

**TITLE OF REPORT:** **Performance Overview – Data as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021**

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## **Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To provide the Corporate Parenting Board with key headline activity and performance data, related to looked after children. The data provided in this report includes the last 3 end of year figures, as well as monthly figures for the last 12 months to the end of July 2021, the latest full month available. This report will be developed for future boards in line with any requirements.

## **Background**

- 2.1 This report will update Board members as to key headline activity and performance data, related to looked after children.
- 2.2 At the end of July 2021, 433 children were looked after which is a 5% increase from the number at the start of the Covid pandemic last year.**
- 2.3 However, it is important to set the context that looked after children are not the only demand increases children services have noted both locally and nationally.
- 2.4 Building on work from previous years, research published in February 2021<sup>1</sup> by the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), reflected back a national picture of increasing demand to social care services. This general trend, which is expected to continue had been seen emerging for a number of years, but has been complicated by the impact of Covid19, with the report concluding nationally:

*“In the initial six months of the Covid-19 pandemic, more children were referred who were not previously known to social care services. Families who were just about managing pre-pandemic and would not normally come to the attention of social care were now in need of significant help. More children were presenting at a later stage, once issues were complex and entrenched, and then immediately becoming subjects of child protection plans or proceedings.”*

- 2.5 Locally in Gateshead, we have not been immune to the national picture and have seen some significant activity pressures emerge. Over the course of the pandemic, since March 2020 to present we have seen the following pattern compared to the previous year in relation to increases:

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<sup>1</sup> ADCS safeguarding pressures phase 7 - <https://adcs.org.uk/safeguarding/article/safeguarding-pressure-phase-7>

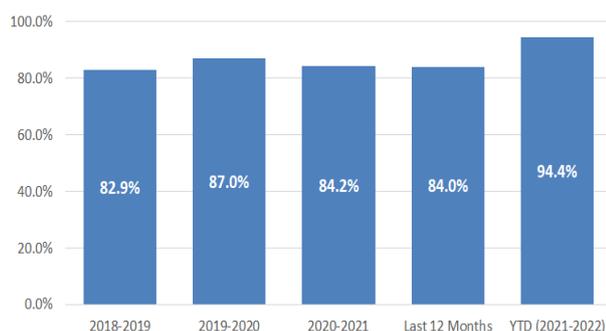
- 16% increase in the overall number of contacts received by the service (5686 to 6600)
- 28% increase in the number of referrals to the service (1470 to 1884)
- and a subsequent 27% increase in the number referrals that led to an assessment (1349 to 1709)
- 18% increase in the number of children open across the service (1567 to 1851). This additional 284 children equates roughly to an additional 15 FTE case load.
- 29% increase in the number children subject to child in need plans (426 to 550)
- 5% increase in the number of children becoming looked after (161 to 169)
- 5% increase in the number of children becoming looked, who had never previously been looked after) after for the first time (140 to 146)
- 5% increase in the overall number of looked after child at the period end (414 to 433)
- 20% increase in the number of children on Interim Care Orders (66 to 79) and 12% increase in children on Full Care Orders (265 to 296) – both Order types incur additional costs in relation to legal services and support from the authority.

