-4 year olds becoming looked after. It was noted that there is a high number of under two's, however this is usually the ones that can be turned around quickly. It was acknowledged that those young people 14 years and over are particularly challenging as many come into the service having had no previous contact. Work is ongoing to establish whether something is required earlier on specifically for teens.

It was also questioned as to what is attributable to the decrease in children and young people entering the care system. It was acknowledged that those families do still exist but more work is underway with them at an earlier level. The service has been restructured and assessment and intervention is carried out, strength based models are in place to help families work for themselves. This is a good indication that early work is helping.

It was noted that a new foster carer recruitment campaign will be launched in January so it is hoped that this will increase the number of foster carers.

It was questioned what work is in place to deal with the increasing number of domestic abuse cases. It was acknowledged that previously the response was very fragmented, however now there is a team based all together and managed by one

person. The team takes a very proactive approach in contacting victims and carrying out intense work with them. Previously it was found that CPP were finishing too soon and sometimes those parents were getting back together with the abuser or a succession of abusive partners, therefore sometimes the longer plans are in place to ensure the safety of the child. In addition, as part of CPP's, work goes on with the perpetrators as there is a worker in the Assessment and Intervention Team who specialises in this work.

RESOLVED - That Committee is satisfied with the level of support children and families receive in Gateshead.

CP15 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received the report setting out the provisional work programme for the municipal year 2019/20.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That Committee endorsed the provisional work programme for 2019/20.
 - (ii) That Committee noted that further reports will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional issues which the Committee may be asked to consider.

CP16 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining business in accordance with the indicated paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

CP17 REGULATION 44 REPORT AND RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT SUFFICIENCY UPDATE

The Committee received a report outlining Ofsted regulation 44 independent visits and inspection outcomes carried out in the Council's children's homes between April and June 2019. The report also looked at developments within the service, linked to the placement sufficiency strategy for 2018-2021.

RESOLVED - That Committee noted the contents of the report.



TITLE OF REPORT: Gateshead Looked After Children and Young People's Health Team – Annual Report 2018-2019 with an update from Newcastle Gateshead CCG

REPORT OF: Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of the work and outcomes for the Looked After Children and Young People's Health Team in Gateshead 2018-19. It also includes an overview of Newcastle Gateshead CCG's progress to improve health outcomes for LAC. Themes from Newcastle Gateshead CCG and the provider LAC health team's annual report are presented. There is brief information regarding the work undertaken by colleagues in sexual health and drug and alcohol services. Priorities for the future year are also included.

Background

This document aims to give an overview of the strategic direction of Newcastle Gateshead CCG in relation to the LAC population of Gateshead and describe the work and achievements of the Looked After Children's Health Team for Gateshead 2018-19

The Designated Nurse post is filled by 2 nurses job sharing and sits in Newcastle Gateshead CCG. The Designated Doctor LAC role is commissioned by the CCG but they are employed by Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust.

The Looked After Children's (LAC) Health Team in Gateshead is commissioned by Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group. The team consists of:

Medical Secretary -1WTE

Named Nurse LAC 1 WTE

Specialist Nurse LAC 1WTE

LAC Administrators – 1 WTE and 0.5 WTE

All employed by Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust.

The team is based at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gateshead.

The previous Designated Doctor LAC retired in December 2016 and the work has been covered by other paediatricians in the department since then. The new Designated Doctor LAC was appointed in September 2018. For ease of reading the activity covered by the group of paediatricians continues to be referred to throughout this report as the work of the Designated Doctor.

Strategic view

Newcastle Gateshead CCG has a Strategy for Looked after children which has been updated outlining the strategic direction for monitoring and improving the health of Gateshead (and Newcastle) LAC for 2019-2022.

Key priorities for 2018-19 were:

- The implementation and population of a comprehensive database to collect data on the health of LAC at the time of health assessments the LAC health team achieved this and the data supports the first steps in profiling the needs of the LAC population in Gateshead.
- Scoping the mental health needs of LAC utilising the quality statements and key outcomes from within the 2017 Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) 'Improving mental health support for our children and young people'.
- Ensuring statutory requirements are met including the timeliness and quality of health assessments.
- Monitor progress with the Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) review.

Designated Nurses LAC from the CCG work closely with the provider team and assurance against objective is provided /collected in a variety of ways in 2018-19:

- The LAC Health team have fulfilled contractual obligations to the CCG. Team members have attended LAC strategic meetings linked to the CCG LAC strategy 2017-2020. This links with the Corporate Parenting Health Work stream.
- Efficiency has been demonstrated through a regular audit programme and Dashboard reporting to the CCG.
- External quality assurance has been provided by the Designated Nurse LAC from the CCG undertaking audits of Review Health Assessments.

Activity

Initial Health Assessments

- The team received a total of 172 notifications of children and young people becoming looked after in 2018-2019 of which 157 had IHA's completed. The remaining 15 were not completed for the following reasons: 3 left care after consent was received but before appointment could be arranged, 9 left care before the consent was received and 3 had appointments for an IHA which were cancelled by carers and then they left care.
- Our overall compliance for Medical Practitioners to complete the IHA (DH/DfE 2015) was 99.36%. The exception was that a young person refused to have their IHA completed by a Doctor but would allow the Specialist Nurse to complete it as she was known to the young person.

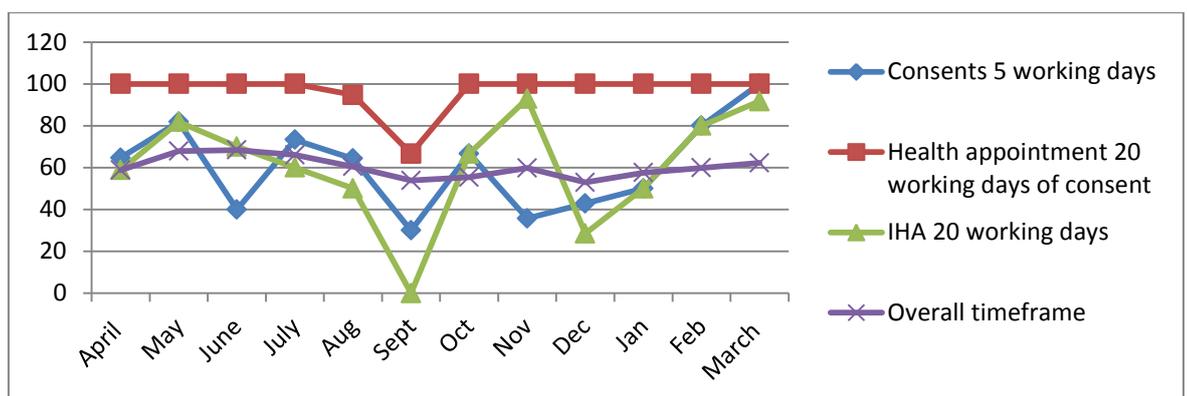
- There is on-going monitoring of timeframes for completion of Initial Health Assessments within 28 days (20 working days) (DH/DfE 2015) In 2018-2019 we achieved 62.26% compliance, this has fallen from 65.85% but remains an improvement from 43.82% in the previous year.
- The LAC Health Team were able to offer IHA appointments to 96.78% of children within 20 working days of consents being received, an increase on the previous year from 93.29% and 77.16% in the year prior to that.

A challenge in meeting the overall time frame was the delay in obtaining parental consent from social workers within 5 days which dropped from 68.78% last year to 62.89% in this reporting period. It does continue to reflect an improvement from 40.12% in the previous year. The Named Nurse met with partners at the Local Authority Performance Clinic on 27th February 2019 and since that meeting timely receipt of consents has improved and it is anticipated this will continue into the coming year. The LAC health team will continue to monitor this and escalate any deterioration with the Local Authority.

An additional factor that has contributed to delay is the cancellation and rearrangement of appointments by carers. In order to achieve a better understanding of how these difficulties are contributing to timescales not being met on a monthly basis, and to ensure that actions are appropriately targeted, data has been collected in the following way:

Total numbers of admissions to care from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019

- % of consents received within 5 days
- % of appointments offered within 28 days of receiving consent
- % of appointments offered within 28 days of becoming Looked After



Review Health Assessments

- A total of 364 RHA's were completed in 2018-2019, a rise from 350 the previous year having risen from 286 in the year prior. 94.59% of these were completed within 28 days of their due date, which is an improvement from 90.23% for the previous year.

- RHA's were completed by:
 Named Nurse & Specialist Nurse LAC – 116 (138 previous year and 83 in the year prior to that)
 Designated Doctor and associates - 54 (23 previous year)
 School nurses – 137 (129 previous year)
 HVs - 43 (45 previous year)
 Out of Area Nurse / Doctor – 13 (14 previous year)
 Family Nurse – 1 (1 previous year)

Other Contacts with Looked After Children and Young People

- Children and Young People who are Looked After can at times require the professionals around them to work in different ways to meet their health needs. In recognition of that there has been 45 contacts with Young People by the LAC Nurses. These contacts have been based upon need and include health education and supporting young people to access services including sexual health, mental health and dental health services. Support has also been given to Young People in relation to healthy eating and BMI reduction.

Leaving Care

- The LAC Health Team are commissioned to provide services for Looked after Children up to their 18th birthday. In keeping with the Corporate Parent Principles laid out within the Children and Social Work Act 2017 the team support Young People and the local authority in their duties to support transition to adulthood.
- A leaving care health consultation is undertaken by the Named or Specialist Nurse LAC, during the final year (age 17-18). This may be achieved at the time of the final statutory health assessment or may be done as a separate contact closer to their 18th birthday if there are additional needs for services and support.
- The document provided is a Leaving Care Health Passport, which has been developed with young people involved in the consultation phase. Amendments have been made to include links on health promotion and advice on access to health services, previous health and immunisation history are included.
- If the young person agrees a copy is sent to the young person's social worker. Leaving Care Health Passports were provided to 33 of the 33 young people recorded as leaving care (100%) whose date of birth fell within 1.4.00- 31.3.01.
- Support has been given to personal advisors from the Local Authority to develop their skills on health needs and services.

- The Named and Specialist Nurse LAC have attended the Transitions Meeting to support young people with a learning disability in the transition between children and adult services.
- The LAC Health team have worked with partners from the Local Authority, Platform, Sexual Health Services, Housing and Jigsaw to set up a Leaving Care Drop in session. This was established in October 2018 and runs on a monthly basis. Young people are sent reminders about the sessions from the personal advisors and the LAC health team also write to them in the month they turn 18.

Statistical Returns

- The team have achieved good returns as reported by the Local Authority in their SSDA 903 returns to Central Government.

	31/3/19	31/3/18	31/3/17	31/3/16	31/3/15	31/3/14
Health Assessments	97%	99%	98.8%	99.1%	96.6%	95.7%
Dental Appointments	96%	97%	94.7%	90.7%	94.4%	87.9%
Immunisations	95%	94%	99.2%	96.9%	94.8%	96.1%

- The task of distributing and scoring the Strength & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) lies with the Local Authority and once completed the scores are shared with the LAC Health Team.

Information provided by Gateshead Local Authority indicates that during the reporting year 193 out of 223 of the eligible children had an SDQ score returned (return rate 83%). 64% had a borderline score of 14 or over . The average score was 15.9.

As recommended by CQC the scores, when available, have been added to the BAAF health assessment forms and practitioners are expected to interpret the score and reflect on the child's needs and services that are either in place or required. This is being supported through training.

Children and Young Peoples Service (CYPS)

- Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust Children and Young Peoples services (CYPS) provide services for children and young people in Gateshead and Newcastle who present with mental health difficulties. The LAC Health team have no data from the service and would expect that this will be available within the CYPS own Annual Report.

