

## **CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**

**Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate  
Street, Rotherham, S60  
2TH**

**Date: Tuesday, 10th November, 2015**

**Time: 5.00 p.m.**

### **A G E N D A**

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency
3. Apologies for absence
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22nd September, 2015. (Pages 1 - 7)
6. Communications: -
  - New Elected Members on the Corporate Parenting Panel – Councillors Ahmed (Improving Lives Select Commission second representative) and Currie.
7. Fostering Service Annual Report. (Pages 8 - 45)
8. Adoption Service Annual Report. (Pages 46 - 65)
9. Support to Rotherham Care Leavers. (Pages 66 - 80)
10. Missing Children and Young People. (Pages 81 - 89)
11. Corporate Parenting Performance Report. (Pages 90 - 108)
12. Residential Home issues. (Pages 109 - 176)
13. Date and time of the next meetings: -

All meetings are due to start at 5.00 p.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall: -

- Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2016;
- Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2016;
- Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.

14. Work programme, 2015-2016: -

**January, 2016**

- **Meeting focus will be voice and influence**
- Voice and influence report
- Young inspectors
- Implementation of PROMISE – LAC summit
- LAC Celebration events
- Virtual School

**March, 2016**

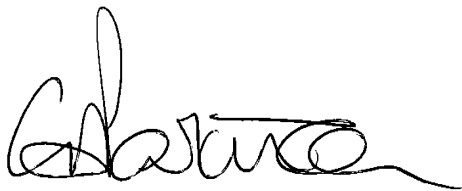
- IRO annual report
- Recruitment and retention of foster carers
- Children placed out of Borough – update

**July, 2016**

- LAACT annual report

**Membership of the Corporate Parenting Panel: -**

Councillors G. Watson (Deputy Leader and portfolio holder), J. Hamilton (Chair of the Improving Lives Select Commission), S. Ahmed (second representative of the Improving Lives Select Commission), C. Vines (representative of the Opposition), S. Currie (Designation).



Catherine Parkinson,  
Interim Director for Legal and Democratic Services



**CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL  
Tuesday, 22nd September, 2015**

Present : - Councillor Watson (in the Chair) and Councillors Hamilton and C. Vines.

Also in attendance were: - P. Dempsey (CYPS), P. Davis (Secondary School), N .Meehan (CYPS), R. Wall (CYPS), A. Jessop (Primary School), L. Dale (CYPS), M. Whiting (CYPS), M. Barton (CYPS), A. Muxlow (NHS CCG), K. Holgate (CCG NHS), L. Grice-Saddington (CYPS), C. Hall (CCG NHS), J. Hopkinson (DfE), A. Harvey (CYPS), S. Wilson (CYPS), J. Parfremment (CYPS), H. Etheridge (Legal and Democratic Services).

Apologies for absence were received from: - C. Bailey (IYSS, CYPS).

**D9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

No Declarations of Interest were made.

**D10. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 20TH JULY, 2015.**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2015, were considered.

Agreed: - That the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as an accurate record.

**D11. COMMUNICATIONS: -**

Brief updates were provided to the Corporate Parenting Panel on: -

- **Paul Dempsey**, Service Manager for Looked After Children and Residential, was leaving his post to take up a new position in Manchester. This would be Paul's final meeting and it was important to note his contribution to the fostering and adoption services. He had made a good contribution and had worked innovatively and had provided added value. He would be missed. The Corporate Parenting Panel's thanks to Paul were noted.
- The Corporate Parenting Panel's **terms of reference** was noted. It had been considered at the previous meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel and had been updated to show the widened membership which included a representative from Rotherham Police (identified) and the Job Centre Plus (representative to be identified).

It was noted that the **Elected Member theme lead/champion** for each identified area – Housing, Employment and Training Opportunities, Health (including mental health), Educational Attainment and access to Higher Education, Foster Carer

recruitment and retention, Response to those who go missing and Children placed out of borough would be agreed at a future meeting.

- **Care Leavers' Week** was taking place between 28<sup>th</sup> October and 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2015, on the theme 'Do You Mind'. The period had been chosen because it included a weekend, half-term holiday and a school week. A programme of events would be circulated to Elected Members.
- **The Post-16 Awards** would be held. Confirmation of date was expected shortly.
- **The LAC Promise** document had been launched at the LAC Summit. Nine promises had been created in conjunction with young inspectors covering provision for looked after children. The LAC Promise would periodically be presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel for review on progress and performance.

Agreed: - That the information shared be noted.

#### **D12. NEW APPROACH TO FOSTER CARE RECRUITMENT IN ROTHERHAM.**

Jane Parfremment, Assistant Director, Children and Young Peoples Services Directorate, introduced the item as a 'new approach' to foster care. The presentation consisted of a power point presentation and two videos of the promotional materials that had been produced.

Some of Rotherham's foster carers were welcomed to the meeting for this item.

The power point presentation covered: -

- Rotherham's Looked After Children Population;
- Placements;
- Local placements;
- Costs of care - £411 (in-house foster), £938 (independent foster), £2,764 (in-house residential), £3,474 (out-of-borough residential);
- Most children will do best living in a family type setting;
- Family-based care, better outcomes, better for the Council;
- Numbers of in-house foster carers – 159 (2012/2013), 176 (2013/2014), 165 (2014/2015), to September 2015 170;
- Comparison between de-registered foster carers and recruitment, on an annual basis;
- The target was to gain 20 more each year than lost.

Rotherham's new approach included: -

- New promotional campaign;
- Local campaign focussing on superheroes;
- Emphasis on public service;
- Awareness of other local authority competition and independent sector competition;
- Good use of social media;
- Intense recruitment work in specific areas;
- Superhero campaign video – material, website, video, launch event;
- Advice from existing foster carers to get in touch and enquire;
- Focus that foster carers looked after children at the time when they needed it the most. These children were the most vulnerable in society;
- The promotion had a strong Rotherham focus.

The promotional videos were shown. They had accounts from Rotherham's foster carers and fostering team members talking about the role and giving advice and encouragement to prospective/interested people. The video was very heartwarming and showed a Rotherham foster carer turning into a superhero.

Feedback given about the presentation and video was very positive: -

- Involve more children and the birth children of the foster carers;
- This was the only campaign that Officers were aware of to feature real foster carers and real birth children;
- The campaign was looking to create significant community links;
- Jane Parfremment had received enquiries from Members asking they could contribute. Supporting and engaging in the target areas was one of the best ways. Jane was proud of this campaign;
- Councillor Vines asked for postcards, posters, car stickers and anything that could be used to promote the campaign around the Borough and in their surgeries;
- Paul Dempsey described a range of recruitment activities that were aiming to bring a community-feel within the local areas that were to be targeted, along with a social media buzz. The Department wanted the new approach to go viral using a mix of 'old fashioned' mediums and internet/social media. It was hoped that Rotherham MBC would come to the top of the list when someone searched for fostering in the area.

The new approach would officially kick off at a home game of Rotherham United. Before this it would be great to meet with Ward Members for areas where the focus would be, and Parish Councillors if appropriate, to co-ordinate how the promotion will be run in each area. It was known that promotions were very effective if campaigns were personalised, including having someone there who was known in the local area.

A suggestion was made about holding a mayoral event to recognise long standing foster carers to show that the Council did value their contributions.

Resolved: - (1) That the information shared be noted and the new approach to foster care recruitment in Rotherham be endorsed.

(2) That a stakeholder meeting be arranged for the areas where there was going to be a specific recruitment focus (Swinton/Kilnhurst, Herringthorpe/Stagg, North Anston and Thurcroft) to discuss the best ways of making meaningful links in these communities.

### **D13. REPORT OF THE HEADTEACHER OF THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL.**

Lorraine Dale, Virtual Headteacher, gave a presentation on the education of looked after children in the Borough.

The update covered: -

- Update on the Virtual School;
- Emotional health and wellbeing. Research showed that each time a child moved placement, they lost six-months' of progress;
- The structure of the Virtual School;
- PEPs;
- PEP training – 86 attendees;
- 2014 outcomes in Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage One, Key Stage Two, Key Stage Four;
- Pupil Premium

Questions were asked on: -

- Councillor Vines - How could Corporate Parenting Panel members support looked after children in their schooling. Things like representation and support at school open evenings?;
- Educational outcomes of children who were looked after in different placement styles.

Resolved: - (1) That the information shared be noted.

(2) That the Corporate Parenting Panel continue to receive progress updates in relation to the Virtual School's work.

### **D14. PERFORMANCE OF SERVICES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AS AT 31ST JULY, 2015.**

Consideration was given to the update provided by Sue Wilson, Performance and Quality Manager, relating to the performance outcomes of services for looked after children as a 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015.

- At the end of July 2015 there were 423 looked after children, this compares with 391 in the same period in 2014.
- At the end of July 2015 there 97.4% of looked after children who had an up to date plan and 94.2% of those children preparing to leave care with a pathway plan.
- At the end of July 2015 73% of looked after children have had a stable placement for more than 2 years, with 9% of looked after children who had 3 or more moves.
- At the end of July 2015 89.2% of looked after children had a review in timescale and 99% had been visited by their social worker in line with national minimum standards (with 89% within our local standards).
- At the end of July 2015 88.2% of looked after children had had both a health assessment and a dental check.
- At the end of July 2015 92.9% of looked after children have a PEP with only 72.6% having an up to date one.
- During the 4 months to the end of July 2015 there had been 15 children adopted with 11 of this within 12 months of their “should be placed for adoption” decision (SHOBPA) – 73.3%.

Three Key Performance Indicators were Red rated as of 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015.

Discussion followed and the following points were raised: -

- The inclusion of detailed health data was welcomed. There was further work to do with regards to more detailed recording.

Resolved: - That the performance information to 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015, be noted.