## Key Headline Data for Looked After Children

Figure 1: Numbers of children becoming looked after

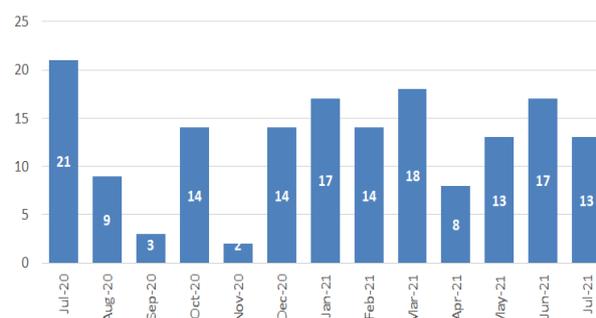
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	Last 12 Months	YTD (2021-2022)	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21
[01] Number of Looked After Children coming into care	170	161	184	169	54	25	13	6	15	4	15	22	17	23	9	13	17	15
[02] - no becoming looked after who were previously CP	112	99	116	100	30	18	5	4	12	2	8	12	13	14	5	10	9	6
[03] - % becoming looked after who were previously CP	65.9%	61.5%	63.0%	59.2%	55.6%	72.0%	38.5%	66.7%	80.0%	50.0%	53.3%	54.5%	76.5%	60.9%	55.6%	76.9%	52.9%	40.0%
[04] - no becoming looked after for the first time	141	140	155	142	51	21	9	3	14	2	14	17	14	18	8	13	17	13
[05] - % becoming looked after for the first time	82.9%	87.0%	84.2%	84.0%	94.4%	84.0%	69.2%	50.0%	93.3%	50.0%	93.3%	77.3%	82.4%	78.3%	88.9%	100.0%	100.0%	86.7%
[06] - no becoming looked after for the first time who were on a CP Plan	87	83	95	81	27	14	5	2	11	1	7	9	10	9	4	10	9	4
[07] - % becoming looked after for the first time who were on a CP Plan	51.2%	51.6%	51.6%	47.9%	50.0%	56.0%	38.5%	33.3%	73.3%	25.0%	46.7%	40.9%	58.8%	39.1%	44.4%	76.9%	52.9%	26.7%

[05] - % becoming looked after for the first time



There is no comparator information available for this measure.

[04] - no becoming looked after for the first time



3.1 Figure 1 shows how over the last rolling 12-month period 169 children have entered care, of which 142 (84%) became looked after for the first time. The proportion of children becoming looked after for the first time has stayed fairly static over the years, ranging between 82.9% and 87.0%

3.2 Over the same period, 100 of the children becoming looked after (59.2%) were previously subject to a child protection plan (CPP), showing how the majority of children do not enter care without support being provided in advance to try and avoid the entry to care.

3.3 Monthly figures can fluctuate significantly, and the number of children being taken into care in July 2021 was below the levels seen in July 2020, with the number of decreasing from 25 children in July 2020 to 15 children in July 2021. Across the course of the 12 months to July 21 the number of children coming into care was 169, which is slightly lower than the previous full financial year 2021, when the figure was 184.

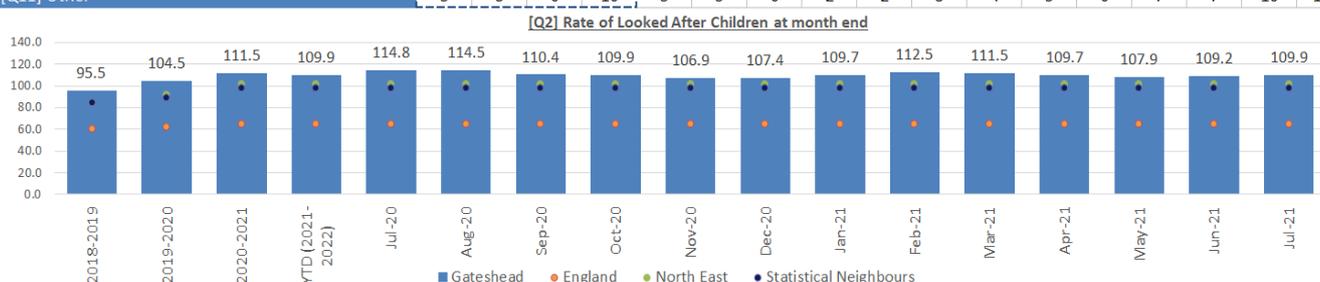
Figure 2: Numbers of children becoming looked after for a second or subsequent time

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	Last 12 Months	YTD (2021-2022)	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21
[P1] Number of Looked After Children coming into care	170	161	184	169	54	25	13	6	15	4	15	22	17	23	9	13	17	15
[P2] - no becoming looked after for a second or subsequent time	29	20	29	27	3	4	4	3	1	2	1	5	3	5	1	0	0	2
[P3] % becoming looked after for a second or subsequent time	17.1%	12.4%	15.8%	16.0%	5.6%	16.0%	30.8%	50.0%	6.7%	50.0%	6.7%	22.7%	17.6%	21.7%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	13.3%

3.4 Figure 2 shows the number of children becoming looked after for a second or subsequent time in the last 12 months is consistent with previous years; although volumes year to date in 2021-22 are currently below historic averages, with no looked after children returning to care in either May or June 2021.