- A LAC Consultation Clinic takes place twice a month. Professionals can refer to this service to discuss cases.
- Information detailed in the table below has been collected using the LAC Health Dendrite database system and demonstrates an increase in children at review health assessment either open to, referred to, or awaiting a service to support their emotional health when compared to children at entry into care.

Emotional Health	Total for year at IHA	% for the Year	Total for the year at RHA	% for the year
Previous Service involvement	11	7.28%	122	35.67%
Open to Service Under follow up)	5	3.31%	65	19.01%
Is there a diagnosis?	4	2.65%	3	0.88%
Awaiting services	1	0.66%	24	7.02%
Referred	5	3.31%	22	6.43%

Safeguarding

- The LAC Health Team continue to recognise that the Looked After population are more vulnerable to exploitation and some other forms of abuse and harm. They are therefore not only involved in training to ensure awareness of this within the wider health community but also participate in reviews of Serious Incidents which have involved Looked After Children to see if learning can be identified.
- The Specialist / Named Nurse LAC attend the LSCB Missing Sexually Exploited and Trafficked (MSET) subgroup to consider individual cases where Looked After Children may be vulnerable and also attend Gateshead NHS Foundation Trust Safeguarding Committee.

Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

- A number of children and young people who are Looked After have been diagnosed with FAS/FASD in recent years. There is an ongoing piece of work led by Paediatricians at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to review those children and young people. Paediatric services in Gateshead remain involved in the development of a regional approach to the assessment of children with possible FASD. This work remains a long-term objective and is important both for the Looked After population but also the wider population of Gateshead.
- The previous Designated Doctor had a particular interest in Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and was continuing to develop this until her retirement. This work is not yet part of a commissioned pathway of care. Review of this work is ongoing and a regional pathway

is being finalised. NICE guidance on FASD is also expected to be published in 2020.

Drug & Alcohol Services

- Drug and Alcohol Services for children and young people in Gateshead are provided by the PLATFORM service. Information provided by Kirsty Martin, Project Leader Platform.

There were 21 referrals from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.
The **referral sources** were: A&E – 3, Social Services – 2, LAC Health Team -10, YOT – 6.

The **first substance of choice** was: Alcohol - 5, Cannabis - 13, Pregablin - 1, Nicotine – 2.

Closures:

13 of referrals have been closed with treatment complete
1 Young person dropped out
1 Young person moved to a secure placement
6 Young people are still with the service

Sexual Health Services

- Young people are encouraged to access generic sexual health services in their placement area as required. Those young people identified as in need of specialist intervention are assessed on an individual basis and professionals work together to ensure that their identified needs are met.
- There were a total of 2 young people who had pregnancies during the year. 1 Young Person engaged with the Family Nurse Partnership and the other declined. Both were initially placed in mother and baby placements following the birth of their babies.
- Information provided by Ann Carey, Specialist Nurse Sexual Health, South Tyneside Foundation Trust.
There were 51 LAC contacts/ Care Leaver contacts all aged less than 20 years old. Contacts were for contraception, attendance at sexual health sessions and advice on a 1 to 1 basis.
There were also 3 contacts for pregnancy options.

Adoption

After the retirement of the previous Designated Doctor LAC who was also the adoption Medical Advisor, this latter role has been taken over in April 2018 by a Consultant Paediatrician.

The Medical Advisor role involves:

- Close working with social workers and members of the adoption team to ensure that historical medical information is collated, the child's family and genetic information considered, and that all the child's health and development needs are identified and shared openly with the prospective adopters. This entails meeting with adopters face to face and providing them with a comprehensive medical report based on clinical assessment.
- Participating in the stage one training of adopters to highlight the role of the medical advisor and the key risks e.g. the invisible disability associated with exposure to pre-birth alcohol if required.
- Sitting on the adoption panel as an advisor and as an independent panel member.
- Actively considering the implications of any procedural and legislative changes in adoption which impact upon the Medical Advisor role.
- 29 adoption medicals were undertaken during the year.
- The Adoption Panel considered 34 matches of children with prospective adopters during 2018/19 which is similar to the previous year number of 29. The Medical Advisor met 26 prospective adopters for 28 children to share all available health information and a detailed health report was prepared for the adopters to share with the new primary health care worker for the child.
- In total during 2018 / 2019, 27 children were adopted which is similar to the previous year (25).
- The Medical Advisor reviewed a total of 33 adult medicals with advice being provided to the agency and the panel. This is an increase from 26 in the previous reporting year.

Fostering

- Adult medical advice to the Foster panel has been provided by doctors working with the LAC Health Team.
- There has been a year on year increase in the number of adult medical advice requests. In 2018/19 174 were completed for fostering and 28 for Special Guardianship purposes. In total medical advice was provided for 202 requests, this compares to 199 last year and 132 in the previous year.

Training

- Two training sessions have been offered to residential staff and foster carers within the year about the health needs of Looked after Children. Further sessions are available within the coming year.
- Looked after children's health needs & issues are included in Level 2 and 3 training delivered to Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Training sessions have been provided to School Nurses and Health Visitors from the 0-19 service. This included training on the health needs of LAC and how to complete a quality health assessment.

Inspection

- There has been no inspection within this reporting period.

Team Developments

- With the support of the development team in the information department of Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust the LAC health team went live on the Dendrite Intellect database on the 1st April 2018. This will enable future profiling of health needs for Gateshead Looked after Children and Young People.
- The LAC Health team have led on the development of the Care Leavers Drop In with support from partner agencies. Support to care leavers has continued to be a priority with 100% of those eligible for a leaving care health passport receiving one. The team have also continued to support the transitions meetings and RAG rated the health needs of young people aged 15+.
- Training on meeting the health needs of looked after children and young people has been provided to staff from the acute setting, 0-19 service and foster carers.
- The team have worked with the local authority to improve the SDQ and consent process.
- The Key Performance Indicators for the end of year have remained high. The dental percentage has improved from previous years and all are well above those recorded nationally.

Priorities 2019 -2020

Newcastle Gateshead CCG have 4 main areas of focus for 2019-20

- Mental health
- Care leavers
- Improved time frames
- Health needs assessment

Gateshead LAC health team have additional priorities:

- The program of audit will be ongoing and improvements made from the recommendations made.
- To continue to develop work supporting the care leavers.
- In response to observations by the LAC Nurses that a number of babies have become LAC who have been born to mothers who have left care in the last 2 years, the team will work with the Specialist Nurse Sexual Health to strengthen the offer to young people prior to them leaving care.
- To ensure quality health assessments the team will disseminate an aide memoire to staff completing health assessments.
- To continue to work closely with the Local Authority to improve the overall timeframes for Initial Health Assessments.
- Support to the newly appointed Designated Doctor LAC.
- To continue monitor the updated process for SDQs and to use the score as part of the health assessment.
- Obtain feedback from young people regarding the leaving care health passport.

References

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**CORPORATE PARENTING
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
16 January 2020**

TITLE OF REPORT: **Missing from care episodes and child sexual exploitation for children and young people looked after by Gateshead Council**

REPORT OF: **Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning and Director of Children's Services**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an updated summary of missing from care episodes from December 2018 to November 2019 and an update regarding protection and monitoring of child exploitation.

Background

1. Young people who go "missing" from their home, foster care or residential care, do so for many complex reasons which cannot be viewed in isolation from their home circumstances and their experience within the Looked After system. It is therefore essential that the Council monitors this closely and understands what is happening for the young people living within the borough.

Policy Context

2. Gateshead Council has clear procedures regarding missing children and young people which incorporate a joint protocol between Northumbria Police and Children's Social Care. The procedures and data systems formed part of the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership's (GSCP's) oversight of arrangements. The protocol was updated in May 2019 and then in September 2019, the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements came into effect. Missing from home or care is still a priority for the partnership.

Definition of Missing from Care

3. In July 2017 Northumbria Police adopted the new missing definition to identify the type of missing activity;

"Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their wellbeing or otherwise confirmed."

4. All reports of missing people sit within a continuum of risk from 'no apparent risk (absent)' through to high risk cases that require immediate, intensive action. The police determine the level of risk (low/medium/high) based on the information shared with them.
5. All professionals must ensure that all known information held on a child/young person is shared with the Police to ensure that the correct level of risk is applied – including if child is Looked After or if they have any other vulnerabilities.
6. A missing category for each young person may be different depending upon the management of assessed risks relating to the young person.
 - **Low** - Risk of harm to subject/public is possible but minimal
 - **Medium** – Risk of harm to subject/public likely but not serious
 - **High** – risk of 'serious harm' to subject/public is assessed as very likely (serious harm is defined as – risk that is life threatening and/or traumatic, from which recovery, whether physical or psychological can be expected to be difficult or impossible)

Missing

7. Within Gateshead a child is categorised as missing when their location or reason for absence is unknown **and/or** there is cause for concern for the child because of their vulnerability or there is a potential danger to the public.
8. A child or young person who is absent should be classified as missing if one or more of the criteria below apply:
 - There is identified or imminent risk of the child or young person being exposed to significant harm
 - The child or young person poses a risk of significant harm to others
 - There are suspicious circumstances
 - The absence is out of character or unusual behaviour
 - There are indications that the child has already come to harm
 - There are indications that the episode is not a deliberate or careless act
 - There are indications that the child or young person
 - Is not expected to return within reasonable time limits
 - Is not staying at homes of others known to them
 - Will not be easily located
9. A child or young person in this category must be reported to the police.
10. In October 2019 the police developed a new protocol/initiative to help locate and safely return a young person in residential care and in some fostering placements as quickly as possible when they are missing. This went live on 1 December 2019 and is known as the Philomena protocol. There are forms with vital information on for foster carers and residential staff to complete as well as there being an up to date photograph of the young person. The police Missing from Care Co-ordinator is expected to contact/visit residential homes or foster placements where children regularly go missing and are deemed high risk to

ensure information around risk and associates is shared and agree a robust plan for joint actions to trace the child. Philomena puts police and partners on the front foot in the event of a missing episode and all agencies can respond quickly and effectively to safely locate the child. This will be reviewed after three months to look at how well this is working

11. The protocol for responding to missing children has been updated, and all children who go missing are now offered a Return Home interview (RHI), regardless of how long they have been missing or how often. The RHI form has been reviewed and updated to ensure push and pull factors are considered and to allow for more narrative (including any previous missing episodes). Guidance notes for completion are available for workers who complete RHIs. RHIs are now recorded on Carefirst (the social care system) and are overseen by the specialist support team (Early Help)

Absent

12. There is also an absent category that has the following definition:

Absent - "A person not at a place where they are expected or required to be and there is no apparent risk."

13. 'Absent' cases should not be ignored and must be monitored over periods of time with consideration given to escalating to 'missing' if there is a change to the circumstances that has increased the level of risk.
14. Whether the absence is careless or deliberate, if there is no apparent risk for their immediate safety, or that of the public, absent episodes must be carefully monitored. It is also still important that staff/carers record these incidences in case the level of risk changes as the child may subsequently be categorised as missing.

Categories of risk

15. **HIGH**

The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child or young person is in danger through their own vulnerability or may have been the victim of a serious crime, or

16. The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public are in danger.

17. **MEDIUM**

The risk posed is likely to place the child or young person in danger or they are a threat to themselves or others.