#### **D15. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended (Business affairs).

#### **D16. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN PLACEMENT SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY, 2015-2018.**

Michelle Whiting, Interim Manager, introduced the report that outlined Rotherham’s draft Sufficiency Strategy. It was noted that: -

It is a statutory requirement under Section 22G of the Children Act



1989 for local authorities to secure, so far as reasonably practical, sufficient accommodation for looked after children in their local authority area in order to stay at the same school or near to other family where contact can easily take place. This is called 'the sufficiency duty'.

The aspiration was that Rotherham looked after children would be placed in Rotherham or no more than twenty miles from home.

The Sufficiency Strategy would cover staying put arrangements.

Resolved: - (1) That the draft Strategy be noted.

(2) That the approach to sufficiency as outlined in the draft Strategy be endorsed.

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**D17. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETINGS: -**

Resolved: - (1) That the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel take place on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2015, at 5.00 pm in the Rotherham Town Hall.

(2) That future meetings take place at 5.00 pm to enable greater attendance by Elected Members and Stakeholders.

(3) That future meetings take place on: -

- Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2016;
- Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2016;
- Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.

**D18. WORK PROGRAMME, 2015-2016: -**

**January, 2016**

- **Meeting focus will be voice and influence**
- Voice and influence report
- Young inspectors
- Implementation of PROMISE – LAC summit
- LAC Celebration events
- Virtual School

**March, 2016**

- IRO annual report

- Recruitment and retention of foster carers
- Children placed out of Borough – update

**July, 2016**

- LAACT annual report

## Summary Sheet

### Council Report

**Title:** Fostering Service Annual Report

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

No

### Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Thomas

### Report Author(s)

Paul Dempsey

### Ward(s) Affected

All Wards are affected

### Executive Summary

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council needs the fostering service to recruit more foster carers to “build on” the increases over the last 4 years (from 132 to 167 carers), particularly to care for sibling groups and older children (10+ years); whilst strengthening support to enable children to remain at home or with extended family members (wherever possible), our strategy has included a new “be a local hero” recruitment campaign across the borough; this is backed by Cllr Gordon Watson, the Corporate Parenting Panel and elected members (and parish councillors) in key “target areas” (Swinton/Kilhurst, Thurcroft, North Anston and Herringthorpe/Stag).

There have been positive achievements: in the placement stability of children and young people: the increase of children placed with in-house foster carers: the increased number of young people “staying put” with their foster carers post-18 years of age: the increase of carer support groups: the increase in fostering celebration events: the uptake of training by foster carers.

### Recommendations:

- An increase in the number of foster carers, particularly to care for sibling groups and older children (10+ years)
- Implementation of the new recruitment campaign and strategy
- Continue to support children at home or with extended family members
- Further development and implementation of the “Empower and Protect Programme” (the CSE Innovation scheme across South Yorkshire)
- Further increase the number of children in permanent homes by utilising the newly-established Permanence Fostering worker.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1: Fostering Service Annual Report to the Fostering Panel 2014-15

Appendix 2: Fostering Service 6-month Update Report to the Fostering Panel (April-September 2015)

**Background Papers**

Appendix 1: Fostering Service Annual Report to the Fostering Panel 2014-15

Appendix 2: Fostering Service 6-month Update Report to the Fostering Panel (April-September 2015)

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

Appendices 1 and 2 reports have been considered by the Local Authority Fostering Panel

No other committee or panel consideration proposed

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Fostering Service Annual Report**

### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That Corporate Parenting Panel note the contents of the report
- 1.2 That Corporate Parenting Panel note the key role that foster carers play in caring for our most vulnerable children and young people
- 1.3 That Corporate Parenting Panel members promote the role of fostering and foster carers in their everyday work in the borough and 'champion' foster carers as our "local (super) heroes".

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Local Authority in Rotherham operates a fostering service to care for our looked after children. The service provides family based care for children who can no longer live with their parents or extended families. Some children stay in foster carer for a short period of time and others stay for many years until they reach adulthood. This report advises Corporate Parenting Panel members of the key business carried out by the Fostering Service in 2014/15 and business in the first 6 months of 2015/16.

### **3. Key Issues**

#### **2014-15**

- 3.1 RMBC's independent Foster Panel considered the following items: Skills to Foster Applications: "Connected Carers" (family & friends) Applications: First Reviews of foster carers: Reviews following allegations/complaints against foster carers: Child and Family Permanence (long-term) Matching: Changes in terms of approval of foster carers
- 3.2 Performance and Development Reviews were completed on all Panel members with the exception of the newly-appointed Panel Chair (February 2015); this is being scheduled

3.3 There were 22 Foster Panels convened. 137 agenda items were discussed, an average of 6.2 items per Panel. The table below categorises these items:

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Statistics</b>
<b>Skills to Foster Assessment</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Regulation 24 (connected carer) Assessment</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Carer Review</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Change of Category</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>De-registration</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Permanent (Long-term) Matching (In-house)</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Permanent (Long-term) Matching (IFA)</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Allegations Report</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>

3.4 Of particular concern during the year was a reduction in fostering enquiries; this particularly coincided with the publication of the Jay Report and subsequent negative media attention over a prolonged period of time. The outcome was a net loss of 11 fostering households; there were 18 approvals and 29 de-registrations. However, there was a 12% “conversion rate” (from 147 enquiries, there were 18 approvals) – the national average conversion rate was 11%

3.5 At the end of the year, there were 167 fostering households

3.6 There was an increase in the number of children being looked after by in-house foster carers: 182 children (45% of all looked after children) compared with 163 children the previous year (41% of all looked after children)

3.7 There was a significant improvement regarding permanent foster placement stability from 68.8% (2014) to 71.9% (2015); this performance was in the top quartile for local authorities nationally

3.8 All 8 young people in foster care (who became 18 years of age during the year) remained with their foster carers in a “staying put” arrangement

3.9 Two additional foster carer support groups were set up, thus, 4 groups in total plus a carers’ children group; the groups are take place on different days of the week, at different times of the day across the borough, to provide carers with choices and options

3.10 Regarding training and development, 286 individual foster carers accessed 1013 training courses; the most popular were the online course “CSE – Keep Them Safe (96 foster carers) and the 1<sup>st</sup> Aid training course (67 foster carers)

3.11 There were a number of fostering celebrations: annual foster carer celebration and Halloween Party for carers and children (both November 2014); Christmas Party (December 2014); foster carer long service awards hosted by the Mayor (February 2015); Easter Party (March 2015); all of the celebration events were extremely appreciated by the foster carers and the children.

### 2015 (up to September)

3.12 There have been 11 Foster Panel convened; 47 items have been discussed, an average of 4.3 items per Panel; the reduction is due, in part, to a modification of Panel business – changes to carers’ terms of approval are no longer considered by the Panel but by the Agency Decision Maker; the table below categorises these items:

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Statistics</b>
<b>Skills to Foster Assessment</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Regulation 24 (connected carer) Assessment</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Carer Review</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Change of Category</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>De-registration/Resignations</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Long-term Matching (In-house)</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Long-term Matching (IFA)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Allegations Report</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>

3.13 A quality assurance audit of each item presented to the Panel has been implemented (from June 2015) in 2 areas of work: the report provided by the worker(s); the presentation by the worker(s); this has included a “score” as follows:

- Score of 1 = Inadequate – requires significant improvement
- Score of 2 = Inadequate – requires moderate improvement
- Score of 3 = Good – requires minor improvement
- Score of 4 = Very good – high-level practice
- Score of 5 = Outstanding – best practice

The overall “average” score of reports provided to the Panel is 3.2 (“good”); the overall “average” score of the presentations at the Panel by social workers is 3.6 (“good”); it is worthy of note that 15 of the 22 presentations to the Panel were scored as 4 (“very good – high level practice”) the fostering social workers, fostering managers and Foster Panel are working together to improve these further via constructive feedback at all stages to the social workers (highlighting quality work and areas of development)

- 3.14 There have been 6 approvals and 3 de-registrations, thus 170 fostering households; however, there have been 95 enquiries (14 more than the corresponding period in the previous year); currently, there are 21 fostering applications being assessed
- 3.15 There has been an increase in the number of children being looked after by in-house foster carers during the 6 months to September: 200 children (an increase of 18 children) of 414, thus 48% of all looked after children, an increase of 3%; it is worthy of note that there were 163 such children in the previous year (41% of all looked after children)
- 3.16 There continues to be a significant improvement regarding permanence (long-term) foster placement stability; this has again increased in the last 6 months to 77.4% (from 68.8% in 2013-14 to 71.9% in 2014-15). This performance remains in the top quartile for local authorities nationally
- 3.17 There are currently 13 young people who have remained with their foster carers after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (Staying Put arrangements) with plans for a further 11 to do so in the coming months
- 3.18 Regarding training and development, 238 individual foster carers have, so far, accessed 670 training courses; the most popular are e-PEP training (80 carers), e-Safety training (25 carers), the online course “CSE – Keep Them Safe (a further 21 carers, an overall total of 117 foster carers)
- 3.19 The service needs more foster carers to “build on” the increases over the last 4 years (from 132 to 167 foster carers), particularly to care for sibling groups and older children (10+ years); to achieve this, the strategy includes: supporting children to remain at home or with extended family members (wherever possible): a pro-active and innovative recruitment campaign with the theme of foster carers being “local heroes” (62% of people consider foster carers to be heroes): development and implementation of the CSE Innovation scheme across South Yorkshire, the “Empower & Protect Programme”: utilising the newly-established Permanence Fostering worker (to secure permanent homes in a timely fashion for all children who need them): utilising the approved policy for funding extensions for foster carers (to increase their capacity to care for children, e.g. sibling groups).

#### **4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

4.1 none

#### **5. Consultation**

5.1 We have consulted extensively with our foster carers via the monthly marketing group and support groups. The new recruitment campaign was



undertaken with the assistance of our foster carers; indeed, they have been so committed to improving our service that they themselves (and their own children) were the “actors” in the videos produced and “models” for the complementary publicity materials (e.g. banners, posters).