Figure 3: Number of looked after children at the month end and type of placement

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	YTD (2021-2022)	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21
[Q1] Number of Looked After Children at month end	380	414	439	433	452	451	435	433	421	423	432	443	439	432	425	430	433
[Q2] Rate of Looked After Children at month end	95.5	104.5	111.5	109.9	114.8	114.5	110.4	109.9	106.9	107.4	109.7	112.5	111.5	109.7	107.9	109.2	109.9
[Q3] Residential non- GMBC	28	29	31	32	30	28	28	31	33	32	32	32	31	31	32	32	32
[Q4] Agency Fostering	20	26	51	52	35	40	42	39	34	32	39	46	51	53	57	54	52
[Q5] GMBC Homes	5	11	9	10	11	10	9	10	9	7	7	8	9	9	8	9	10
[Q6] Mainstream Fostering	239	250	233	237	249	245	238	236	236	237	235	229	233	229	227	230	237
[Q7] Family & Friends	55	59	63	51	80	80	70	73	69	72	71	78	63	56	52	54	51
[Q8] Awaiting Adoption	15	15	10	14	16	15	15	17	13	13	14	14	10	9	12	13	14
[Q9] Foster to Adopt	1	2	8	8	3	3	3	5	5	6	5	5	8	9	6	6	8
[Q10] Placed with parent or other person with PR	11	19	28	19	23	25	24	20	20	21	25	26	28	29	24	22	19
[Q11] Other	5	3	6	10	5	5	6	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	7	10	10



3.5 Figure 3 shows there were 433 Looked After Children at the end of July 2021, which is a 5% increase from the number at the start of the Covid pandemic last year. However, across the past 12 months the number of looked after children was as high as 451, in August 2021, the highest number ever in Gateshead. Our rate of looked after children per 10,000 was 109.9 meaning Gateshead, as well as the wider Northeast, continues to be high when compared to the England average for the number of LAC.

3.6 The increasing number of looked after children has resulted in a change in our use of different types of placements. While traditionally in Gateshead we have had a low use of agency foster placements, more recently as a result of increasing LAC numbers there has been an increase in their use from 35 in July last year to 52, in July this.

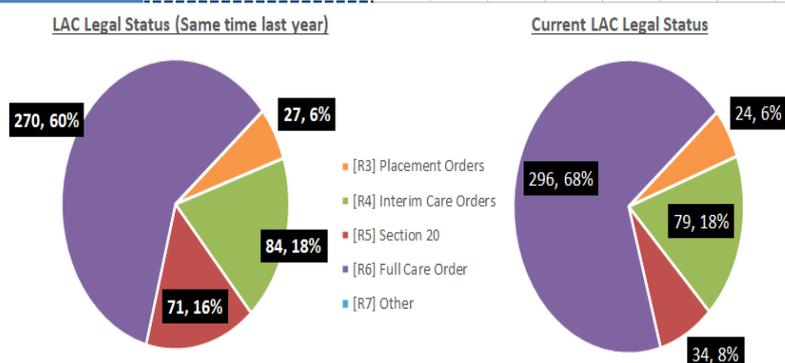
**Figure 4: Number of looked after placed outside the Gateshead boundary**

Looked After Children: Number open at month end and type of placement																	
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	YTD (2021-2022)	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21
[Q12] Number of Looked After Children at month end	380	414	439	433	452	451	435	433	421	423	432	443	439	432	425	430	433
[Q13] Number placed outside Gateshead Boundary	0	185	199	198	200	207	200	197	198	193	193	199	200	200	201	204	198
[Q14] % placed outside Gateshead Boundary	-	44.7%	45.3%	45.7%	44.2%	45.9%	46.0%	45.5%	47.0%	45.6%	44.7%	44.9%	45.6%	46.3%	47.3%	47.4%	45.7%
[Q15] Of those placed outside boundary, non-GH provision	0	49	85	88	66	73	75	75	77	72	76	85	87	87	86	86	88
[Q16] Of total LAC, non-GH provision (%)	-	26.5%	42.7%	44.4%	33.0%	35.3%	37.5%	38.1%	38.9%	37.3%	39.4%	42.7%	43.5%	43.5%	42.8%	42.2%	44.4%

3.7 Figure 4 shows how at the end of July, 198 children were in placements outside of Gateshead boundary, this was equal to 45.7% of all placements at the time which is broadly in line with the average for previous months and end of year figures reflected in the table. This is positive trend given the increase in overall numbers of LAC children discussed earlier in the report. However, the number of children who are placed out of Gateshead in non-Gateshead provision has increased to around 44.4% of those placements across the course of the past 12 months.