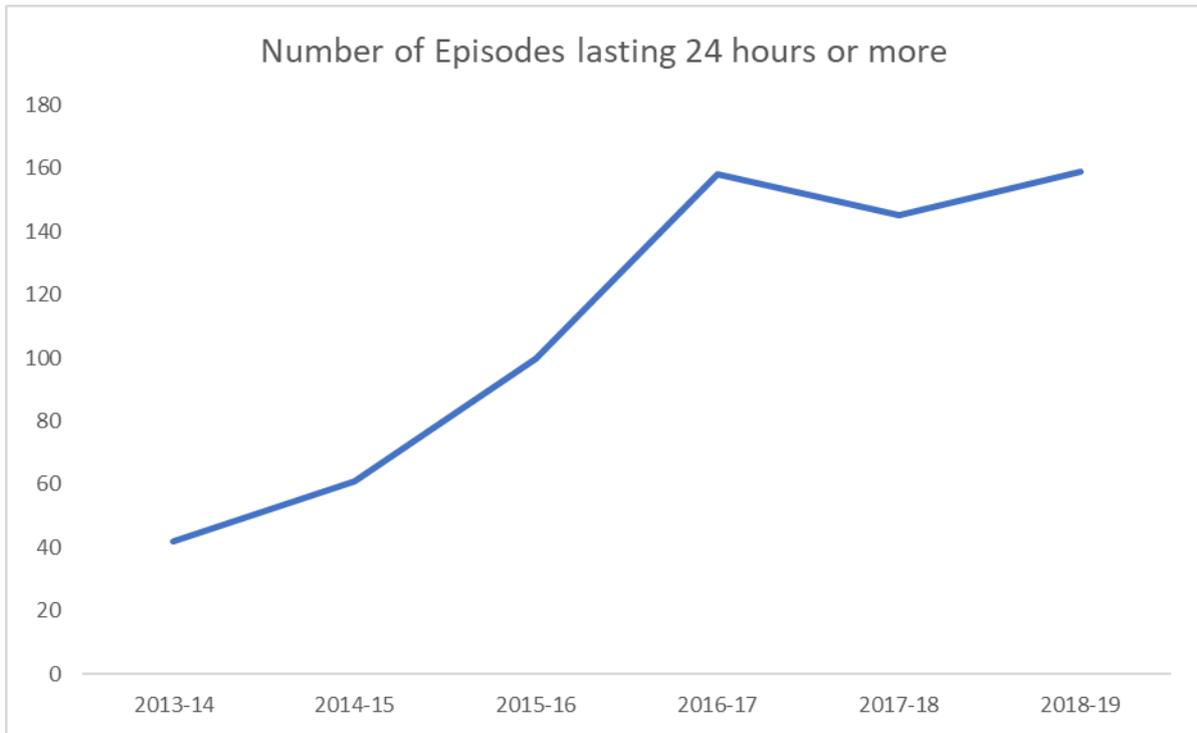
18. **LOW**

There is no apparent threat of danger to either the child or young person or the public.

19. The key messages from research regarding young people Missing from Care over the last five years indicated the need for a regional approach and highlighted that:
- Few young people leave their local area
 - Many stay with friends known to them/relatives, less than a third or a quarter sleep rough
 - Most common reasons for running away are conflict with parents/step parents and carers and wanting to spend time with friends and partners
 - Young people who run away are more likely to be absent from school through refusal to attend or exclusion
 - Young people are at as much risk whether they are missing for the first time or on any subsequent occasions
 - Young people who go missing are often very vulnerable and place themselves at risk and are exposed to violence, victimisation, sexual exploitation and involvement in crime
20. It is important that the assessment of risk is a dynamic process and should be re-considered and challenged at every point during a child or young person's absence.
21. As a minimum requirement when a child is missing the risk assessment should be reviewed every eight hours and the level of prevailing risk agreed by carers and other professionals responsible for that young person's health safety and wellbeing.

Overall data

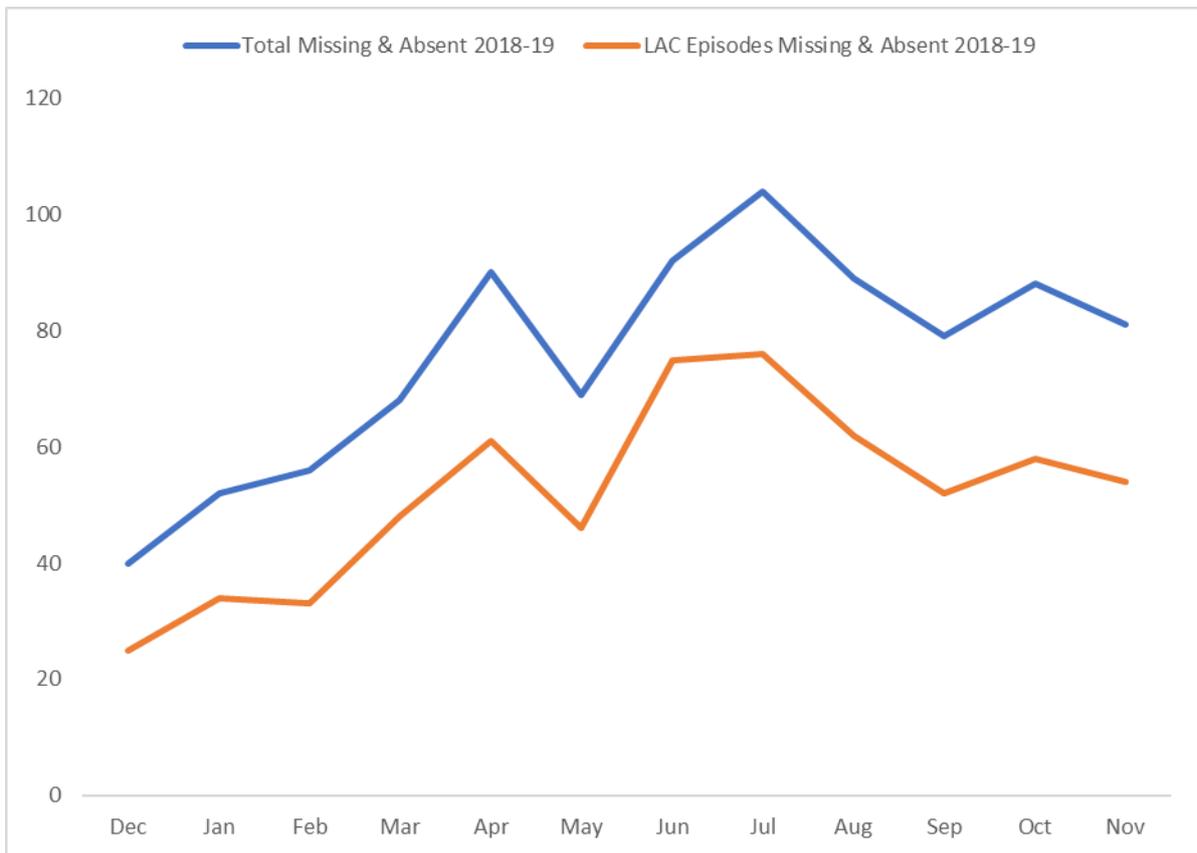
22. There were 908 missing episodes in total between December 2018 and November 2019, of which 626 (69%) were looked after children. Whilst this represents a decrease in the total number of missing episodes compared to 2017-18 (948) it also shows an increase in terms of the number of missing from care episodes which involved looked after children for the same period (612 (65%)).
23. There is a difference between the number of missing/absent episodes each month and the number of missing/absent individuals as some people will have more than one episode. Each month the number of individual young people in total and individual looked after children reported missing varies and is different from the number of missing episodes.
24. Over the last 12 months young people who have been recorded as missing from care have in most cases returned quickly to their placements.
25. A small cohort of missing episodes of looked after children are for more than a 24-hour period. They are young people who are in the older age group and who have had very complex needs and backgrounds. Clear procedures are in place to manage these longer episodes.
26. Between December 2018 and November 2019 there were 159 episodes where a young person was missing or absent for over 24 hours. Most of those young people were missing from care (63%), which is an increase on last year.



27. It is always a concern when young people are missing for over 24 hours which is why it is monitored to see if there are any patterns for individual or groups of young people. Targeted interventions are implemented and, disruption plans looked at by the multi-agency Missing Slavery Exploited and Trafficking (MSET) group to ensure everyone is doing all they can to keep young people safe

Dec 2018 – Nov 2019 data

Month	Total missing and absent episodes	Number of individuals	Episodes over 24 hours	LAC missing and absent episodes	Number of individual LAC	
December	40	23	5	25 (62.5%)	9	
January	52	32	9	34 (65.4%)	16	
February	56	31	5	33 (58.9%)	11	
March	68	32	6	48 (70.6%)	15	
April	90	39	15	61 (67.8%)	21	
May	69	39	14	46 (66.7%)	24	
June	92	31	17	75 (81.5%)	20	
July	104	44	17	76 (73.1%)	24	
August	89	40	26	62 (69.7%)	21	
September	79	44	23	52 (65.8%)	23	
October	88	40	15	58 (65.9%)	17	
November	81	43	7	54 (66.7%)	21	
TOTAL	908		159	624 (68.7%)		



28. To try and understand the missing episodes of looked after children the following data looks at where young people are placed, and the number of missing episodes linked to both residential placements and foster placements

Month	Placement Young Person reported missing from (number of episodes)				Total
	Residential		Foster Care		
	in-house	Other residential (out of borough, private, independent living)	Gateshead (in-house)	IFA placements	
December	2	7	16	0	25
January	6	15	13	0	34
February	7	10	16	0	33
March	15	16	16	1	48
April	12	15	29	5	61
May	2	20	20	4	46
June	6	14	51	4	75
July	14	21	35	7	77
August	9	17	33	3	62
September	16	18	18	0	52
October	22	20	16	1	59
November	13	29	11	1	54
Total	124	202	274	26	626

29. The data demonstrates that there was a significant number of missing episodes from our in-house residential provision. These missing episodes relate to a relatively small number of young people with one young person having 36 missing episodes over a 6month period, another having 25 missing episodes over a 4month period and a third having 21 missing episodes over a 3month period.
30. Interventions and incentives are in place to reduce the number of missing episodes for these young people.
31. In relation to other residential, including out of borough provision, the high numbers of missing episodes relate again to a relatively small group of young people. One young person went missing 27 times, another went missing 23 times and a further five young people went missing between 16 and 19 times each, which accounts for 136 of the 202 missing episodes.
32. In relation to children placed with in-house foster carers, the majority of these missing episodes relate to seven young people who each had over 10 missing episodes. The largest number of missing episodes related to two young females who were missing a total of 46 and 44 times respectively and have subsequently been placed in residential provision. The remaining five young people accounted for 103 missing episodes out of the remaining 184 episodes.

Other relevant information

Return interviews

33. When a child is reported missing from home or care for a second or subsequent time in a six-month period or for a single episode lasting longer than 24 hours, they are offered an Independent Return Interview. This differs from a police Safe and Well Check (which all missing people receive on return) and is carried out by skilled and experienced workers to determine underlying reasons for the missing episode and wider risks and vulnerability factors. The interviews are also used to identify broader trends, including “CSE hotspots” and there are clear links into MSET meetings and intelligence sharing with police.
34. These interviews are undertaken by workers in Early Help and the outcome of the return interview is shared with the young person’s social worker, the police and any other relevant professionals. In cases where a Gateshead child is looked after and placed out of borough the return interview is commissioned and undertaken by someone within the area the young person lives. This information is shared with the social worker and the hosting local authority.
35. Participation levels for Return Interviews is an area of work that needs to be improved as often young people refuse to engage at all and of the ones carried out young people are often quite reluctant to share the reasons why they have gone missing or absent.