**6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

6.1 Not applicable

**7. Financial and Procurement Implications**

7.1 Under Section 22G of the Children Act 1989, there is a “sufficiency duty” for local authorities to secure, so far as reasonably practical, sufficient accommodation for looked after children in their local authority area in order to stay at the same school or near to other family where contact can easily take place. In addition, it makes good economic sense to have a sufficient range of placements to meet the needs of looked after children, as not having enough placements has resulted in placing children in higher cost placements which meet their needs less well than local “value for money” family placements.

**8. Legal Implications**

none

**9. Human Resources Implications**

9.1 There has been a recent increase in staffing within the fostering service with the appointment of a “permanence social worker” whose primary role is to drive forward the permanent placements of looked after children (e.g. permanent, long-term foster care, Special Guardianship orders)

**10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

10.1 It is vital that we provide high quality, local foster care for our looked after children; these are the most vulnerable children and young people in our community. By increasing the numbers of foster carers, we will be able to offer a greater choice of “placement” and improved matching between child and carer, enable children to remain close to their family and continue their education in their own school

**11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

11.1 Good quality, local foster care (that promotes family contact and maintains local relationships) has a positive outcome for children and young people. This is particularly in accordance with the Human Rights Act, most notably the Right to a Private and Family Life (Article 8)

**12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

12.1 The new “local hero” recruitment campaign, developed and constructed by the Communications team in conjunction with the fostering service and foster carers, has been greatly supported and assisted by elected members; the campaign was presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2015 and, on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015, Cllr Gordon Watson chaired a successful meeting of elected members, parish councillors and other interested parties, particularly in the “targeted areas” of Thurcroft, Swinton/Kilhurst, North Anston and Herringthorpe/Stag. This meeting provided focussed detail on enabling us to better interact with those areas.

### **13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 There are 2 key risks associated with the fostering service; the first is that we do not enough foster carers to meet the needs of our looked after children, hence the need for the new recruitment campaign as part of our sufficiency strategy; the second risk is that services to looked after children, including the fostering service, is a key element of the inspection by Ofsted.

### **14. Accountable Officer(s)**

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- Named officer

Director of Legal Services:- Named officer

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):-

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:-

<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>


**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**


CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
SERVICES

Annual Report  
Rotherham Fostering Panel

2014-15

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9. Looked After Children Information 2014-15
10. Key Challenges, Developments, Targets and Actions for 2014-15
11. Summary

## 1. Purpose of Report

This is a report to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's Foster Panel. It reports on the business of the panel and the fostering service in 2014-15, providing statistical information on its business from 01.04.2014 -31.03.2015. As well as reporting on the activity of the panel, including a brief summary of the work which is undertaken by the panel, it considers the feedback and monitoring completed by the panel and the quality of reports presented to it.

This report provides an opportunity for the panel, led by the panel chair, to reflect on the work of the panel and the fostering service in the reporting period and to respond, either challenging or commending practice where necessary. The fostering service will request a written response from the panel chair which will be shared with and considered by the Agency Decision Maker for fostering.

## 2. Introduction

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Foster Panel has the following primary functions (under Regulation 25(1) of the Fostering Regulations 2011):

1. It is to consider each application for approval and to recommend whether or not a person is suitable to be a foster parent (including "connected persons" under Regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement & Care Review Regulations 2010)
  2. Where it recommends approval of an application, to recommend any terms on which the approval is to be given
  3. It is to recommend whether or not a person remains suitable to be a foster parent, and whether or not the terms of their approval (if any) remain appropriate - (i) on the first review and (ii) on the occasion of any other review, if requested to do so by the fostering service (e.g. following allegations or complaints against foster carers)
- It matches children who have a plan for long-term fostering with suitable foster carers

The panel works within the Fostering Regulations 2011, the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011 and the Care Planning, Placement & Case Review Regulations 2010 (and the Care Planning and Fostering Miscellaneous Amendments Regulations 2015).

## 3. Panel Composition

**Regulation 23(1)** states that *"the fostering service must maintain a list of persons who are considered by them to be suitable to be members of a fostering panel ("the central list"), including one or more social workers who have at least three years' relevant post-qualifying experience.*

**Regulation 23(4)** states that “...the fostering service must constitute one or more fostering panels, as necessary, to perform the functions of a fostering panel under these Regulations, and must appoint panel members including:

(i) a person to chair the panel who, in the case of any appointment made after 1st October 2011, must be independent of the fostering service provider, and

(ii) one or two persons who may act as chair if the person appointed to chair the panel is absent or that office is vacant (“the vice chairs”) from the persons on the central list.

The panel manages its business in a professional and consistent manner with no significant skill gaps being identified by the panel or the service. This is regularly reviewed through individual Professional Development Reviews.

The central list has 15 members. These include an independent chairperson who is independent of the fostering service, two vice chairs from the children and young people’s service, a medical advisor (Dr Hashmi) and a legal advisor (who is available for written advice or consultation). In addition, the panel advisor attends each meeting but is not a member of the panel, social workers (with 3 years’ relevant post-qualifying experience) & independent members

The table below provides the details of the Central List as at 31.03.2015:

Name of Panel Member	Type of Member
Fred Lillie	Independent Chair
Beth Lancaster	Social work member (adoption service) and Vice-Chair
Roberta Lyne	Social work member (fostering service) and Vice-Chair
June Watson	Independent Member (foster carer for Sheffield city council)
Betty Brothers	Independent Member (foster carer for Sheffield city council)
Sandra Guest	Designated Nurse for Care Leavers
Karen Holgate	Designated Nurse for Looked After Children
Lorraine Litchfield	Virtual Head (education) for Looked After Children
Lynne Grice-Saddington	Social work member (manager of the Children’s Rights Service)
Terry Sharman	Elected member

Davis Pickering	Elected member, subsequently independent member
Amie Stead	Social work member (fostering service)
Sue Pickering	Social work member (fostering service)
Lisa Padley	Social work member (adoption service)
Sarah Thompson	Social work member (adoption service)

It is clear that the composition of the central list would benefit from:

- a young person with “care” experience, e.g. a care leaver
- a representative of the BME community
- a vice-chair (and members) of organisational seniority
- at least one elected member to attend each panel (Cllr Sharman has indicated that he is not seeking re-election in the May 2015 local elections.

#### **Panel Member Annual Performance and Development Reviews (PDR)**

All panel members are required to have an annual Performance and Development Review looking at their progress as panel members. This is a “rolling programme” throughout the year undertaken by the Panel Chair and supported by the Panel Adviser.

The previous Panel Chair, Paul Walton, was reviewed in 2014 but retired at the end of December 2014. The “new” Panel Chair, Fred Lillie, took up the post in February 2015; his PDR is yet to be arranged.

#### **4. Panel Training**

Panel training during the year has included safeguarding, the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the Education of looked after children.

#### **5. Fostering Panel and Quality Assurance of Work 2014-15**

The panel in its work considered the following written reports:

- Skills to Foster Applications
- “Connected Persons” (family & friends) Applications
- First Reviews of foster carers
- Reviews following allegations or complaints against foster carers
- Child and Family Permanence (long-term) Matching



- Changes in terms of approval of foster carers

The Panel Advisor receives the draft reports prior to panel and gives written feedback on the quality of the reports, where appropriate, as well as practice advice. The quality of Prospective Foster Carer Reports (including “connected persons”), 1<sup>st</sup> Reviews of carers and Reviews following an allegation or complaint is generally good. The “Front Sheet” was reviewed and revised during the year to clarify and summarise the information to aid the Fostering Panel and the Agency Decision Maker.

Throughout the period from 01.04.2014 to 31.04.2015, there have been numerous comments & views made by the Fostering Panel in relation to items presented:

- The quality of permanence (long-term) matching reports varied widely throughout the year; some were of a good standard and reflective of the reasons why a specific match meets the needs of a child or children, with good analysis provided and clear information about why the foster carers could meet the needs of a child; others were not considered to be “good”
- The following comments were made by the Fostering Panel that required development consideration: sometimes the matching reports failed to adequately identify risks (e.g. risk from family, risk of developing needs in the future): sometimes children’s needs were inadequately identified: sometimes insufficient information regarding the views of all concerned in the household (including the carers’ children) – these comments echoed issues of the previous year
- As a consequence of the continued comments, the report format was reviewed, revised and strengthened in two specific ways: some sections were incorporated together to avoid duplication: significant guidance was added to each section to ensure that the information and analysis required in the report was well-defined and unambiguous
- The outcome of this revised format has been that the quality of information provided to the Foster Panel by the matching report has generally improved
- In addition, managerial oversight in terms of quality assurance appeared to be absent or lacking in too many matching reports. Consequently, in relation to the “matching” of children with “in-house” foster carers, the Fostering Supervising Team Manager has spent a considerable amount of time undertaking quality assurance work to ensure that these reports are of sufficient quality to be submitted to the panel administrators
- However, the fostering team managers need to explore the “quality assurance” issue further (through advice, guidance, training and consultation) with children’s social workers and their team managers.

## **6. Fostering Panel Business 2014-15**

Between 01.04.2014 & 31.03.2015, there were 22 Foster Panels convened. 137 agenda items were discussed, an average of 6.2 items per Panel.

The 3 tables below categorise these items; the 1<sup>st</sup> table relates to both Panels combined, the latter two for each individual Panel (nominally named Panel 1 and 2):

<b>Panels 1 &amp; 2 Combined (22 Sessions)</b>	
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Statistics</b>
<b>Skills to Foster Assessment</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Regulation 24 Assessment</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Carer Review</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Change of Category</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>De-registration</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Long-term Matching (In-house)</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Long-term Matching (IFA)</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Allegations Report</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>

<b>Panel 1 (11 Sessions)</b>	
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Statistics</b>
<b>Skills to Foster Assessment</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Regulation 24 Assessment</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Regulation 24 extension</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Carer Review</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Change of Category</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>De-registration</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Long-term Matching (In-house)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Long-term Matching (IFA)</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Allegations Report</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>

<b>Panel 2 (11 Sessions)</b>	
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Statistics</b>
<b>Skills to Foster Assessment</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Carer Review</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Change of Category</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>De-registration</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Long-term Matching (In-house)</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Long-term Matching (IFA)</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Allegations Report</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>

Of the 21 skills to foster reports presented to the Panel, 2 were additional assessment work for the Foster Plus scheme, another was an assessment of a registered foster carer & her “new” partner.