**Figure 5: Looked after children by legal status**

Looked After Children: Number open at month end and legal status																	
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	YTD (2021-2022)	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21
[R1] Number of Looked After Children at month end	380	414	439	433	452	451	435	433	421	423	432	443	439	432	425	430	433
[R2] [Rate of Looked After Children at month end	95.5	104.5	111.5	109.9	114.8	114.5	110.4	109.9	106.9	107.4	109.7	112.5	111.5	109.7	107.9	109.2	109.9
[R3] Placement Orders	28	23	25	24	27	26	25	26	21	21	22	24	25	25	24	24	24
[R4] Interim Care Orders	44	66	85	79	84	88	85	84	73	77	78	81	85	88	84	81	79
[R5] Section 20	47	60	41	34	71	69	61	55	52	47	55	58	41	34	30	36	34
[R6] Full Care Order	261	265	288	296	270	267	263	265	273	278	277	280	288	285	287	289	296
[R7] Other	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

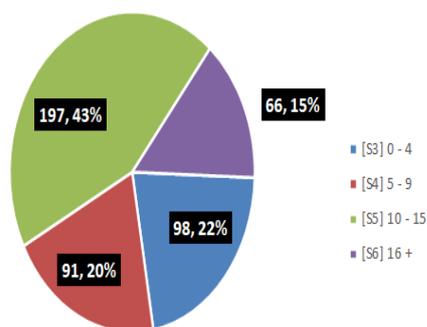


3.8 Figure 5 shows the number of Looked After Children on full care orders increased to 296 at the end of July 2021 and is higher than the same month last year when there were 270. There has been a significant reduction in the number of children on Section 20 voluntary agreements which have decreased to 34 in July 2021 compared to 71 agreements in July 2020. Compared with the end of March 2020, there has been a 20% increase in the number of children on Interim Care Orders (66 to 79) and 12% increase in children on Full Care Orders (265 to 296) – both Order types incur additional costs in relation to legal services and support from the authority.

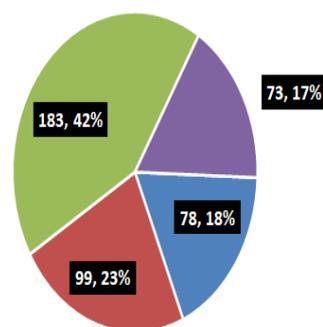
**Figure 6: Age profile of looked after children**

Looked After Children: Number open at month end and age of children/young people																	
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	YTD (2021-2022)	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21
[S1] Number of Looked After Children at month end	380	414	439	433	452	451	435	433	421	423	432	443	439	432	425	430	433
[S3] 0 - 4	75	85	78	78	98	97	90	87	78	81	85	84	78	74	68	72	78
[S4] 5 - 9	84	78	98	99	91	90	91	95	89	88	87	95	98	94	97	100	99
[S5] 10 - 15	160	185	191	183	197	197	190	187	188	192	196	197	191	195	193	192	183
[S6] 16 +	61	66	72	73	66	67	64	62	64	62	64	67	72	69	67	66	73

LAC by age (Same time last year)