Summary of reasons given by young people for going missing or absent December 2018 to September 2019 (old Return Interview form)

	Care	Home
Alcohol	26	4
Bullying	2	2
CSE	11	4
Domestic Violence	2	0
Drugs	21	2
Emotional	37	11
Neglect	1	0
Physical	4	1
Planned	39	7
Sexual	8	3

36. Between December 2018 and September 2019, the number of Return Interviews requested was 292, and the number that were completed following engagement with a total of 43 young people was 155; an uptake rate of approximately 53% (a decrease on the rate for 2017-18).

37. In August 2019 the Return Interview process and recording form changed and all young people reported missing are offered a return interview. The form now records vulnerabilities, as well as re-wording the reason categories for the missing episodes. Since the process changed, 99 IRI's have been carried out for a total of 59 young people.

Summary of vulnerabilities identified by workers completing the Return Interview forms (August to November 2019)

	Total
Concerns about Physical & Emotional Presentation	20
Criminal Exploitation	25
Misuse of Substances	39
Offending Behaviour	18
Self-Harm	11
Sexual Exploitation	32
Trafficking/Modern Slavery	9

Summary of the most prominent reasons given by young people for going missing (August to November 2019)

	Total
Avoiding an abusive situation	2
Avoiding contact with family or friends	6
Bullying	5
Felt pressured or coerced	3
Involved in offending behaviour	1
Other reason	17
Problems at home	25
Reason unknown	2
Seeking contact with family or friends	48
Substance misuse	8

38. It is essential that this work continues as the information provided feeds into the MSET. This completion rate is significantly higher than in other areas where external services are commissioned to provide the service and reflects the specialist skills and local knowledge that workers have whilst also retaining independence from the case. The Early Help workers also have links in to other services which means that appropriate support can then be put in place for young people when required.

Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficking (MSET)

39. In addition to being reviewed and monitored by their own social workers and care team, children who go missing regularly from care are also monitored by **MSET**, which is a multi-agency sub group of the Strategic Exploitation Group. MSET monitors and coordinates multi-agency activity for children who are reported missing from home or care and has oversight of cases where there are concerns about slavery, exploitation or trafficking.

40. There were 46 cases discussed at MSET due to concerns about them in 2018-2019, eight of which were discussed on more than one occasion. This is a 42% decrease from 2017-2018 when there were 79 cases discussed (20 of those were discussed more than once).

41. It is not possible to separate how many of those cases were discussed due to missing episodes and how many due to sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation due to the overlap between the concerns, but an MSET risk assessment was carried out for each case that was discussed and disruption plans put in place.

42. It is thought that this decrease represents improved screening and assessment of risk, rather than decreased incidence of exploitation. Police Child Concern Notifications (CCNs) are now picked up as part of the Police Triage and

Integrated Referral Team Process. During triage the Police MASH officers advise of concerns regarding exploitation and missing and invite the worker to consider MSET referrals and risk assessment. This has led to more appropriate referrals to MSET, focussing on high risk cases. It has also meant that lower risk cases that do not meet criteria for MSET can be managed appropriately to manage risks and work done to disrupt exploitation and try to prevent concerns escalating. More detail on the work of the MSET is set out in Appendix 4.

43. The GSCP Business Manager has reviewed how child exploitation is recorded on the Social Care System and is continually working with the management information team to improve recording to ensure data is accurate and up-to-date. This review has also looked at the way risk assessments are recorded, how we can improve the quality of risk assessments and how they inform care planning. This work was carried out alongside the wider review of the whole social care system, and will inform the specification for the new system, which is currently going through procurement process.

Practice developments

44. The local authority continues to work to develop a system to capture and share accurate and meaningful information on missing from care episodes and will remain a priority area.
45. The local authority will continue to work with all agencies to strengthen work to protect those young people vulnerable to exploitation
46. Return interviews will continue and services will work together to try and improve the uptake and quality of these.

Recommendation - it is recommended that the Corporate Parenting OSC:

- (i) note and comment on the information provided in the report.
- (ii) consider the frequency with which it would like to receive Missing from Care reports

CONTACT: Jill Little
Service Manager
Looked After Children and Corporate Parenting
Ext 3420



TITLE OF REPORT: Education of Looked After Children – Gateshead Virtual School Annual Report

REPORT OF: Caroline O'Neill Strategic Director Care, Wellbeing and Learning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a summary of recent work by the Virtual School.

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee and provide a progress report on the work of the Virtual School.

Background

2. Attached to this summary is the annual report 2020 of the Virtual School. The report covers service provision and activities undertaken to support the education of looked after children. It includes detailed information on:
 - Outcomes data
 - Pupil Premium plus grant and Personal Education Plans
 - Support to teaching and learning for pupils and schools
 - Exclusions
 - Adoption
3. Officers will make a brief presentation to the Committee, drawing attention to some of the main features of the report.

Recommendations

5. The Corporate Parenting OSC is asked to:
 - Consider and comment on the attached annual report.
 - Consider the recommendations.

CONTACT: Jean Thompson

EXT: 8752

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GATESHEAD VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Education Report to Corporate Parenting Overview and Scrutiny Committee

January 2020



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1. Gateshead Virtual School context

Virtual School Head Teacher

Virtual School team manager

PEP Senior Coordinator

Pathways to Work and
Post 16 coordinator

Data and Finance Officer

Education Support Worker

Education Support Worker

Virtual School Teacher

Education Psychologist

Business Admin Support

Liaison Support for Previously Looked After and adopted children (TBC)

Virtual School Priorities

- Personal Education Plans
- Pupil Premium Plus
- Pathways to work
- Pupil progress and Attainment data
- Teaching and Learning
- Education enrichment
- Reducing Exclusions

Looked after Children Context

As of 30/10/19 there were 389 Looked after Children in Gateshead between the ages of 0-18 years old. The total has dropped in the last year.

Looked after Children School Population

The following tables provide an overview of the numbers of Gateshead LAC across a number of key stages, school and educational settings and also out of borough data where this has been available

Looked after Children Numbers in and out of Borough per statutory age

Current Year Group	Jul-17	Nov-18	Oct-19
Year 11	34	34	25
Year 10	23	21	38
Year 9	29	31	32
Year 8	19	24	24

Year 7	27	22	30
Year 6	23	31	28
Year 5	18	30	26
Year 4	28	24	12
Year 3	27	12	14
Year 2	15	14	11
Year 1	12	12	12
Reception	6	19	12
Total	261	274	264

(Figures as of October 2019)

The largest number of LAC within the secondary sector is in Year 10 with 38 LAC in 2019. LAC at Key Stage 4 are the most challenging of all LAC year groups in terms of behaviour and the risk of fixed term and permanent exclusion. The challenges and demands that this has placed and will continue to place on service delivery is significant. The current Year 10 & 11 cohorts will dominate a substantial amount of service resource due to the complexity of need and corresponding support will be required in response to issues relating to behaviour, alternative provision and potential exclusion and also to prepare them for their exams.

Years 9 is also one of the larger cohorts and are at critical stages of their education as they will be making their curriculum choices which will have an impact on their future.

In Primary schools the Year 6 cohort is also large, this year group will also take up a lot of service time due to SATs examinations and also in preparing them for the transition into Secondary schools.

Looked after Children in Gateshead Secondary Schools

School	Gateshead LAC	LAC Attending Gateshead Schools from other Local Authorities	Total
Cardinal Hume	5	1	6
Emmanuel College	7	0	7
Heworth Grange	11	0	11
Grace College	11	1	12
Kingsmeadow	4	2	6
Lord Lawson	9	0	9
St Thomas More	6	1	7

Thomas Hepburn	School Closed July 19		
Thorp Academy	6	1	7
Whickham	5	1	6
Total	64	7	71

(Figures as of October 19)

Overall the number of Gateshead LAC, including LAC from other Local Authorities attending Gateshead secondary schools has slightly decreased from the previous academic year from 74 to 71

The school with the largest total of Looked after Children combined (Gateshead and non Gateshead) is Grace College with 12.

The Virtual School has a role in supporting other Local Authority LAC who attend Gateshead schools. There has been a drop in the number of non Gateshead LAC attending Gateshead schools with the current figure at 7 compared to 11 in the previous year

The figures for OOB may not always be totally accurate as we do not always get informed about OOB LAC attending Gateshead schools.

Looked after Children Educated out of Borough

Out of Borough	Number of LAC
Primary	28
Secondary	40
Special	20
Total	88

There is a significant number of Gateshead LAC being educated out of borough, (33% of the total Gateshead LAC population). This has necessitated an increased need to attend PEP meetings beyond Gateshead to ensure Pupil Education Plans are completed.

Looked after Children Educated out of Borough across all Key stages

Key Stage	Total
Early Years (EY, N & R)	3
Key Stage 1 (Year 1 & 2)	4
Key Stage 2 (Year 3, 4, 5 & 6)	23
Key Stage 3 (Year 7, 8 & 9)	26
Key Stage 4 (Year 10 & 11)	25

Key Stage 5 (Year 12 & 13 HE)	7
Total	88

(Figures as of October 2019)

Some of these pupils are beyond the local region, we have children placed in London, Cumbria, Scotland and other areas of the country.

Looked after Children Educated out of Borough according to setting

Number of out of borough Educational Settings	
Primary	19
Primary Special	3
Secondary (including middle)	24
Secondary Special	14
Total	60

(Figures as of October 19)

The 88 Gateshead LAC educated out of borough is spread across 60 settings, of which 28% are special school places.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) and LAC

The following tables provide data relating to LAC with SEN, across a number of key stages and year groups.

Year	Education Health Care Plan	School SEN Support
Reception	0	2
1	2	3
2	1	5
3	1	6
4	4	5
5	7	6
6	8	6
7	11	4
8	7	8
9	5	12
10	7	2
11	5	18
Total	58	77

(Figures as of July 19)

The table above gives a Breakdown of Looked after Children who have Special Educational Needs, there are 58 with Educational Health Care Plans and a further 77 who receive Schools based SEN Support. This impacts quite considerably on the work of the Virtual School as statutory processes have to be supported to ensure appropriate provision is in place.

Breakdown of Category for Looked after Children with Single Plan

Category	Number of LAC
Speech Language Communication Needs	2
Moderate Learning Difficulties	6
Other	1
Physical Disability	2
Social Emotional Mental Health	31
Severe Learning Difficulties	6
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	10

(Figures as of July 2019)

The table above shows the SEND category breakdown for Looked after Children with a Single Plan, the biggest cohort is children come under the category of Social Emotional Mental Health in which there are 31.

Approximately 35% of LAC in Gateshead have Special Educational Needs which is similar to last year.

Looked after Children School Attendance

Attendance figures are drawn down to the Virtual school on a termly basis from EMIS and via school information requests. Where low attendance is identified as an emerging issue this is picked up in the PEP or reported by social workers and is then followed up by the Virtual School team.

As there has been a problem with the links between EMIS and the schools we are unable to give yearly attendance figures for 2018/19.

At present we can confirm that 32 Looked after Children have achieved 100% Attendance for 2018/19 compared to 27 from last year

Pupil Premium Plus Grant 2018-19

Following discussions with the Children and Young People Portfolio meeting and Schools Forum, the following information was prepared for schools. This is to inform them of the arrangements for the distribution of the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) for Looked After Children (LAC) for financial years 2018-19 and 2019 – 20 and the role of the individual school in ensuring that payments are received for each individual LAC entitled to the funding.

In March/April 2019, each school (maintained and non-maintained but not private schools) received a payment broken down as follows:

£400 paid for each term.