The Panel’s work is to be modified in the future; there is no statutory requirement for changes of carers’ terms of approval (i.e. approval category) to be presented to the Fostering Panel; following a carer review, these will be presented directly to the Agency Decision Maker; a number of de-registrations are “resignations” by carers – whilst it would be appropriate for some of these to be reviewed by the Panel in terms of the issues for the resignation, others are “straight forward”, (e.g. retirement); these take effect, in any event, after 28

days of receipt of the resignation letter - the Panel will be notified of such situations.

## 7. Staffing in the Fostering Service

The in-house fostering service consists of 2 separate teams who are closely aligned – the Fostering Recruitment Team and the Fostering Supervision Team.

The **Fostering Recruitment Team** takes responsibility for the following:

- “Mainstream” Recruitment Activity - recruiting, training, assessing and approving prospective foster carers
- The Fostering Plus Specialist Fostering Scheme – this scheme was established during 2014/15 to recruit foster carers for adolescents with complex needs. Foster carers on the scheme have an enhanced wraparound support package including support from the Looked After and Adopted Children’s Therapeutic Team, and also receive an enhanced financial support package.
- The Families Together Scheme – this scheme offers short break foster care for disabled children (18 Families Together approved foster carers offer short breaks to a total of 29 non- looked after children)
- “Connected Persons” Foster Carers (also known as family and friends or kinship foster carers) – the team undertakes assessments of “connected persons” and provides the ongoing support and supervision to such carers (such carers in Rotherham are mostly made up of extended family members, often grandparents; at 31.03.2015, there were 16 children living such foster carers)
- Supported Lodgings Scheme (including “Staying Put” arrangements) – the scheme provides placements for care leavers, generally “staying put” with their current foster carers

The **Fostering Supervision Team** takes responsibility for the following:

- Support and supervision of all mainstream foster carers (not including Foster Plus and Families Together carers)
- Family finding and matching of children to placements
- Ongoing training and development of approved foster carers

The service's workforce consists of the following:

<b>Fostering Recruitment Team</b>	
<b>Name of Worker</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Louise Atkinson	Recruitment & Assessment Worker (“connected persons”)
Suzanne Cassidy	Assessment & Supervising Worker (Foster Plus scheme co-ordinator)
Maureen Connolly	Principal Practitioner (Recruitment & Assessment Worker)
Simon Dewick	Principal Practitioner (Families Together Co-ordinator)
Barry Donnellan	Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator (assessing & supervising worker)
Katie Duffield	Assessment & Supervising Worker (“connected persons”)
Sarah Harpham	Training & Development Officer
Roberta Lyne	Principal Practitioner (Recruitment & Assessment Worker)
Joanne Nutton	Recruitment & Assessment Worker
Amie Stead	Recruitment & Assessment Worker
Carol Stickland	Principal Practitioner (Recruitment & Assessment Worker)
Andrew Symcox	Team Manager

<b>Fostering Supervision Team</b>	
<b>Name of Worker</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Sadia Alam	Principal Practitioner (Supervising Worker)
Sue Arnold	Principal Practitioner (Supervising Worker)
Anne-Marie Banks	Team Manager

Paul Baxter	Principal Practitioner (Supervising Worker)
Rhondda Davies	Principal Practitioner (Supervising Worker)
Michelle Dolman	Supervising Worker
Katie Fisher	Principal Practitioner (Supervising Worker)
Nicola Flanagan	Supervising Worker (starting in June 2015))
Yasmina Fynn	Supervising Worker
Dave Hey	Supervising Worker
Yvonne Howe	Supervising Worker (Permanence/Long-term Fostering) (starting in June 2015)
Lisa Ledger	Supervising Worker
Sue Pickering	Supervising Worker

### Training for staff

- Amie Stead, Joanne Nutton and Carol Stickland are undertaking their final year at Sheffield University regarding the M.A. in Professional Practice; this will be completed in September 2015
- Sadia Alam has applied to complete the final year regarding the same course
- In 2015, Yasmina Fynn and Lisa Ledger began the newly established Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Practice in Family Placement course run by Sheffield Hallam University and Leeds BAAF
- On 30.04.2014 and 04.12.2014, there were fostering service development days to review progress regarding the development plan and consider next steps; the latter day also included training regarding the electronic DBS process

## 8. Fostering Service Business 2014-15

### Fostering Recruitment

Of particular concern was the significant drop in enquiries into fostering, especially from the time of the publication of the Jay Report. This decrease resulted in a net loss of foster carers during the year of 11 fostering households; there were 18 approvals and 29 de-registrations.

It is, however, worthy of note that there were 147 enquiries with an outcome of 18 approvals (some of which were “carried over” from the previous year); whilst this is not enough carers for the service to increase its sufficiency, it demonstrates a 12% “conversion rate” (i.e. enquiry to approval rate) – the national average conversion rate for last year was 11%.

The service undertook a great deal of work into improving the number of enquiries by increasing information events and publicity across the borough; indeed, as a consequence, 52 of the 147 enquiries in 2014-15 were made in the 3 months from January to March 2015 (in comparison, there were 38 enquiries in the 5 months from August to December 2014).

### **In-house fostering provision (as at 31.03.2015)**

Regarding in-house fostering provision, there were:

- 132 mainstream approved foster carers
- 6 Foster Plus carers
- 18 Families Together (short breaks) carers
- 11 “Connected Persons” foster carers

### **Fostering Supervision**

#### **Support groups**

- 2015 saw the introduction of 2 additional support groups; the service currently facilitates four groups:
  1. Induction year and newly approved foster carers support group (Unity Centre)
  2. North support group (Swinton Library) (afternoon)
  3. Central support group (Listerdale children’s centre) (morning)
  4. South support group (Dinnington resource centre) (evening).
- The groups are run on different days of the week and at different times of the day to provide carers with choices and options.

### **Regarding training and development of foster carers during 2014-15:**

- There were 1013 training courses accessed by 286 carers
- These included taught courses and introductory DVD courses
- The most “popular” courses were:
  - CSE – Keep Them Safe (online course) = 96 carers
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Aid (taught course) = 67 carers
  - Record Keeping (DVD course) = 52
  - Understanding behaviour (DVD course) = 51 carers
  - Equality & Diversity (DVD course) = 50 carers
  - Safer Caring (DVD course) = 43 carers

This period also saw the introduction of training workshops being incorporated (where appropriate) into the support groups, for example, behaviour management training was facilitated by the supervising worker and presented to the North Support Group over three support group meetings (it was well received by carers). This is to be rolled out to each support group in 2015 – 2016

In addition, foster carers receive a great deal of support from the LAACST team and the Virtual School:

- The Looked After and Adopted Children's Support and Therapeutic team provides a therapeutic consultation, support and intervention service to looked after and adopted children, their carers (e.g. foster carers or adopters), and professionals working with them, particularly regarding emotional wellbeing and attachment/early trauma issues. The team consists of a manager/clinical psychologist and four therapeutic intervention workers. Volunteers and students from courses in social work, clinical psychology and art therapy also make an important contribution to the team which provides a great deal of training for foster carers in relation to attachment and therapeutic parenting.
- The Virtual School, Rotherham, acts as a local authority champion to bring about improvements in the education of Rotherham's Looked After Children and Care Leavers. It aims to promote their educational achievement as if they attended a single school. Looked After Children are entitled to and must have a high quality education - this is key to improving their life chances and future outcomes. The Virtual School does not exist in real terms - children do not attend it - they remain the responsibility of the school at which they are enrolled. The Virtual School works in close partnership with a wide range of agencies that includes schools, social care, Independent Reviewing Officers, foster carers and other services in order to promote educational achievement.

### **Fostering Celebrations**

- **November 2014** saw the annual foster care celebration evening (held at Consort Suite) and well attended by foster carers; Jane Parfremment and Paul Dempsey attended and gave short speeches before a 3-course dinner and dance was enjoyed by all which ran into the night
- **November 2014** also saw the first Halloween fostering families fancy dress party at the Sunnyside Community Centre, which was decorated to the spirit of the event; children and adults alike enjoyed the disco, face painting, games and hauntingly fun activities
- **December 2014** saw the fostering Christmas Party; a disco, arts and craft activities, face painting, and raffle were held; after the fancy dress parade, the children were awarded a selection box and certificate for their involvement in the event. Santa dropped by with his little helper, bringing magic to the room as presents were given to all the children
- **February 2015** saw the foster carer long service award (held at the Town Hall) hosted by the Mayor and Mayoress; foster carers were presented with bouquets of flowers for long service of 25 years, 15 years and 10 years together with framed photographs to commemorate the event; an informal afternoon was enjoyed by carers and staff over refreshments and cake

- **22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015** saw fostering families “hopping” along to Sunnyside to enjoy Easter Celebrations with fancy dress, face painting, disco, Easter egg raffle and, after a fancy dress parade, awards to the children of certificates and Easter eggs.