Current LAC Plans by age

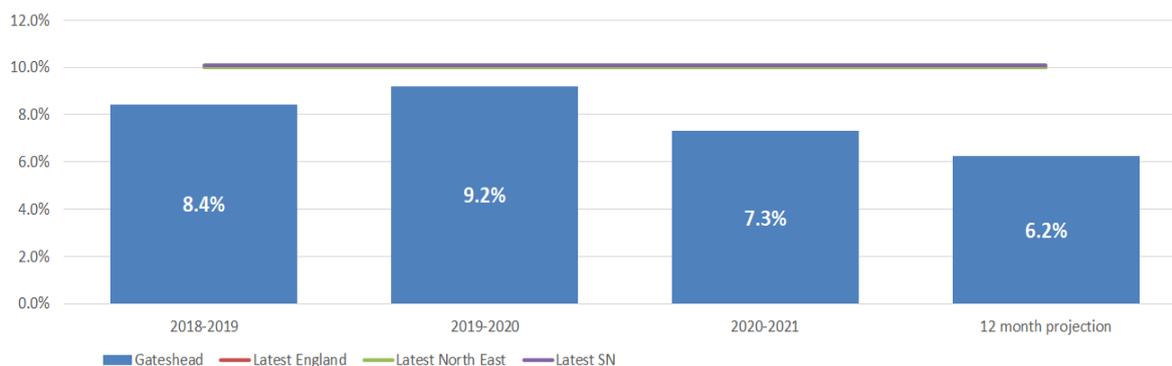


3.8 Figure 6 shows the majority of Looked After Children continue to be those between the ages of 10 -to- 15 years old, in line with previous years. At the end of July 21 compared with the same time last year, younger children aged 0-9 accounted for 41% compared with 42%. While those aged 16+ increased from 15% to 17%.

**Figure 7: stability of looked after placements (3 or more in previous 12 months)**

Looked After Children Stability: 3 or more placements																	
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	12 month projection	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21
[T1] Number of LAC open at month end	380	414	439	433	452	451	435	433	421	423	432	443	439	432	425	430	433
[T2] - no who have had 3 or more placements (Cumulative)	32	38	32	27	4	4	9	16	18	20	24	30	32	0	1	3	9
[T3] - % who have had 3 or more placements (Cumulative)	8.4%	9.2%	7.3%	6.2%	0.9%	0.9%	2.1%	3.7%	4.3%	4.7%	5.6%	6.8%	7.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.7%	2.1%

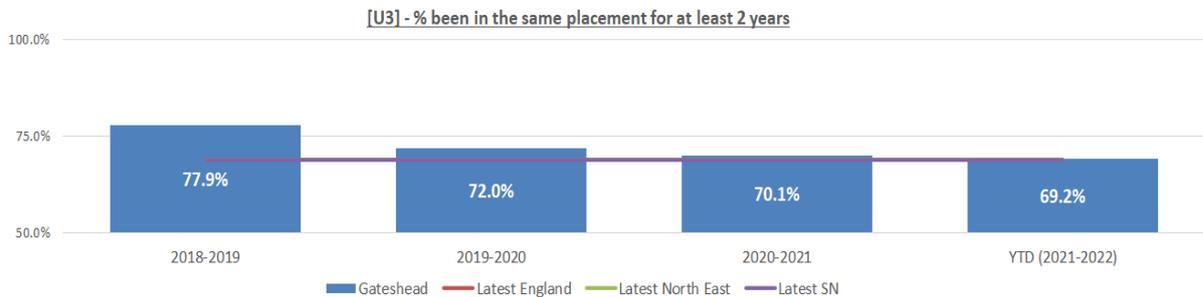
[T3] - % who have had 3 or more placements (Cumulative)



3.9 Overall the proportion of children who experience 3 or more placements in the previous 12 months is generally low. The current 12-month projection remains on a downward trend compared to previous years, and at 7.3% of LAC experiencing 3 or more placements in the last full financial year 2020/21, Gateshead remains below the Northeast and England averages. The number of LAC who have had 3 or more cumulative placements in July 2021 rose to 2.1% from 0.7% in June, with an additional 6 children experiencing moves.

**Figure 8: stability of looked after placements (2.5 years or more long-term stability)**

Looked After Children Stability: LAC Placed for at least 2 and a half years who have been in the same placement for at least 2 years																	
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	YTD (2021-2022)	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21
[U1] Number of LAC open at month end (2.5 years)	131	150	164	159	160	160	163	165	161	159	164	169	164	164	163	162	159
[U2] - no been in the same placement for at least 2 years	102	108	115	110	120	122	123	122	119	118	118	118	115	117	116	113	110
[U3] - % been in the same placement for at least 2 years	77.9%	72.0%	70.1%	69.2%	75.0%	76.3%	75.5%	73.9%	73.9%	74.2%	72.0%	69.8%	70.1%	71.3%	71.2%	69.8%	69.2%