£500 paid based on 2 completed Personal Education Plans over a 12 month period (statutory requirement) received into the the Virtual School

£600 to be retained by the Virtual School to be used for additional support to both Individual Looked after Children and their schools

It is expected that schools will use this funding to:-

- directly support the achievement and attainment of LAC
- close the attainment and progress gap between LAC and their peers
- support underlying issues and interventions for LAC who are at risk of exclusion, non- attendance and other issues that may affect learning

All social workers and designated teachers must follow the Gateshead PEP processes in ensuring each LAC has an up to date quality PEP. The Virtual School will monitor and compile an accurate list of qualifying schools for Finance in accordance with the above expectations

Private Tuition

Within the period September 2018 - July 2019 a total of 11 Looked after Children received one to one private tuition totaling 150 sessions overall. These sessions were arranged through 3 companies Fleet Tutors, Vision for Education and Teaching Personnel, we also arranged sessions through other Virtual Schools for some of our children placed Out of Borough.

The numbers receiving tuition are less than in the previous year, we have been able to fund this by using some of the Pupil Premium money the Virtual School retains

The tutoring support offered during this period was in English and Math's and targeted mainly at Years 10 and 11 LAC to support those who were about to take their examinations, we also were able to offer some sessions to Year's 12 & 13 for students who were re sitting their examinations.

2.1 Personal Education Plans

The total number of LAC pupils currently tracked are 392.

Age range	Number
3-16	283
Post 16	60
Under 3	49

PEP Returns 2019	
% of PEPs returned In Borough	% of PEPs returned Out of Borough
87%	73%
% of PEPs not returned in borough	% of PEPs not returned Out of Borough
13%	27%

PEP returns 2018	
% of PEPs returned In Borough	% of PEPs returned Out of Borough
83%	69%
% of PEPs not returned	% of PEPs not returned Out of Borough

In Borough
17%

31%

- PEPs and PEP meetings continue to be led by schools. This has proved to be most successful as there continues to be an increase in the timely completion and return of PEPs within the set periods of October / November and February / March
- There has been a significant increase in the completion and return of PEPs for Post 16 LAC and LAC placed Out of Borough.
- PEP meetings should be completed with School, Foster carer and Social Worker. The Virtual school endeavor to attend those PEPs where there may be issues.
- There has been a decline in the attendance of Social Workers at PEP meetings this year.

3. Exclusions - December 2019

With the recent increase in exclusions both in and out of Gateshead's borough, the Gateshead Virtual School (GVS) has implemented and improved its monitoring system to allow greater detail of fixed term exclusions to be recorded. GVS has an agreement in place with all schools that no LAC should receive a permanent exclusion. We are now able to monitor those children who may be at risk of being permanently excluded; this allows us to work with schools to prevent this from occurring. Having this system in place enables GVS to identify patterns of exclusions allowing the necessary support to be put in place. This process has been in place from May 2018 and is monitored on each academic year. Having these details allows the Virtual School to intervene at an early stage to prevent any further fixed term exclusions or persistent issues from re-occurring or escalate into a potential permanent exclusion. With the agreement of no permanent exclusions in place, as a service, we try to explore various approaches to ensure all involved receive the most positive outcome. These include: a managed move to a different school or provision, being placed on either the Fair Access Panel or the Education Inclusion Panel or the Virtual School can intervene by placing an additional form of support in place for both the school and the Looked After Child.

There is a wide variation in the reasoning behind the exclusions which are listed below:

1. Persistent refusal to follow instructions.
2. Verbal abuse towards adults and pupils.
3. Non-compliance.
4. Truancy.
5. Swearing at staff and pupils.
6. Physical assault against members of staff and other pupils.
7. Damage of property.
8. General behaviour issues.

The Virtual School has been successful in preventing a number of Permanent Exclusions this year through offering one or more of the following interventions:

- Teaching - Extra support is available from our Teacher on a 1:1 basis to help aid their studies and ensure our Looked After Children maintain an educational focus.
- Tuition – The Virtual School currently uses a range of tuition companies which allows us to allocate the tutors to any children who require extra support and these block sessions can be personalised to suit the needs of our LAC.
- Additional funding – This funding is part of the Virtual School’s Pupil Premium Plus and is distributed to the school at the Virtual School Head teacher’s discretion; which is then used to support our Looked After Children.
- Education Support – Support is available from one of our two Education Support workers for LAC who are experiencing issues in school. This is normally a 1:1 basis which can also include counselling if required. The focus is to keep our Looked After children engaged in education.

During the period, (Sep 2018 – Sep 2019) 23 looked after children have been fixed term excluded; accumulating a total of 62 fixed term exclusions between them and 133.5 days’ worth of education has been missed. This is an average of between 2-3 exclusions per week. The looked after children who have received these fixed term exclusions range from Reception – Year 12 with a total of 15 different schools. The schools with the highest number of exclusions have been targeted by the Virtual Head to prevent reoccurrences in the future. Also, throughout this time frame there has been 10 occasions in which a looked after child has been on the verge of receiving a permanent exclusion. Of these 10 cases, 3 have been resolved by a managed move to another school, 1 underwent a statutory assessment for a special school place which was granted, 4 began receiving support from our learning mentor, 1 received 1-1 tuition from our teacher and 1 received support and guidance from our Deputy Virtual Head Teacher.

Conclusion

This monitoring process has been a success as it has allowed the Virtual School to work more closely with schools and provide early intervention to support both the Looked After Child and the educational setting they are attending. Also, it has allowed the Virtual School to discuss the more complex cases in more detail by having a better quality of information regarding LAC exclusions. This also has allowed casework to be allocated around the team in an attempt to reduce the amount of fixed term exclusions that is currently on the rise both in Gateshead and nationally.

4 . Teaching and learning

4.1 Letterbox

The Letterbox Club programme aims to inspire a love of reading and engagement with numeracy. The packs include a variety of books, Math’s games and stationery that are sent out in colourful packaging on a monthly basis Letterbox Club also provides us with a special pack during the Christmas period that we send to the children as an additional extra. The cohort is divided up into 5 different packs depending on age, for instance: - Purple (Nurse & Reception), Orange (Year 1 & 2), Blue (Year 3 & 4), Red (Year 5 & 6) & Yellow for our children who have a Special Educational Need. For many children, it’s the first time they have had a letter or a parcel through the post and for some it’s the first time they have had books of their own.

Feedback continues to be positive from both Foster Carers and pupils. This feedback shows how the Letterbox Club provides such a positive impact not only on the children’s reading, but other aspects of their education and valuable skills that can be transferred into their

everyday life. This is a yearly process that will hopefully continue to make encouraging influence to other LAC children who become involved with Letterbox Club. The VS is planning to extend this service to Previously Looked After Children and adopted Children.

4.2. Private Tuition

Within the period September 2018 - November 2019 a number of Looked after Children received one to one private tuition. This is funded through the Pupil Premium Plus funding that the Virtual School retains.

The tutoring support offered during this period was in English and Math's and targeted mainly at Years 10 and 11 LAC to support those who were about to take their examinations. We were also able to offer some sessions to Year's 12 & 13 for students who were re-sitting their examinations.

This year we have extended the use of local education providers to support us the Virtual School in supporting pupils with significant social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. The Virtual School Head teacher is particularly keen on finding the right tutor with the relevant experience in working with challenging children to support their education and their emotional and mental health and well being.

4.3. Education Support

We now have two Education support workers. One is a qualified counsellor and has significant experience in supporting children in secondary and primary schools. Since January 2019 she has supported 12 Looked After Children supporting their emotional wellbeing in both an educational and personal settings. She has been an advocate for them and they have shared issues and concerns they have regarding their education. Seven students are key stage (KS) 4, six students KS3 and three students KS2. Depending on each young person's needs and abilities, she has used strategies such as cognitive behaviour therapy to help them simply manage a day. She has helped them build their confidence and self-esteem. She has supported them in class to ensure they do not miss out on lesson content and peer interaction.

She maintains strong and positive relationship with social workers, schools, foster carers and more importantly the young persons that receive support.

The newest member of the Virtual School was successfully appointed to not only provide education support but also to develop opportunities for Looked after children to continue engaging with education during the school holiday through educational enrichment activities and extra curriculum learning opportunities.

He currently supports several Looked after children ranging from age 6 to 16 and has been very successful in encouraging them to engage and in some cases re-engage with education.

The first school holiday education enhancement project is being planned for February 2020.

4.4 . Education Psychology

Following on from the success of previous training the Educational Psychology role has involved organizing a second two day group Theraplay training course which took place in the Autumn term 2019. The training was attended by representatives from 17 schools as well as 1 member of the Virtual School Team. This has further increased capacity to support Looked After Children in our schools as well as other vulnerable young people. All schools attending have committed to running at least one Theraplay group over the coming year and the approach continues to be used in schools by staff who previously attended the training. We continue to hold network meetings where we share good practice.

The Education Psychology role has involved delivering training to schools, Gateshead College staff, Foster Carers and early years practitioners with a focus on the impact of early

trauma and attachment difficulties for young people in our schools. Feedback has been consistently positive.

Additionally the Virtual School EP is involved in liaison with the Educational Psychologists input through the usual school route linked to changes in care and educational placements. Priorities for the coming year include supporting the establishment of protocols for Looked After Children linked to Local Authority Panels and further development of our training offer.

Additionally the REALAC EP is involved in liaison with the Educational Psychologists in Gateshead around their work with looked after children in the schools that they cover. She has also been directly involved in casework and facilitating statutory processes with a number of looked after young people who have not been able to access an Educational Psychologist input through the usual school route linked to changes in care and education placements.

4.5 VS Teacher support to pupils

Gateshead's Virtual School Teacher, has been responsible for delivering and improving the educational attainment for all Looked After Children in the Borough of Gateshead as well as looked after children that are in the care of Gateshead but live out of Borough. Support has been provided through variety of one to one support to Look After Children between the ages of 3 to 16 (Foundation Stage through to Key Stage 4) during the periods of November 2018 – November 2019.

The focus of support is to work with Looked After Children who; have gaps in their learning, are below the Government National expectations for their age, attachment difficulties; SEN; behavioural difficulties; Social and Emotional difficulties and children who are at crisis point as a result of earlier adverse experiences. She is currently working with a cohort of five Looked After Children supporting their educational needs as well as their personal, social and emotional wellbeing. Identifying their barriers to learning and closing the attainment gap compared to their peers. Bringing them back in line with national expectations for their age group is a high priority.

The VS Teacher delivers Group Theraplay sessions to primary school children. Theraplay a child-based therapy for building and enhancing attachment, self-esteem, trust in others and joyful engagement which a high percentage of looked after children lack due to early and ongoing adverse experiences.

The VS teacher is also the Designated Teacher for 'Previously Looked after and Adopted Children.' This is a new role for the Virtual School to offer advice for schools and parents. This role is beginning to expand.

4. Educational Outcomes and Progress

Primary

A priority for The Virtual school 2010/20 is to progress and performance as well as outcomes for pupils. Below is an example of how progress and performance is monitored;

Key:

RED – Working at below age related expectations (ARE)

Amber – Emerging /working towards ARE

Green - Working below ARE

Pupils progress and performance can be closely monitored enabling the VS to provide early intervention for those pupils working below ARE.