## 9. Looked After Children Information 2014-15

Regarding the Looked After Children (LAC) population (in relation to fostering) as of 31.03.2015:

### LAC Population:

- The total LAC population at 31.3.15 was 409 children. It had ranged from 390 to 409 between March 2011 and March 2015
- 50.6% of the children were aged 12-17 years, 24.9% were aged 6-11 years and 24.4% were aged 0-5 years
- More females were in care (231) than males (178)
- 20.3% children were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, compared with the 15% black and ethnic minority population on Rotherham as a whole

### Admissions to care:

- There were 175 admissions to care in 2014-15 (147 in 2013-14)
- 59 children aged 2 years and under were admitted (an increase of 14 children from 45 in 2013-14)
- 45 children aged 12-15 years were admitted (an increase of 13 children from 32 in 2013-14)
- 17 children aged 8-11 years were admitted (a decrease of 16 children from 33 in 2013-14)

### Placement of LAC:

- **45% (182 children) of the whole LAC population were placed with in-house foster carers, compared to 41% (163) the previous year; 27% (111) were placed in independent fostering agency placements compared to 26% (102) in 2013-14**
- **Thus, there has been placement success during the past year. Whilst the number of fostering household decreased, there was an increase in the number of children being cared for (19 children) by RMBC foster carers**
- There was significant improvement regarding permanence (long-term) foster placement stability; the percentage of looked after children who had been in care for 2.5 years and had been in the same placement for the previous two years increased from **68.8% in 2013-14 to 71.9% in 2014-15. This performance is in the top quartile for local authorities nationally**
- More young people in foster care were enabled to benefit from Staying Put arrangements; these increased from 5 young people in 2013-14 to 13 young



people in 2014-15. **All 8 young people in in-house foster care who turned 18 in 2014/15 remained beyond 18 with their foster carer in a Staying Put arrangement**

## 10. Key Messages, Challenges, Targets and Actions

### Key Messages

#### **“The Voice of the Child” and the fostering service**

RMBC’s Looked After Children Council was consulted in April 2015. The participating members included looked after children and care leavers (aged 16-22 years); they had experienced foster care, residential care, Staying Put arrangements and semi-independent care accommodation.

Key messages from the young people in terms of the fostering service included:

- There needs to be more in-house foster carers in Rotherham; one young person said: **“we need more foster carers living in Rotherham.....it gives you more chance to see your family”**; another said: **“We should recruit more of our own foster carers and use less privatised carers”**
- “Quality foster carers” need to be recruited; quotes included **“We need the right kind of foster carer”**: **“You should do good assessments of foster carers”**: **“Recruitment can attract carers who just want the money”**: **“There shouldn’t be too many children in one home”**: **“Carers need to have good training to understand children’s mental health needs”**

#### **“The Voice of foster carers” and the fostering service**

Foster carers say:

- It’s life changing!”
- You can make a difference!”
- It gives kids a second chance”
- When a child accepts you, you feel special”
- “Above all, we all work together to keep Rotherham children in Rotherham!”
- It’s the start of a great journey for you & the children & young people you may work with”

### Key Challenges

However, there are **key challenges** for the fostering service in the coming years for which a sufficiency strategy is being devised to address:

- The Ofsted Inspection noted that **“Looked after children do not receive good enough care and they wait too long for permanent homes. Too**

***many children and young people are placed out of the borough because there are not enough local placements”***

- Too many children and young people are placed in residential placements; this needs to be decreased with an increase of family placements
- Too many children and young people are placed out of borough and at distance from their families and communities; these independent placements are, on average, at a much higher cost when compared with in-house provision
- In addition to the need to increase the number of in-house placements, it is also essential to increase the range of specialist in-house placements so as to provide sufficient provision of local parent and child placements, teenager placements and emergency placements

### **Gap Analysis**

There is an insufficient number and range of in-house foster carers; the service needs more carers, in particular for sibling groups and children aged 10 years and above

- There is a need for carers able to take parent and child placements
- There is a need for or 2 remand foster carers
- There is a need for carers able to care for young people at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation
- The current carer pool cannot meet the complex needs of many of the adolescents requiring placements. Highly skilled and resilient foster carers who are able to work with a wraparound support team are needed so as to offer more young people a family based placement rather than a residential placement
- The carer pool needs to be more ethnically diverse to reflect the ethnicity of children requiring placements.

### **Strategy**

The strategy over the next three years will consist of the following elements:

- Supporting children to stay at home with their birth parents or extended family members wherever this is possible
- Changing considerably the composition of placement types used to care for looked after children so that the vast majority of children are placed in foster families and less children and young people are placed in residential care, and more children and young people are placed in more cost efficient in-house placements
- Robustly managing the care population to ensure that children are moved to permanence placements in a timely fashion, both in and out of care
- Increasing local provision through growth in local in-house fostering provision and working with the independent sector so that less children are placed at a distance
- Boosting in-house wraparound placement support services to facilitate the placement of young people with multiple complex needs locally.

## Targets and Actions

To meet the needs of Rotherham children and young people, the “carer pool” needs to increase by at least 60 carers over the next 3 years, i.e. a target of 20 carers each year:

- To increase the number of children cared for in in-house foster care also by 20 in each of the next 3 years
- This will require a “rebranding” of the Fostering Service and be a pro-active and innovative initiative to counter the negative press coverage of Children’s Social Care Services and the town over the last year
- Recruitment campaigns and activity will appeal to members of the public to be part of the ‘solution’ to the ‘problem’ of supporting and caring for our most vulnerable children, appealing to their sense of wanting to act on a moral imperative – their sense that they ‘must’ contribute as foster carers as it is the right thing to do; there will be a focus on the “sense of community” that foster carers value, i.e. that they can enable Rotherham children to remain in their local communities in Rotherham
- The rebranding will promote the concept of foster carers as “community heroes”
- To increase the Foster Plus specialist fostering scheme (established in 2014-15) so that it provides further placements for adolescents with challenging and complex needs, recruits at least one more “salaried” emergency carer to add to the one recently recruited, and recruits carers that can offer parent and child placements and accommodate young people on remand
- To develop the Child Sexual Exploitation Fostering Scheme across South Yorkshire alongside Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster Local Authorities. This initiative is supported by an Innovation Grant of £1.2m from the Department for Education and has a target to recruit 35 foster carers across South Yorkshire to provide local family based placements for young people at risk of or suffering from Child Sexual Exploitation
- To make use of the newly-established Permanence Fostering Social Worker to lead on securing permanent foster homes in a timely fashion for all children who need them
- To utilise the recently approved policy for funding home extensions for foster carers (and adopters) to increase capacity of existing carers where it allows for them to care for our most difficult to place children and where it allows for sibling groups to be placed together

## Proposals

- To invest in a new Fostering Service website and develop and invest in a full online marketing campaign as a matter of urgency
- To increase the current fostering and adoption marketing officer post from 26 hours per week to 37, making it a full time post
- To establish a third team manager post in the Fostering Service. This is essential to support both the foster carer recruitment and supervision and retention functions in the Fostering Service and to ensure there is sufficient management capacity to accommodate the necessary growth in the service
- To review and revise the financial support package paid to foster carers to ensure that it is, as a minimum, competitive with the package paid by neighbouring local authorities and local independent fostering agencies.

## Other Developments

- The recruitment team was a part of the Fostering Network's review of their assessment materials and will be using the latest report formats when they become available in July 2015
- The supervision team are to participate in a BAAF pilot (in partnership with Doncaster Children's Trust, BAAF and the "Esmee Fairbairn Foundation" exploring current practice relating to information that is collated by foster carers; the aim is to inform BAAF "top tips" and best practice around life story work and sharing children's narratives; focus groups for foster carers, fostering workers & children's social workers are arranged for June 2015
- The supervision team are also to lead on a consultation and confidence-building event for males 11-18 years of age, working in partnership with the Youth Service in June-July 2015, including outward-bound activities, Music, art and IT
- A successful Innovation bid has resulted in a South Yorkshire project for CSE fostering; the 3 local authorities of Sheffield, Barnsley and Rotherham, together with Doncaster Children's Trust are working in partnership to respond to the need for "CSE foster placements" in South Yorkshire; the project is to be managed from Sheffield with the 4 services recruiting, assessing and supervising such carers in their own geographic area; placements will be matched across the county
- The fostering service is a "learning from feedback" service; this includes feedback reports from: carers attending the Fostering Panel: the Fostering Panel itself: journey mapping of applicants' journey to become foster carers: complaints, allegations and compliments
- The contribution of looked after children, carers' own children and social workers to foster carers' reviews will be collated into a quarterly report to inform future delivery of the service.

## 11. Summary

In summary, 2014-15 was a busy year for the Fostering Panel and the Fostering Service.

### Regarding the Fostering Panel:

- Frequency of Panel Meetings and careful planning of agendas have ensured children's plans for permanence are agreed in a timely manner to avoid any unnecessary delay from the Panel perspective
- Recruitment of new panel members to the central list to fill vacancies has ensured panels are quorate and able to function appropriately
- A new chair of the Panel, Fred Lillie, commenced in February 2015 following the retirement of the previous Chair, Paul Walton, in December 2014
- Fred has initiated an Information Sheet so that the Panel receives all relevant information regarding the previous month; this includes: number of enquiries and assessments: number of looked after children and those placed with in-house carers & independent agencies (within and outside of the borough):

foster carer reviews (and the level of contribution by children and their social workers to the review)

- The Panel continues to ensure that it is a positive experience for everyone attending by providing a welcoming atmosphere, and support for (prospective) foster carers from either their assessing or supervising social worker; Fred has stated a willingness to attend support groups to introduce himself and discuss all matter relating to the Fostering Panel

**Regarding the fostering service:**

- Following a tough year for children's services, the fostering service is looking forward to the next 12 months with optimism
- There is a need for more foster carers with a stated target of 20 additional carers for the next 12 months
- There is to be a fully-refreshed recruitment campaign with a new website as its "flagship"
- The recruitment team will use the new Skills to Foster report format when it is available
- The supervision team is to participate in the BAAF pilot and the partnership project with youth services
- The "CSE fostering project" (with a current working title of "Fostering Changes") will become established
- The service is a "learning service" that takes note of feedback

The Fostering Service invites the Fostering Panel Chair, on behalf of the panel, to comment on the work of the panel and the service as detailed in this report and to make any other comments relating to quality assurance and the performance of the service so that the service can take account of this in its future development.