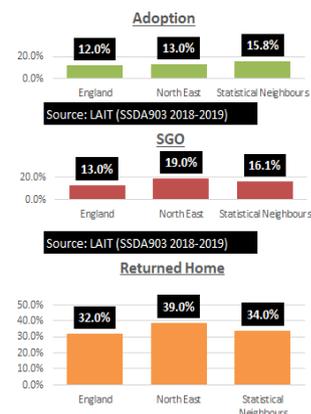
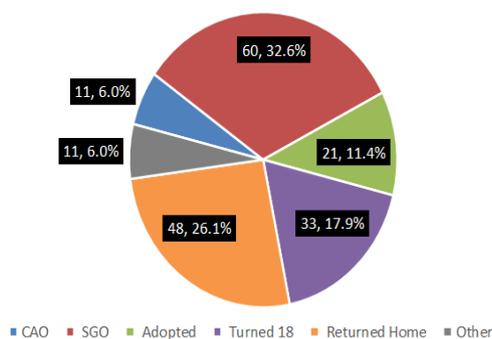


3.10 Figure 8 shows the proportion of Looked After Children who have been looked after for 2.5 years or more and in the same placement for at least 2 years, reduced slightly in July to 69.2%, although this remains slightly above the England average of 68.9%.

**Figure 9: Children ceasing to be looked after**

Looked After Children: Destination																	
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	Last 12 Months	YTD (2021-2022)	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
[V1] Number of Looked After Children Ceasing to be Looked After	186	126	155	184	60	6	14	22	17	16	11	13	5	26	16	20	12
[V2] - no ceasing due to Child Arrangement Order	38	12	12	11	1	0	2	2	1	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	0
[V3] - % ceasing due to Child Arrangement Order	20.4%	9.5%	7.7%	6.0%	1.7%	0.0%	14.3%	9.1%	5.9%	6.3%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%
[V4] - no ceasing due to Special Guardianship Order	27	25	44	60	23	1	2	8	5	4	2	6	2	8	6	7	4
[V5] - % ceasing due to Special Guardianship Order	14.5%	19.8%	28.4%	32.6%	38.3%	16.7%	14.3%	36.4%	29.4%	25.0%	18.2%	46.2%	40.0%	30.8%	37.5%	35.0%	33.3%
[V6] - no ceasing due to Adoption Order	27	19	20	21	4	0	1	1	2	7	1	1	1	3	1	2	1
[V7] - % ceasing due to Adoption Order	14.5%	15.1%	12.9%	11.4%	6.7%	0.0%	7.1%	4.5%	11.8%	43.8%	9.1%	7.7%	20.0%	11.5%	6.3%	10.0%	8.3%
[V8] - no ceasing due to turning 18	32	26	29	33	11	2	3	5	4	2	4	3	0	1	4	2	2
[V9] - % ceasing due to turning 18	17.2%	20.6%	18.7%	17.9%	18.3%	33.3%	21.4%	22.7%	23.5%	12.5%	36.4%	23.1%	0.0%	3.8%	25.0%	10.0%	16.7%
[V10] - no ceasing and returning home	56	39	40	48	19	2	2	6	5	1	1	3	2	9	5	7	4
[V11] - % ceasing and returning home	30.1%	31.0%	25.8%	26.1%	31.7%	33.3%	14.3%	27.3%	29.4%	6.3%	9.1%	23.1%	40.0%	34.6%	31.3%	35.0%	33.3%

Looked after children leaving care end reasons (Last 12 months)



3.11 Over the last 12 months 184 children have ceased to be looked after in Gateshead, an increase on previous years with 155 LAC ceasing to be looked after in 2020-21.

3.12 Of these children who ceased to be looked after, 26.1% were as a result of returning home and a further 17.9% as a result of turning 18 years of age. Gateshead LAC episodes that ceased as a result of turning 18 years of age is below both the England average (32%) and the Northeast average (39%). Special guardianship offers also accounted for 32.6% of children ceasing to be looked after in the last 12 months which is significantly higher than the England average of 13%.

## Recommendations

- 4.1 The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to note the contents of this report. And identify if there are any areas/issues they would like more information about.

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**Contact:** Jon Gaines, Service Manager Quality Assurance  
[jongaines@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:jongaines@gateshead.gov.uk) Ex: 3484