Example Year 4

		End of Year 4		
Name	School	Reading	Writing	Maths
MM	Colegate	Expected	Expected	Expected
ME	Riverside Academy	YR4 Secure	YR4 Secure	YR4 Secure
KJ	Bill Quay	YR4 Emerging	YR4 Emerging	YR4 Emerging
LR	Eslington	YR4 Exceeding	Yr4 Expected	YR4 Expected
WG	High Spen	PAT 1	PAT 1	PAT 1
KJ	Lobley Hill	YR4 Emerging	YR4 Emerging	YR4 Emerging
FK	St Margarets c of E Primary	YR3 Expected	YR3 Expected	YR3 Expected
RC	Toy Top Farm, Darlington	Yr1 Developing	Yr 1 Emerging	Yr 1 Emerging
KW	Red Rose Primary, Durham	ARE	ARE	ARE
OM	Stephenson Memorial Primary	4 Secure	4 Developing	4 Secure
CD	High Spen	YR3 Expected	YR3 Expected	YR3 Expected
CF	The Dales Primary	2c	3c	3d
LB	Portobello Primary	YR3 Expected	YR4 Expected	YR3 Expected
DA	Bexhill Academy	3 Developing	3 Developing	3 Developing
CP	St Philip Neri	4 Developing	4 Developing	4 Developing
CH	Eslington	Yr4 Emerging	Yr3 Emerging	Yr3 Emerging
CH	Eslington	Yr4 Emerging	Yr3 Emerging	Yr3 Emerging
OB	Riverside Academy	YR4 Secure	YR4 Secure	YR4 Secure
AN	Hill View Juniors	YR3 Emerging	Yr3 Emerging	YR3 Emerging
MS	St Aidans	YR3 Emerging	Yr3 Emerging	YR3 Emerging
EC	Parkhead Primary	ARE	ARE	ARE
NR	South Street	ARE	ARE	ARE

Looked after Children Key Stage 1 Results 2019

Gateshead's Year 2 Looked after Children Cohort was 14 Students, below is a table showing results of their end of year assessments.

All LAC Including Out of Borough Schools				
Number Achieving Expected Level	5	7	5	5
Number in Cohort	14	14	14	14
% Achieving Expected Level				
Writing	36			
Reading		50		
Maths			36	
Reading, Writing & Maths				36

The Cohort was 14 in 2018-19 which is one more than it was in 2017/18 when it was 13. 2 Children were SEN – 14% of the cohort, this is less than the previous year when it was 46%

5 out of 14 children gained the expected level in writing

7 out of 14 children gained the expected level in reading

5 out of 14 children gained the expected level in maths

5 out of 14 children gained the expected level in Reading, Writing & Maths

The table below shows a comparison between Looked after Children Results at Key Stage 1 for 2018-19 and 2017-18.

% Achieving Expected Level	2018	2019
Writing	46%	36%
Reading	46%	50%
Maths	46%	36%
Reading, Writing & Maths	31%	36%

Writing – 36% achieved the expected level in 2018-19 compared to 46% in 2017-18, a decrease of 10%.

Reading - 50% achieved the expected level in 2018-19 compared to 46% in 2017-18, an increase of 4%.

Maths – 36% achieved the expected level in 2018-19 compared to 46% in 2017-18, a decrease of 10%.

Writing, Reading & Maths – 36% achieved the expected level in 2018-19 compared to 31% in 2017-18, a increase of 5%.

The results for Gateshead Looked after Children in 2018-19 have improved in 2 areas from the previous year but also decreased in 2 areas.

Key Stage 2 (SATs Results)

Gateshead's Year 6 Looked after Children Cohort was 30 Students, below is a table showing results of their end of year assessments.

All LAC Including Out of Borough Schools				
Number Achieving Expected Level	17	16	18	14
Number in Cohort	30	30	30	30
% Achieving Expected Level				
Writing	57			
Reading		53		
Maths			60	
Writing, Reading and Maths				47

The cohort in 2018-19 was 30 which is a significant increase from 2017-18 when it was only 18.

14 children were SEN – 47% of the cohort

17 Gained the expected level in Writing

16 gained the expected level in Reading

18 gained the expected level in Maths

14 gained the expected level in Reading, Writing & Maths

The table below shows a comparison between the SATs results for 2018-19 and 2017-18 for Gateshead Looked after Children.

Key Stage 2 Looked after Children SATS Results		
% Achieving Expected Level	2018	2019
Writing	33%	57%
Reading	50%	53%
Maths	50%	60%
Writing, Reading and Maths	33%	47%

47% of Children were SEN in 2018/19 compared to 2017-18 when it was 61%.
 Writing – 57% achieved the Expected level in 2018-19 compared to 33% in 2017-18
 Reading – 53% achieved the Expected level in 2018-19 compared to 50% in 2017-18
 Maths – 60% achieved the Expected level in 2018-19 compared to 50% in 2017-18
 Reading, Writing & Maths - 47% achieved the Expected level in 2018-19 compared to 33% in 2017-18

The Key Stage 2 results overall for Looked after Children for 2018-19 have risen in all areas from the previous year.

The amount of SEN children in the cohort has also decreased from the previous year from 61% in 2017/18 to 47% in 2018/19, this equates to 14 out of the 30 in the cohort.

Gateshead's Year 6 SEN Cohort was 18 pupils.

% Achieving Expected Level	LAC 61% SEN	All Gateshead
Writing	33%	82%
Reading	50%	80%
Maths	50%	81%
Writing, Reading and Maths	33%	70%
Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling	50%	84%

This is the third year for the new SATS tests which are marked differently to previous years where a Level 4 was seen as making Expected Level, they are now marked out of a 120, anyone achieving a score of 100 or above is classed as being at Expected Level, 99 or below is classed as not meeting Expected Level. There were a series of tests for each subject to gain a score, Writing is graded through Teacher Assessments.

KEY Stage 4 GCSE Results 2019

Gateshead's Looked after Children Year 11 Cohort was 38 Children, below is a table showing Provisional Results for their GCSE/Equivalent Results.

38 Looked after Children	No of Children	Percentage
5 (9-4)	11	29

5 (9-1)	25	66
5 (9-4) inc M&E	8	21
1 (9-1)	29	76
SEN	23	61

This Year's GCSE's comes under the new Grading System, they are marked by a number system between 9 and 1, 9 would be the equivalent of a A* while 1 would be the equivalent of a G. 4 is the classed as a C which is seen as a standard pass. These examinations are generally accepted as being of a Higher Level and harder to attain the standard pass or above.

Evaluation

29 Looked after Children achieved 1 x GCSE Passes at Grade 1 or above.

25 Looked after Children achieved 5 x GCSE Passes at Grade 1 or above.

11 Looked after Children achieved 5 x GCSE Passes at Grade 4 or above.

8 Looked after Children achieved 5 x GCSE Passes at Grade 4 or above including English & Maths.

61% of the Cohort were SEN

12 (32%) of the cohort attend Special Schools or specialist provisions and were not expected to make 5 (9-4) because of SEN needs.

The table below gives a comparison with the results from 2017/18

	2017/18 Cohort (30)	Percentage	2018/19 Cohort (38)	Percentage
5 (9-4)	6	20	11	29
5 (9-1)	17	57	25	66
5 (9-1) inc M&E	3	10	8	21
1 (9-1)	23	77	29	76
SEN	19	63	23	61

The cohort for this year 2018/19 had a slightly lower ratio of SEN children with 61% compared to 63% in 2017/18.

5 (9-4) including English & Maths – this is significantly higher with 21% achieving this in 2018/19 compared to 10% in 2017/18.

5 (9-1) – this has increased to 66% in 2018/19 compared to 57% in 2017/18.

5 (9-4) – This is another area where we have increased this year with 29% achieving this compared to 20% in 2017/18

1 (9-1) – there has been a very slight decrease in this area with 76% achieving this in 2018/19 compared with 77 % in 2017/18.

In three of the four areas where we have made a comparison there has been an increase this year of students achieving their targets compared to the previous year.

Please note

All figures are collated from information received directly from schools. This is to be used only as a guide, official figures will not be available until end of 2019.

National Looked after Children figures will not be published until March 2020.

5. Post 16 Progression routes

The following table provides a snapshot of the destinations of students in year 12, 13 and post year 13 (as of 25/11/19).

2019 (Data as of 25/11/19)						
Year Groups (size of cohort)	2018 figures			2019 figures		
	Year 12 (34)	Year 13 (32)	Year 14 (34)	Year 12 (39)	Year 13 (29)	Year 14 (31)
Progression Routes						
6 th form	8	4	0	8	6	3
College	13	13	11	18	3	5
Study Programme/ Traineeship	4	2	4	5	4	1
Apprenticeship	1	5	4	0	1	3
NEET	3	4	4	6	7	10
University/HE level course	N/A	N/A	3	1 (sat A levels early)	N/A	2
Princes Trust/personal Development Programme	0	1		1	2	0
Work (including part time)	1	0	4	0	5	7
Combined care and education	1			0	0	0
Pregnant			2	0	0	0
Teenage Parent	1	2	1	0	0	0

Not available to the work place/ Other	1 incarcerated	1 in voluntary drug rehab	1 in full time care	0	0	0
Other	1 missing	0		0	1 unknown	0

Higher Education (HE)

The numbers of LAC progressing to higher education remains low. It is most likely that some previously looked after young people engage with HE at a later stage but there are no figures at present to capture this. Gateshead Virtual School continue to financially support students in their first year at university when they receive an HE bursary of £2,000.

Education, Employment and Training (EET)

A monthly meeting between Gateshead Virtual School and Social Care has continued to identify and plan work with young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) or who are at risk of becoming NEET. External partners are also part of this group to improve monitoring and target work to be done with the young people. These include Gateshead and Newcastle College, Learning & Skills and Early Help's Careers Advisers as well as a job coach from Economic Wellbeing.

Work Experience

Background

The Pathways2Work (P2W) project supports Looked After Young People in year 10 – year 13 to find work experience during their school/college holidays within a real working environment. The aim is to help to improve their chances in life by developing the skills needed for future careers. It can also improve their confidence and helps them to learn more about a particular career before finalising their plans.

A young person can work for a period of one day to several weeks. They are supported to help identify the correct type of placement suitable to their needs.

Pathways2Work Participation (Feb 19 to Oct 19)

Half Term	No of students out per holiday	Total days 2018	No of students out per holiday	Total days 2019
February Half Term	6	25	3	13
Easter (across the 2 weeks)	12	66	13	53
May Half Term	2	8	2	4 & half
Summer	12	110	16	101 & half
October	6	26	11	44
Total	38	235	45	216
Supported student to find own placement for their school work experience	1	5		

Types of Placement

In 2019, examples of placements included: Catering, Construction, sport, childcare, working with adults with learning disabilities, horticulture, dog grooming, elderly care, architecture, equine care, customer services, retail, special Olympics, motor vehicle, community projects, environmental services, transplant games, law, engineering, web design/graphics.

One young person impressed their employer so much that they identified him for a young talent pipeline programme, which could lead to an apprenticeship if he so wishes.

Raising Aspirations

Gateshead Virtual School continues to work with the North East Raising Aspirations Partnership, to try to improve young people's knowledge and experience of university. This is via their Choices programme, which has 2 strands:

Choices Together – this is aimed at year 10 and 11 and comprises of 5 sessions.

- A welcome event for the young people and foster carers
- 3 themed events where the young people gain experience of a vocational area eg Media, Sport, Medicine whilst also learning about things such as 'Student Finance' and Student Accommodation'. The sessions are ran by student reps, many of whom were previously looked after children, which helps as the participants can relate to the reps' life story and personal situation.
- A celebration event, where young people receive prizes and acknowledgment of their participation.

Foster Family Fun Days – FFFD: This is for the broader foster family and is aimed at year 7 – year 11 but can include younger siblings who are in primary school.

2019's session gave families the chance to:

- learn about university courses in a fun way by giving them the experience of working together to solve a mocked-up break in that has been discovered on campus. They had the opportunity to examine a crime scene, CCTV and the getaway vehicle.
- They were also joined by a guest speaker who talked about their journey from being in care through to completing their degree, which will give the young people positive role models that they can relate to.