**Andrew Symcox**  
**Fostering Recruitment Team Manager**



Signed:

Andrew J Symcox  
Fostering Panel Advisor

Dated: 26.06.2015


**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
SERVICES

6-Month Update Report  
Rotherham Fostering Panel

April – Sept 2015

**“If you or someone you know needs help to understand or read this document, please contact us”:**

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## 1. Introduction

This report is a 6-month update (from April – September/October 2015) of the annual report of 2014-15

## 2. Panel Composition

The amendments to the Central List are as follows:

- Sandra Guest has retired from the health service
- Cllr Terry Sharman has retired as an elected member of the council
- Peter Douglas & Tina Hohn (virtual school) have joined & provide education representation together with Lorraine Dale (formerly Litchfield)
- Cllr Maureen Vines has joined as an elected member of the panel
- Lisa Padley (adoption service) is to resign as of December 2015

It is clear that the composition of the central list would benefit from:

- a young person with “care” experience
- a vice-chair (and members) of organisational seniority

### Panel Member Annual Performance and Development Reviews (PDR)

Since April 2015, the following panel members have had an annual Performance and Development Review looking at their progress as panel members:

- Karen Holgate (health representative)
- Amie Scaife (formerly Stead) (social worker)

## 3. Fostering Panel and Quality Assurance of Work 2014-15

The panel in its work has considered the following presentations:

- Skills to Foster Applications
- “Connected Persons” (family & friends) Applications
- First Reviews of foster carers
- Reviews following allegations or complaints against foster carers
- Child and Family Permanence (long-term) Matching
- Changes in terms of approval of foster carers

From June 2015, there has been a panel audit of each item presented to the panel in 2 areas of work: the report provided by the worker(s); the presentation by the worker(s); this has included a “score” as follows:

- Score of 1 = Inadequate – requires significant improvement
- Score of 2 = Inadequate – requires moderate improvement

- Score of 3 = Good – requires minor improvement
- Score of 4 = Very good – high-level practice
- Score of 5 = Outstanding – best practice

An analysis of the audits show:

As regards the documentation/report provided to the Panel, there were:

- No score of 1
- 4 scores of 2
- 10 scores of 3
- 8 scores of 4
- No score of 5
- Average score = 3.2 (“good”)

As regards the presentations to the Panel:

- No score of 1
- 2 scores of 2
- 5 scores of 3
- 15 scores of 4
- 0 score of 5
- Average score = 3.6 (“good”)

Comments made by the Fostering Panel in relation to the reports provided and items presented:

- A number of reports were considered to be thorough
- Social workers (whether assessing applicants or supervising existing carers) were confident and knowledgeable about the applicants/carers
- It would be helpful for all Panel members to have the genograms (rather than in the portfolio of evidence) to assist their understanding of family relationships – this has been implemented
- In relation to carer reviews, the Panel advised that they would like carers’ terms of approval to be clear
- A Fostering Plus carer had provided a “our journey through fostering” which was highly praised; this document can be used for recruitment and retention purposes
- Assessing workers to record individual interviews clearly with applicants & referees; this was generally the case but reinforcement was implemented to ensure that the distinct was made when we received written references & when referees were interviewed
- Too many reviews did not include contributions from children’s social workers or the fostered children; although there has been some improvement in this, it continues to require monitoring (including by the Panel) to ensure full compliance as this is a safeguarding issue

#### **4. Fostering Panel Business 2014-15**

Between 01.04.2015 & 30.09.2015, there were 11 Foster Panels convened. 47 agenda items were discussed, an average of 4.3 items per Panel.

The table below categorises these items:

<b>Panels 1 &amp; 2 Combined (11 Sessions)</b>	
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Statistics</b>
<b>Skills to Foster Assessment</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Regulation 24 Assessment</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Carer Review</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Change of Category</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>De-registration/Resignations</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Long-term Matching (In-house)</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Long-term Matching (IFA)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Allegations Report</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>

The Panel's work was modified during this period of reporting in relation to "changes of carers' terms of approval"; following a carer review, these are now presented directly to the Agency Decision Maker.

## **5. Staffing in the Fostering Service**

The in-house fostering service consists of 2 separate teams who are closely aligned – the Fostering Recruitment Team and the Fostering Supervision Team. There are no amendments to the teams since the annual report (2014-15) with the exception of Paul Dempsey (service manager, family placement & residential services) leaving the council as of 16.10.2015 to take up a senior post in Manchester. On 26.05.2015, Michelle Whiting commenced employment as Interim LAC Adviser to support improvements in fostering, adoption and looked after children's services.

## **6. Fostering Service Business 2014-15**

### **Fostering Recruitment**

- There has been an increase in recruitment activity over the 6 months that bodes well for the remainder of the year
- There had been 6 new approvals and 2 de-registrations by the end of September 2015
- Between April and September 2015, there were enquiries into fostering and there are currently 20 assessments being undertaken
- There is no doubt that this is an insufficient increase to achieve our stated target of 20 new carers
- With the additional support of Michelle Whiting (Interim LAC adviser) and RMBC's media team, the service has been able to achieve a new recruitment campaign, based on a theme of foster carers being "local heroes"; this theme came from foster carers themselves, from research that evidenced that: 62% of the population consider foster carers to be

“heroes”: 73% of foster carers (81% of new foster carers) have values relating to wanting to “make a difference, do the right thing at the right time, put something back into the community and help those who need help”; the campaign (and accompanying publicity materials) has been presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel, groups of foster carers and children’s service managers; feedback is extremely positive. The campaign will be rolled out across the borough and in specific “target areas” (Swinton/Kilnhurst, Thurcroft, North Anston and Herringthorpe/Stag) which have been identified by demographic research; this is backed by Cllr Gordon Watson and elected members, parish councillors and other key people in the 4 areas.

### **In-house fostering provision (as at 30.09.2015)**

Regarding in-house fostering provision, there are:

- 132 mainstream approved foster carers
- 6 Foster Plus carers
- 18 Families Together (short breaks) carers
- 11 “Connected Persons” foster carers

### **Fostering Supervision**

#### **Support groups**

1. Induction year and newly approved foster carers support group (Unity Centre)
2. North support group (Swinton Library) (afternoon)
3. Central support group (Listerdale children’s centre) (morning)
4. South support group (Dinnington resource centre) (evening)
5. Foster carers’ own children’s support group (evening)

The groups are run on different days of the week and at different times of the day to provide carers with choices and options.

The fostering service is participating in a “pilot project” with the FosterTalk organisation (and Cambridge University) to explore the impact on fostering households of unsubstantiated allegations against foster carers

### **Regarding training and development of foster carers between 01.04.2015 and 30.09.2015:**

- There have been 670 training courses accessed by 238 carers
- These include taught courses and introductory DVD courses
- Examples of the courses completed by carers are:
- e-PEP training = 80 carers
- e-Safety = 25 carers
- CSE – Keep Them Safe (online course) = 21 carers (96 carers completed this last year)

- In addition, a further 15 carers have undertaken direct learning regarding CSE (e.g. Working Together to Safeguard Children & Young People at Risk of Sexual Exploitation)
- Understanding behaviour (DVD course) = 22 carers
- Equality & Diversity (DVD course) = 28 carers
- Therapeutic Parenting = 13 carers

In addition, a further 15 carers have completed the Training, Support & Development Standards for Foster Carers during this period.

### **Fostering Celebrations**

- April 2015 – Easter Party for children and foster carers
- June 2015 – “Party in the Park” event as part of foster care fortnight
- July-August 2015 (school holidays) – 2 “Party in the Park” events for children and foster carers
- October 2015 – Halloween Party for children and foster carers
- The children’s support group have taken part in a range of activities including: visit to Yorkshire Wildlife Park: 10-pin bowling: clay making event: roller blading activity: music and drama activities: 2 swimming projects (specifically for looked after children who could not swim and were reticent to learn) – these culminated in a swimming event at Lake Windermere where the children participated in “open water swimming”

There is to be the annual foster carer celebration party at the end of November 2015 and the annual Christmas Party in December 2015

## **7. Looked After Children Information 2014-15**

Regarding looked after children in relation to fostering (as of 30.09.2015):

- The total number of looked after children at 30.09.2015 was 414 children
- Of these. 303 were placed with foster carers, 200 with RMBC (“in-house”) foster carers; 103 with independent agency foster carers
- Thus, 48% of all looked after children were placed with in-house foster carers (a 3% increase from 31.03.2015, a 7% increase from 31.03.2014)
- Thus, there continues to be placement success over the last 6 months
- There continues to be a significant improvement regarding permanence (long-term) foster placement stability; the percentage of looked after children who had been in care for 2.5 years and had been in the same placement for the previous two years has again increased in the last 6 months to 77.4% (from 68.8% in 2013-14 to 71.9% in 2014-15). This performance is in the top quartile for local authorities nationally
- There are currently 13 young who have remained with their foster carers after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (Staying Put arrangements) with plans for a further 11 to do so in the coming months.

## 8. Key Challenges, Targets and Actions

### Key Challenges

There are **key challenges** for the fostering service in the coming years for which the sufficiency strategy is to address:

- Insufficient local placement availability, particularly for older children and sibling groups
- Too many children placed out of borough, on average, at a much higher cost
- There is a need for carers able to take parent and child placements
- There is a need for 1 or 2 PACE foster carers
- There is a need for carers able to care for young people at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation

### Strategy

The strategy over the next three years will consist of the following elements:

- Supporting children to stay at home with their birth parents or extended family members wherever this is possible
- Changing considerably the composition of placement types used to care for looked after children so that the vast majority of children are placed in foster families and less children and young people are placed in residential care, and more children and young people are placed in more cost efficient placements
- Robustly managing the care population to ensure that children are moved to permanence placements in a timely fashion, both in and out of care
- Increasing local provision through growth in local in-house fostering provision and working with the independent sector so that less children are placed at a distance
- Boosting in-house wraparound placement support services to facilitate the placement of young people with multiple complex needs locally.

### Targets and Actions

To meet the needs of Rotherham children and young people, the “carer pool” needs to increase by at least 60 carers over the next 3 years, i.e. a target of 20 carers each year:

- To increase the number of children cared for in in-house foster care also by 20 in each of the next 3 years
- This has required a “rebranding” of the Fostering Service and a more pro-active and innovative recruitment campaign to enable children’s services as a whole to look to the future with optimism for the care of our vulnerable children; this rebranding is to promote the concept of foster carers as “local heroes”
- To further develop and implement the “Empower and Protect Programme” (the Child Sexual Exploitation Fostering Scheme across South Yorkshire) together with Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster, supported by the Department for Education

- To make use of the newly-established Permanence Fostering Social Worker to lead on securing permanent foster homes in a timely fashion for all children who need them
- To utilise the recently approved policy for funding home extensions for foster carers (and adopters) to increase capacity of existing carers where it allows for them to care for our most difficult to place children and where it allows for sibling groups to be placed together

## 10. Summary

In summary, April-September 2015 has been busy for the Fostering Panel and Service.

### Regarding the Fostering Panel:

- Frequency of Panel Meetings and careful planning of agendas have ensured children's plans for permanence are agreed in a timely manner to avoid any unnecessary delay from the Panel perspective
- Recruitment of new panel members to the central list to fill vacancies has ensured panels are quorate and able to function appropriately
- A new chair of the Panel, Fred Lillie, commenced in February 2015 following the retirement of the previous Chair, Paul Walton, in December 2014
- Fred requested an information report so that the Panel received all relevant information regarding the previous month; this information is obtained and collated by the panel adviser and includes: number of enquiries and assessments: number of looked after children and those placed with in-house carers & independent agencies (within and outside of the borough): foster carer reviews (and the level of contribution by children and their social workers to the review)
- The Panel continues to ensure that it is a positive experience for everyone attending by providing a welcoming atmosphere, and support for (prospective) foster carers from either their assessing or supervising social worker; Fred has stated a willingness to attend support groups to introduce himself and discuss all matter relating to the Fostering Panel

### Regarding the fostering service:

- Following a tough year for children's services, the fostering service is looking forward with optimism
- More foster carers are required during the next 12 months (and beyond) for the local authority to achieve its sufficiency strategy targets (net gain of 20 carers per year over a 3-year period)
- The new recruitment campaign (with the new website as its "flagship") on the "local hero" theme is to be formally launched on 10.11.2015
- The recruitment team will use the new Skills to Foster report format when it is available
- The supervision team is to participate in the BAAF pilot and the partnership project with youth services
- The "CSE fostering project", the "Empower & Protect Programme" is becoming established across South Yorkshire

- The service is a “learning service” that is takes note of feedback

The Fostering Service invites the Fostering Panel Chair, on behalf of the panel, to comment on the work of the panel and the service as detailed in this report and to make any other comments relating to quality assurance and the performance of the service so that the service can take account of this in its future development.

**Andrew Symcox**  
**Fostering Recruitment Team Manager**



Signed:

Andrew J Symcox  
Fostering Panel Adviser

Dated: 22.10.2015



## Summary Sheet

## Council Report

**Title** Adoption Service Annual Report

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

*This is not a Key Decision*

## Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Thomas

## Report Author

Jill Stanley

## Ward(s) Affected

All Wards are affected

## Executive Summary

**This is a report which is prepared on an annual basis to provide Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's Adoption Panel with information on the business of Panel and the Adoption Agency. The report also provides a brief summary of the work undertaken by Panel and considers the feedback and monitoring completed by the Panel, and the quality of the reports which are presented to Panel.**

**The Adoption Panel has two primary functions which are making recommendations regarding the suitability of prospective adopters, and matching children who have a plan of adoption to suitable prospective adopters.**

## Recommendations:

**That members note the Adoption Agency and Adoption annual report 2014/15, and the addendum highlighting performance from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2015.**

### **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1: Adoption Service Annual Report to The Adoption Panel

Appendix 2: Addendum

### **Background Papers**

No

### **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

Appendix 1 report has been considered by the Local Authority Adoption Panel

### **Council Approval Required**

No

### **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

### **Adoption Service Annual Report**

#### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That Corporate Parenting Panel note the contents of the report
- 1.2 That Corporate Parenting Panel note the key role that Adopters play in caring for our most vulnerable children and young people
- 1.3 That Corporate Parenting Panel members do their best to promote the role of Adopters in providing secure and stable family lives for children where adoption is the plan for a child.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Local Authority in Rotherham operates an adoption service to provide loving permanent homes to Looked After children with a plan of adoption. The service provides adoptive families for children who can no longer live with their parents or extended families.

#### **3. Key Issues**

The Adoption Agency needs to achieve a high level of recruitment of prospective adopters to meet the needs of the children who have an adoption plan and to ensure timeliness for children in achieving permanence. This is in line with the Governments agenda of tackling delay. Both within Rotherham and nationally there has been a significant

increase in the number of approved adopters, however the challenge remains in recruiting prospective adopters for the harder to place children.

The focus of the recruitment campaign continues to be for children of all ages but with an emphasis on older children, sibling groups and children with additional needs. The Adoption Agency promotes the use of Early Permanence planning for children and the support available from the Therapeutic Team.

To continue to improve timeliness for children with an adoption plan by commencing family finding at the earliest stage.

**4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

That members note the Adoption Panel Report.

**5. Consultation**

Adoption Panel Report has been shared with the Adoption Panel Chair.

**6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

The Adoption Team Manager and Service Manager are responsible for implementing the report.

**7. Financial and Procurement Implications**

No

**8. Legal Implications**

No

**9. Human Resources Implications**

No

**10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

To improve outcomes for Looked After Children in a timely manner by providing secure and stable adoptive family homes for children where this is the plan.

**11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

Not applicable.

**12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

None

**13. Risks and Mitigation**

None

**14. Accountable Officer(s)**

Team Manager and Service Manager

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- Named officer

Director of Legal Services:- Named officer

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):-

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:-

<http://modern.gov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>

Addendum to Adoption Panel Report from April – September, 2015

Children in Adoption Placements as of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015

18 children placed in adoption placements as of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Of these there are 6 sibling groups of 2 and 6 single children.

The average A1 measure for children in adoption placements as of the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 is 340 days against the scorecard measure of 426 days. The A1 measure for the 24 children in adoption placements at the end of March 2015 was 385 days. The trend is for continued improvement in timeliness for the A1 measure. Rotherham's A1 measure currently exceeds the target by 86 days. 83 % of children currently placed meet the A1 measure of 426 days.

The average A2 measure for children in adoption placements as of the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 is 136 days against the scorecard measure of 121 days. The A2 measure at the end of March 2015 was 179 days. This demonstrates a continued improvement in timeliness between Placement Order granted and the match Agency Decision but remains short of the scorecard measure target of 121 days by 15. 71% of children currently placed met the A2 measure of 121 days.

The children placed who did not achieve the A2 measure timescale were 2 older sibling groups of 2 children and a child from BME background with a potential genetic condition.

Children with a Plan for Adoption

There are 30 children with a plan of adoption as of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Of these 7 children have had their Placement Order for more than 4 months. These children therefore have not met the A2 timescale. Reasons include uncertainty about health and development and older children including an older sibling group of 2.

Placements are identified for 5 of the 7 children and 1 child's plan is awaiting revocation. The child with no identified adoptive placement is an older child with Global Developmental Delay. Intensive family finding is continuing including Activity Days.

16 children have a Placement Order. Placements are identified for 11 of these children. 10 of the 11 children will meet the A2 measure. Family finding continues for the remaining 5 children which includes an older child with additional needs, a sibling group of 2 older children with Fragile X Syndrome, a baby with uncertainties in health and development and a young child who has had a number of moves in her very short life and who needs a period of stability in foster care.

7 children currently have a plan of adoption and a Should be Placed for Adoption decision. Family finding has commenced for 3 of the children including Activity Days. 4 children are awaiting revocation of the SHOBPA as family members have had

further assessment following the Agency Decision and are to be placed with family members.

### Children Adopted between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015

22 children have had an Adoption order granted in this period.

The average number of days for the A1 timescale is 364 against the scorecard target of 426 days. This exceeds the target by 56 days.

The average number of days for the A2 timescale is 193 days. The scorecard target is 121 days. Performance did not meet the target by 72 days. The reason for decreased performance on this measure for children adopted is due to older children being adopted including 3 sibling groups of 2 children, 3 children with significant health needs and 2 single male children. Although these children were not matched within 121 days of Placement Order being granted they have achieved permanence through adoption which is a positive outcome for the children.

It is anticipated that this performance will improve over the next 6 months as 71% of the children currently placed have met the A2 measure.

### Adopter Performance

6 adoptive families were approved between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> September. This is a decrease from the same period in 2014/15 where 19 families were approved.

During this period 16 families have been counselled out or a decision made not to recommend approval or withdrawn on receipt of further information.

2 adoptive families who have had full assessments were not approved.

The number of initial enquiries for the period was 46 compared to 60 for the same period the previous year.

The Being Family Consortium recruitment campaign was very active in the period of April to September in 2014. Although the Being Family campaign has continued, this has not been on as large a scale this year.

The statistics demonstrate that although a larger number of enquiries have been received during 2014, this correlates with the large number of withdrawals and or non- acceptance of Registration of Interest in 2015. The agency are being more robust at the acceptance of Registration of Interest stage to ensure that prospective adopters who do proceed to stage 1 are likely to progress through the process.

Regionally the number of families approved as suitable to adopt exceeds the number of children currently with an adoption plan. Regionally there has been a drop in the number of adoptive families approved. Rotherham continues to recruit adopters for

children of all ages however the priority is for adopters who can consider children over 4 years of age, children with health and development needs and sibling groups.

There are 3 recruitment events planned for National Adoption Week and advertising for these events is ongoing.