6. LAC Apprenticeship progression report 2029

Work being progressed in relation to LAC apprenticeships

The Council's approach to Apprenticeships

Providing apprenticeships and routes into apprenticeships are an important part of Gateshead's strategic ambitions within Thrive to create opportunities for employment and economic growth. The Council's Workforce Development team will lead on the council's apprenticeship programme through a corporate, co-ordinated, planned approach with the development of an Apprenticeship Strategy and the underpinning Delivery Plan which aims to:

- Embed a positive apprenticeship culture
- Maximise workforce capability by identifying and promoting a range of suitable apprenticeship opportunities for new apprentices and existing employees
- Provide advice and support to managers on apprenticeships
- Enable the Council to have one route for approval for spend on the apprenticeship levy
- Track spend and planned spend against the apprenticeship levy

- Monitor the council's progress against the government's apprenticeship target for public bodies
- Ensure a consistent approach is in place for the recruitment and management of apprentices across the council
- Negotiate apprenticeship training programmes on behalf of the council;
- Support and reflect the Council's wider responsibilities e.g. NEET, corporate parent and achieving targets for care leavers entering apprenticeships.
- Engage with training providers and other local authorities to maximise apprenticeship provision within the region.

We are currently in the process of finalising the Apprenticeship Strategy 2020-2023; a delivery action plan runs alongside the strategy to implement actions and track progress. One of the aims within the Apprenticeship Strategy is to develop workforce diversity and inclusivity, with a key priority to ensure that young people leaving care are supported to have an opportunity of an apprenticeship within the Council. Acting in its capacity as corporate parent, the Council will offer apprenticeship opportunities to Care Leavers and Looked after Children who find it difficult to navigate the complexities of finding and sustaining work. This approach will help more disadvantaged young people in the borough get a foot on the ladder of employment and begin their journey to independence.

The delivery action plan focuses heavily on how the Council can support LAC and Care Leavers not only to access Apprenticeships, but sustain, succeed and progress into further employment. It is the intention that the following actions will be undertaken:

- A working group will be established to develop, implement and embed a diverse work experience and traineeship programme that offers opportunities and progression pathways into apprenticeships and securing sustainable employment for LAC and Care Leavers.
- Consideration will be given as to whether and which apprenticeship opportunities can be ringfenced to LAC and Care Leavers.
- Offer additional supervision, pastoral and transitional care, advice, guidance and information for LAC young people (aged 16-18) and care leavers (aged 19-24) to sustain and complete apprenticeships and aid progression into further employment.
- Ensure LAC young people and care leavers are supported to overcome any financial barriers to enable them to access apprenticeships
- Signpost training providers to the additional financial support available to meet the additional cost in supporting LAC and Care Leavers to transition from education to the world of work.
- Ensuring additional appropriate guidance is developed for all managers to aid them in supporting LAC and Leaving Care apprentices in successfully navigating the complexities of employment, to maximise the probability of sustaining and achieving their apprenticeship.

The Council's Apprenticeship Co-ordinator will be responsible for working with relevant officers across the Council to make progress on the above actions. Outcomes of the apprenticeship delivery plan are to be reviewed and updated every 8 weeks.

NB: This element of the report was submitted by Alison Smith. HR & Workforce Development Manager

7. Previously Looked After and Adopted Children

For previously looked-after and Adopted children, the Virtual school head teacher (VSH) is the source of advice and information to help their parents to advocate for them as effectively as possible. The VS teacher is to provide this advice and respond to parent and school

queries as required. This has already resulted in visits to schools and phone queries from parents.

Further funding has been made available to develop the VSH role for previously Looked after and adopted children and is planning to offer a wider service to parents. E.g. network meetings, training sessions such as Attachment training, SEND and education information. The VSH is currently liaising with Adopt North East.

8. Recommendations for the Virtual School

- 1 To further increase the completion and timely return of all PEPs, both in and out of borough and to further promote the importance of full attendance of all professionals at PEP meetings.
- 2 Continue to provide appropriate intervention and provision for those pupils who are have gaps in their education and also support those at risk of permanent exclusion to maintain their school place and to challenge where schools haven't made appropriate provision.
- 3 Ensure communication with social care enables more timely information to the Virtual School on children moving placements and schools an
- 4 To further develop the role for previously looked after and adopted children.

TITLE OF REPORT: **How we assess young people in crisis (Changing Lives Project)**

REPORT OF: **Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report gives an overview of how services work with children and young people in crisis and how services support and assess young adults via the Supported Accommodation and Independent Living Service (SAILS) pathway, which is a commissioned model and has been operational since July 2018. The report looks at the data provided by the commissioned services for a 12month period.

Background

1. Within Care, Wellbeing and Learning several teams work intensely with children and young adults in crisis.
2. Assessment and Intervention (A&I) service holds Child in Need cases from assessment through intervention to closure or transfer if escalated to Child Protection plan, legal intervention or the child becomes looked after. The work is predominantly focussed on crisis intervention with families who have children of any age.
3. The Complex Child in Need Team, also known as the Edge of Care team (EoC) is part of the A&I service and works intensely with teenagers who are in crisis and at risk of becoming looked after by the Council.
4. The Safeguarding and Care Planning (SGCP) service pick up children's cases from either A&I or the EOC teams when it becomes clear that the young person will need a significant period of social work involvement. Throughout this work safeguarding children and young people is integral to all assessments undertaken by the teams. Social workers in SGCP are skilled in working directly with children and young people to determine their views regarding their future care.
5. Within the Looked After Children's (LAC) teams and Leaving Care team young people continue to need support and interventions to help them understand their life story and the impact this has on how they manage their emotions, relationships and lifestyle.

6. Our approach to social work practice is not limited to one model or 'way to do it'. Gateshead CAN is an overarching systemic and strengths-based approach which recognises the interrelationships between Context, Action and Narrative. Some of the methods and models our social workers use are Relational Genograms, Ecomaps, Solution-focused and motivational interviewing, Signs of Safety, Narrative techniques and tools from positive psychology.
7. Our Social work practice is driven by our aspirant vision that "Children and families are at the heart of everything we do, ensuring all children can thrive and reach their full potential". Our ethical driver is rooted in the belief that our responsibility to children and families in need of help should start from the position where families are empowered and supported to make positive changes, enabled to make self-determined choices and seek their own solutions to build on existing strengths and resilience within the family network. Our firm resolve is to work relentlessly in supporting families to remain together and where a child's needs demand alternative living arrangements these will firstly be sought from within the child's own family network.
8. Professionals involved in delivering statutory social work regardless of which service they belong to hold a determination to seek the opportunities for change within families, utilising the families own resources, by demonstrating reflexivity in their thinking and seeking to reach proportional and evidenced based conclusions.
9. There are times where young people/adults need additional support and accommodation in the form of supported accommodation. This is used widely across the country and is something Gateshead have always used. The SAILS service differentiates from traditional supported housing models in that there are on-site clinical interventions on offer for young people with complex needs. To encourage wellbeing and recovery, all the services are also contractually required to be either PIE (Psychologically Informed Environment) or PIP (Psychologically Informed Practice) compliant.
10. A "pathway" for vulnerable young people has been developed with a person-centred assessment resulting in placements offering targeted, including psychological interventions. Substance misuse drop in services are also available on-site.
11. The services within SAILS are intended to operate as needs led and flexible supported housing services for young people. The aim of all the services is to provide appropriate, safe, supported accommodation to vulnerable young people in housing need during their transition into adulthood.

Policy Context

12. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places legal duties on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help, irrespective of their priority need status, if they are eligible for assistance.

13. Under the Children's Act 1989 and the Housing Act 1996, the Council has an obligation to fund services to support young people presenting as homeless or at risk of homelessness and Care Leavers requiring accommodation.
14. In response to the national guidance document "Developing positive accommodation and support pathways to adulthood", the "Council Plan 2015-2020" has invested in projects to support the early intervention model of working with young people to prevent young people becoming homeless.

SAILS Commissioned services

15. The procurement process was followed, and the following providers were successful in their bids for each lot.
 - Lot 1 – Direct access, Assessment & Emergency Accommodation Unit – Eslington House (Changing Lives)
 - Lot 2 – Shared Living Supported Housing Service and Semi-Independent Living & Floating Support in 5 dispersed properties – Alexander Road and Poplar Crescent (Home Group)
 - Lot 3 – Supported Lodgings Accommodation Service for Looked after Children/Care Leavers - Barnardo's (decommissioned from 1st October 2019 as limited success in recruiting host families within Gateshead)
 - Dispersed Accommodation – The Gateshead Housing Company. 30 Taster flats with 2 hours floating support per week.

Lot 1 Eslington House

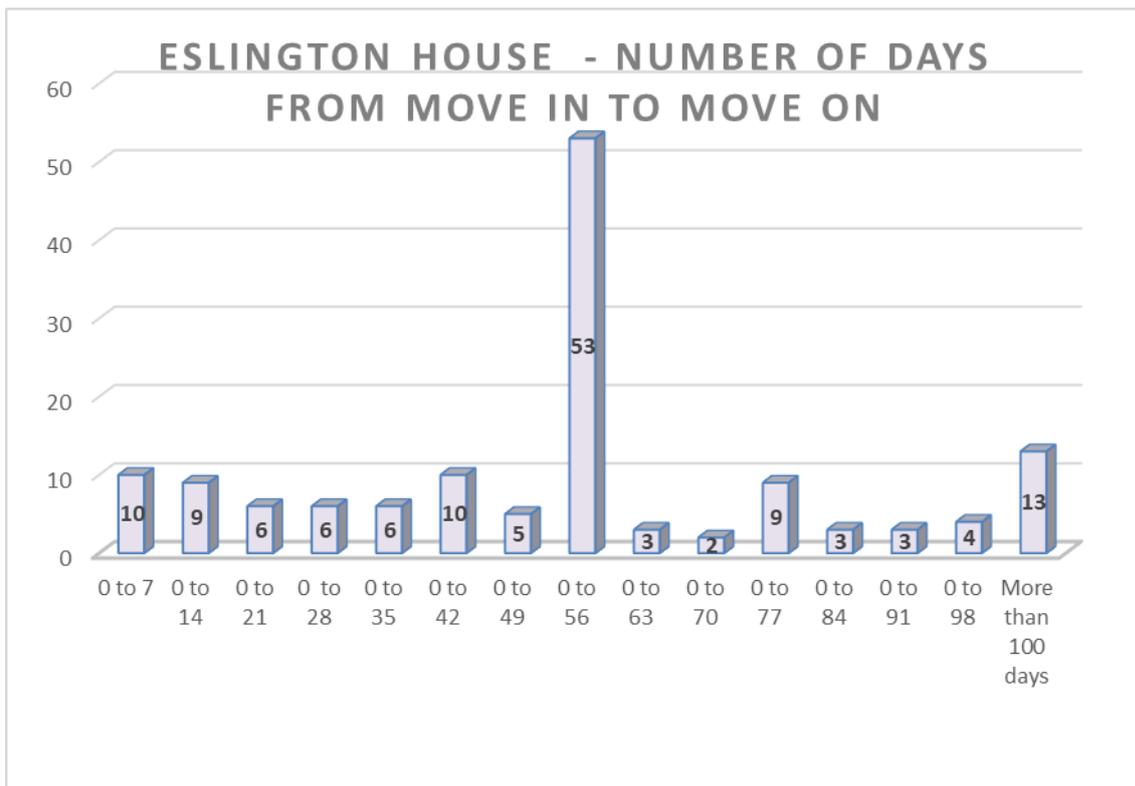
16. Since the SAILS housing pathway for young people aged 16 to 25 years commenced July 2018, the following outputs up to end of June 2019 have been:
 - Total number of referrals 194, of which 175 (91%) were accepted and accessed services
 - Of 194 young people accessing support 14 returned home to family
 - 22 young people were successfully referred to the high needs, clinical intervention
 - 46 young people moved outside the pathway i.e. not homeless or in custody
 - 35 young people were successfully referred to Gateshead Housing Company for Taster Flats Service
 - 1 young person was referred to Supported Lodgings Service, however they rejected this placement. Provider terminated their contract July 19 due to low levels of referrals.
 - Of 194 young people accessing support 18 have been evicted from service for a variety of reasons

Referrals through SAILS

17. Initial referrals are made directly to Eslington House as they take young people in crisis and in emergencies from a range of sources, which include
- Housing services
 - Children's services
 - SAILS panel
 - YOT
 - Probation
 - Northumberland adolescent services
 - Northumberland CRC
 - Family intervention
 - Psychosis community treatment team
 - Domestic abuse team
18. Of the accepted referrals there were 42 young people known to be former LAC or young people leaving care.

Assessments at Eslington

19. Young people who are accepted into Eslington for are there for an assessment period of 56 days. The assessment looks at the skills and abilities young people and are scored by staff and the young person, focussing on the following areas
- Self-Care & Living Skills
 - Managing Money
 - Meaningful Use of Time
 - Social Networks & Relationships
 - Drug & Alcohol Misuse
 - Emotional & Mental Health
 - Managing Tenancy & Accommodation
 - Offending
 - Motivation & taking responsibility
20. The observations, assessment and scores are used to make recommendations on
- Skills the young person has
 - Areas that need further support/interventions
 - Type of move on accommodation required
21. Although the assessment is 56 days, not all young people stay for that length of time - see below



22. The assessments are brought to the SAILS decision making meeting to discuss recommendations. It is evident from the statistics that most young people go to the following:

- 24 hour supported accommodation – Alexander Road
- General lets
- Taster flats

23. There are several young people that do not engage or have had to be evicted, which is also monitored very carefully by the SAILS panel

Lot 2 Alexander Road, Polar Crescent and dispersed properties

24. The length of stay per provision within Home Group is currently not collated from the provider therefore I am unable to provide data on the length of stay in each of Home Groups individual provisions. This will be collated in the next 12 months.

25. Home group have however provided information via the outcome framework workbook and have been able to identify the positive progress young people make and the interventions used to help them with:

- Emotional wellbeing
- Health
- Education, employment or training
- Managing finances
- Relationships
- Community based activities
- Independent living skills
- Managing own tenancy

26. As part of the contract, supporting young people into education, training and employment is a key focus. Home Group have employed a support worker who had been through the SAILS project. Home Group have offered this young person a comprehensive training programme during their probationary period and have worked through confidentiality, DBS checks etc. Home Group have also recruited an apprentice, who has also been supported through the SAILS pathway.

LOT 3 Taster flats - The Gateshead Housing Company

27. From the start of the SAILS contract The Gateshead Housing Company will prioritise 30 flats for young people on the SAILS pathway. For LAC/ Care leavers the setting up home allowance is used to furnish the flat and for young people coming through the homeless route flats are furnished by the Housing Company.

28. Summary of reporting made by the TGHC:

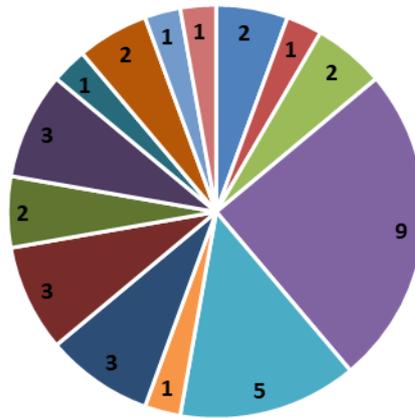
- Over three quarters of commissioned clients, including those who have had any involvement with a taster flat, are maintaining or showing a positive trend in their outcome framework scoring assessments.
- Support workers review progress at 7 days, 28 days and 3 months. Following this, progress is reviewed every 3 months.
- There are instances where other support issues such as domestic abuse and safeguarding the client have had to take priority over getting the assessments completed

29. There had been delays in the preparation of taster flats, but a lot of the barriers and challenges have now been resolved. The service will have 6 properties that can be prepared and ready for immediate use. Identifying future properties will depend on areas of choice from young people and the availability of properties in that area.

30. In addition, young people are offered 4 hours floating support, this is valued in feedback from our young people. The service is client led and therefore young people receive as much support as they need. In the beginning of support, workers will spend more than 2 hours per week as setting up a tenancy can be time intensive. This will then go down to 2 hours with support being decreased the more independence the young person gains.

31. Support activities can be wide ranging in nature and include home visits, benefit applications and appeals, child protection involvement, core group attendance, home repair issues, support around physical or mental health etc. Due to the fluctuating client need the weekly support and activity time can vary.

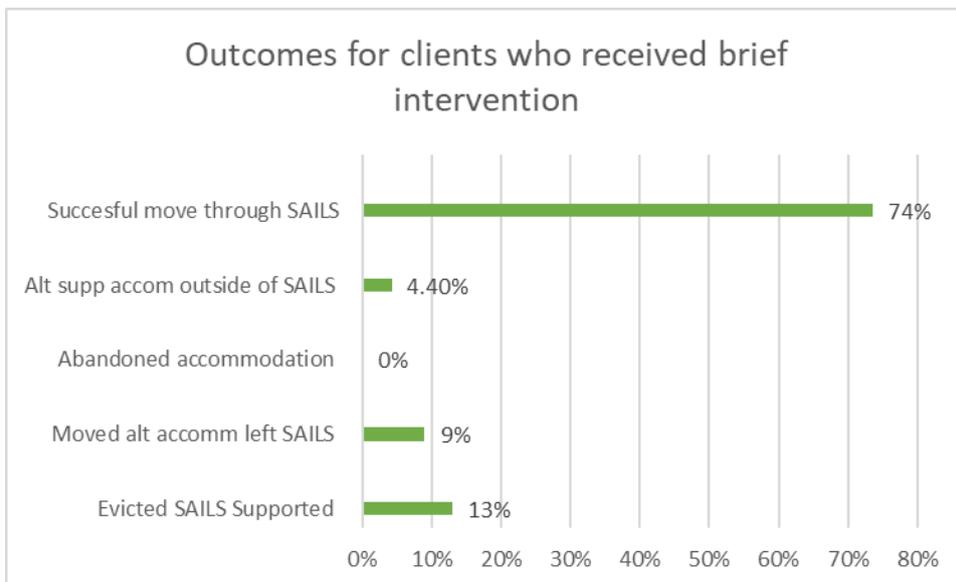
Location and Number of Taster Flats Per Ward



- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ■ Birtley | ■ Blaydon | ■ Bridges |
| ■ Chowdene | ■ Dunston and Teams | ■ Dunston Hill and Whickham East |
| ■ Felling | ■ High Fell | ■ Lamesley |
| ■ Lobley Hill and Bensham | ■ Low Fell | ■ Ryton, Crookhill and Stella |
| ■ Whickham South and Sunnyside | ■ Winlaton and High Spen | |

Gateshead housing Company – Brief intervention worker

32. The Under 25 Brief Intervention post is provided by the Gateshead Housing Company as part of the commissioned under 25 support floating support service that is part of the wider SAILS model. This post has been agreed until July 2021.
33. The post provides short term brief intervention support to young people aged 25 and under. It was initially envisaged that the postholder would provide short term support to young people who needed immediate intervention, support to cases who had been signed off by the service but needed some further intervention as well as providing some of the initial support to those going into taster flats. The post has evolved since its inception and now also contributes to the smooth transition and movement of young people between the different supported housing schemes of the SAILS model through drop in sessions at Eslington, Poplar or Alexandra Road as well as linking into the LAC Young Persons drop in, contributing to an effective multi agency service delivery for young people.
34. A total of 31 of the direct referrals have received support from the brief intervention worker. In addition, 23 young people received support and advice from the Brief Intervention Service through the drop-in sessions provided resulting in a total of 54 clients have received brief intervention.



35. Feedback from providers within the SAILS Process

- I would like to take this opportunity to say what a pleasure it has been working with you. The drop in's at Poplar Crescent have proved very useful and beneficial to both me and the housemates.
- “The housemates have commented how helpful you are and how you really explain housing and what's expected of someone when moving into their own tenancy. You have given them clear guidelines and come to help out at the drop of a hat “
- “The communication between Eslington and our workers ensures that the smoothest transition is made when the young person moves out. They also mentioned the contribution the brief intervention worker makes as being the ‘face of the council’ and the drop in's this worker holds are really beneficial to both staff and residents “

36. Overall the feedback of the brief intervention worker has been positive and helpful in terms of encouraging and supporting joint working between the providers within the SAILS model, the post has allowed for a flexible approach to supporting young people.

Feedback from Young People on the services being provided

37. Eslington House - for Care leavers week Eslington House organised a football match between Gateshead and Durham Care leavers. The day was a huge success and we would like it to be a regular event

38. Home Group - group work looked at what the we would like to deliver and how we can achieve this. The service now pays for Fareshare food deliveries and evening group cooking sessions have been put in place at our request.

Summary

39. The report demonstrates the support both statutory services and the SAILS pathway give to young people in crisis. Ofsted recognised the good work of the social work teams and the positive outcomes we achieve with children and families.
40. SAILS has provided an option to those young people who were homeless in Gateshead. It has provided them with a clear and defined pathway based on their individual needs. It is being acknowledged that staff in the accommodation settings work hard with care leavers who have complex needs and can be very challenging to manage. Their commitment to them has been recognised and positive progress has been seen in a number of cases. Overall, the hard work and dedication from providers has created a foundation in which the process can be developed and enhanced.

Recommendation

41. It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting OSC note and comment on the information provided in the report.

CONTACT: Jill Little

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TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Work Programme

REPORT OF: Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive
Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services
and Governance

Summary

This report sets out the provisional work programme for the Corporate Parenting OSC for the municipal year 2019/20.

Background

1. Every year each Overview and Scrutiny Committee draws up a work programme based on the Council's policy framework which is then agreed by the Council as part of the policy planning process
2. The Committee's work programme is a rolling programme which sets the agenda for its quarterly meetings. It is the means by which it can address the interests of the local community, focus on improving services and seek to reduce inequalities in service provision and access to services.

Recommendations

3. The Committee is asked to
 - a) Endorse the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's provisional work programme for 2019/20 attached at Appendix 1.
 - b) Note that further reports will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional issues which the Committee may be asked to consider.

Contact: Angela Frisby

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APPENDIX 1

Corporate Parenting OSC 2019/20	
4 July 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation 44 Report • Adoption Annual • Early Permanence (including a focus on sufficiency of local placements / reduction in use of IFAs/the quality of foster carers looking after Gateshead children) • Early Permanence (what it means/accelerated plans/placement stability) • Work Programme
17 October 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People's Presentation • Performance Overview • Monitor Progress in relation to reducing the numbers of LAC and children subject to Child Protection Plans • Regulation 44 Report and Residential Placement Sufficiency (proposed way forward in relation to out of borough placements) • Work Programme
16 January 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing from Care Annual Report • Education Annual Report (incl focus on employment/training/apprenticeships) • Health of LAC Annual report • How we assess Young People in Crisis - (Changing Live Project) • Regulation 44 Report • Work Programme
2 April 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People's presentation • Performance Overview • Care Leavers Offer – Quality and Impact – Annual Report / incl session with care leavers • Social Work Practice and the Voice of the Child – Case Study (work with the Safeguarding Board to develop core model /systemic working practices) • Regulation 44 Report • Work Programme

Issues to slot in:

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

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