Adoption Panel Business

	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016</b>
Number of adopter assessments considered	18	31	7
Number of adopter assessments approved	18	31	6
Number of adopter assessments minded not to approve	0	0	1
Number of matches considered	45	41	12 (14 children)
Number of matches approved	45	41	12 (14 children)
Number of children adopted	36	43	22

**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
SERVICES

Annual Report  
Rotherham Adoption Panel

2014/15



“If you or someone you know needs help to understand or read this document, please contact us”:

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💻: e-mail

Minicom: 01709 823536

#### Slovak

#### Slovensky

Ak vy alebo niekto koho poznáte potrebuje pomoc pri pochopení alebo čítaní tohto dokumentu, prosím kontaktujte nás na vyššie uvedenom čísle alebo nám pošlite e-mail.

#### Kurdish Sorani

#### کوردی سۆرانی

نهگهر تو یان کهسێک که تو دهیناسی پیویستی بهیارمهتی هه بێت بۆ نهوهی لهم بهنگهنامه به تیگات یان بیخوینتهوه، تکایه په یوه ندیمان پیوه بکه له سههر نهو ژماره یه ی سهروه دا یان بهو نیمه یله.

#### Arabic

#### عربي

إذا كنت أنت أو أي شخص تعرفه بحاجة إلى مساعدة لفهم أو قراءة هذه الوثيقة، الرجاء الاتصال على الرقم اعلاه، أو مراسلتنا عبر البريد الإلكتروني

#### Urdu

#### اُردو

اگر آپ یا آپ کے جاننے والے کسی شخص کو اس دستاویز کو سمجھنے یا پڑھنے کیلئے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا نمبر پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں یا ہمیں ای میل کریں۔

#### Farsi

#### فارسی

اگر جناب عالی یا شخص دیگری که شما او را می شناسید برای خواندن یا فهمیدن این مدارک نیاز به کمک دارد لطفاً با ما بوسیله شماره بالا یا ایمیل تماس حاصل فرمایید.

## **Contents**

1. Purpose of Report
2. Introduction
3. Panel Composition
4. Panel Training
5. Quality Assurance of Reports
6. Adoption Panel and Agency Business 2014/15
7. Timeliness of Adoptions
8. Family Finding Activity
9. Early Permanence Planning
10. Staffing in the Adoption Team
11. Key Performance Statistics in the latest Rolling 12 month period as at 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2015
12. Developments and Targets for 2014/15
13. Summary and Conclusions

## 1. Purpose of Report

This is a report to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's Adoption Panel. It reports on the business of the panel and the Adoption Agency in 2014/15 and provides statistical information on Adoption Agency business in 2015/16 up to end of April 2015. As well as reporting on the activity of the panel and providing a brief summary of the work which is undertaken by the panel, it considers the feedback and monitoring completed by the panel and the quality of reports presented to it.

This report provides an opportunity for the panel, led by the panel chair, to reflect on the work of the panel and the Agency in the reporting period and to respond, either challenging the Agency where and if necessary and /or commending the Agency wherever it is felt good practice or quality improvements have been made. The agency will request a written response from the panel chair which will be shared with and considered by the Agency Decision Maker for Adoption.

## 2. Introduction

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Adoption Agency Adoption Panel has two primary functions, as follows:

- The panel is required to make recommendations regarding the suitability of prospective adopters
- The panel matches children who have a plan of adoption to suitable prospective adopters.

The panel works within the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 and the National Minimum Standards for Adoption Services 2011.

## 3 Panel Composition

The panel manages its business in a professional and consistent manner with no significant skill gaps being identified by the panel or the agency. This is regularly reviewed through individual Professional Development Reviews.

The central list is currently made up of 10 members. These include an independent Chairperson who is not an employee of the children and young people's directorate, an independent Vice Chair, a Medical Advisor, 3 social care professionals and 4 independent members including 2 who have personal experience of adoption and one who is employed by a voluntary adoption agency. In addition the Agency Advisor attends each meeting but is not a member of the panel, and a Legal Adviser is available for written advice or consultation. There have been a number of changes to the central list of panel members in 2015, and we currently have 3 new panel members for whom we are undertaking DBS and reference checks in order for them to be available to sit on panel.

<b>Name of Panel Member</b>	<b>Type of Member</b>
Judith Longhill	Independent Chair
Dr Hashmi	Medical Advisor
Catherine Eshelby	LA social worker
Jacqueline Falvey	Independent Member
Ulla Trend	Independent Member
Esther Martin	Independent Member and Adoptive parent
Michael Connell	Independent Member and Adoptive parent
Elizabeth Bridges	Independent Member and Vice-Chair
Sadia Alam	LA social worker
Jerusha Firth	LA social worker
Maureen Connolly	LA social worker (references currently being undertaken)
Michele Beecham	Social Work member – Voluntary Adoption Agency (references currently being undertaken)
Michele Stevenson	Social Work Member – Independent social worker ( references currently being undertaken)

The previously developed central list of panel members has been designed to ensure that panels are quorate and can be quickly arranged in order to avoid delay when planning for children's futures. Panel members are extremely supportive of this, and it continues to allow us to convene additional panels when appropriate, in order to prevent delay for both prospective adopters and children.

From April 2014/15 there were 22 meetings of the panel. So far since April, 2015 up to end of June, 2015 there have been 4 meetings of the panel.

Panel Member Annual Performance and Development Reviews (PDR)

All panel members are required to have an annual Performance and Development Review looking at their progress as panel members. All panel members have had an annual appraisal in the last 12 months.

The panel chair, Judith Longhill, will be reviewed on 23/07/15, by the Agency Decision Maker and the Agency Advisor. Previous comments regarding her strengths as a panel chair have included the following:

- 'Good at including all panel members in discussions and gaining a wide range of views, keeping focus on discussing the key issues and maintaining timeliness.
- Excellent knowledge of tasks involved in delivering effective services for children and families, including excellent safeguarding knowledge.
- Has a good ability to understand and analyse complex issues.'

#### **4 Panel Training**

Panel training for panel members and the Adoption Team in 2015/16 will include a one day presentation on 03/09/15 facilitated by the Adoption Team's Early Permanence Champion. The training will focus on an up-date of Early Permanence and information regarding the Agency's progress in respect of EPP. A representative from the Legal Department will also provide an overview of the current legal framework.

#### **5 Quality Assurance of Reports**

The panel in its work considers the following written reports:

- Prospective Adopters Report (PAR)
- Child and Family Matching Report
- Child Permanence Report
- Adoption Support Plans

The Agency Advisor to the Adoption Panel receives the draft reports three weeks prior to panel and gives written feedback on the quality of the reports, where appropriate, as well as practice advice. Additionally, the reports are now quality assured for a second time after amendments have been made by the social worker, in order to try ensure that the information received by panel members is reflective of a high standard with good analysis and a clear recommendation. The quality of Prospective Adopter Reports is generally good with the majority being well written with positive analysis and reflection.

The quality of Child Permanence Reports submitted with the matching paperwork continues to vary widely. The Adoption Team Manager and Practice Consultant Manager continue to work to resolve this issue through advice, guidance, training and consultation with social workers and their team managers.

A new quality assurance measure has also been introduced which includes a rating for each report presented to Panel, ranging from outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate. A record of these ratings, scored 1-5, will be included in a quarterly report to Panel and the ADM, and only reports which meet the good or better standard should go before Panel and the ADM.

Matching reports also differ in quality with some being of a high standard and reflective of the reasons why a specific match meets the needs of a child or children, with good analysis provided and clear information from prospective adopters about why they feel they can meet the needs of a child. Some reports do not meet this standard and this is addressed through quality assurance and advice and guidance provided to social workers and their team managers to try and ensure that all paperwork provided to panel members is of a good standard.

The Adoption Panel are particularly aware of the child reading their Child Permanence Report and matching paperwork in later life, and therefore of the need to provide an accurate analysis regarding how the prospective adopters can meet the child's needs, what the potential risks are, how the placement will be supported, and very clear reasons why the child could not be cared for by the birth family, including information about the viability assessments undertaken in respect of birth family members.

The quality of Adoption Support Plans presented to panel shows some improvement with a number of them providing clear, well written evidence of good planning for specific services for children, and detailed information regarding contact arrangements. Panel members are clear that the reports need to address on-going and future support for a child including access to any specialist help identified, and who will be responsible for providing this. This has been addressed through quality assurance and written guidance to social workers, and also with support and advice from the Agency's Therapeutic Team (LAACST) who have a named worker who provides guidance to social workers regarding Post Adoption Support plans. Some plans still require further improvement in order to ensure a child's current and long-term needs are appropriately met in their adoptive placement, and social workers will continue to receive guidance and support in an effort to address this issue.

## 6 Adoption Panel and Agency Business 2013/14

	2013/14	2014/15
Number of adopter assessments considered	18	31
Number of adopter assessments approved	18	31
Number of matches considered	45	41
Number of matches approved	45	41
Number of children adopted	36	43
% of children who left care via adoption	26.7%	27%

## 7 Timeliness of Adoptions

Performance on timeliness of adoptions has been an area requiring significant improvement, although poor performance here is partly explained by the high number of children for whom the Agency secures adoption and the high number of difficult to place children for whom the Agency secures adoption.

However, the Agency has made significant improvements to all its processes and invested considerably in the Adoption Service to make improvements in this area. The tables below illustrate the significant improvement that has been made over the last year on timeliness.

Table 1 below shows how performance on Adoption Scorecard Measure 1, the number of days between a child becoming looked after and the child being placed with its adoptive family has improved.

The table shows that it took 661 days from a child becoming looked after to placement with adopters between 2011 and 2014 for children who had been adopted. This had improved to 385 days for the group of 24 children placed in adoptive families as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, an improvement of 276 days.

Table 1: Adoption Scorecard Measure 1 – Improvement Trend

Period and children measured	Rotherham Performance (Days)	Adoption Scorecard Threshold Target
3 year average 2011-14 for children adopted	661	2014 Target = 547
2013/14 performance for all children adopted	634	2013/14 Target = 547
2014/15 performance for all children adopted	393	2014/15 Target = 487
Performance for the 24 children placed in adoptive families as of 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2015	385	2015/16 Target is 426

Table 2 below shows how performance on Adoption Scorecard Measure 2 has improved.

The three year average for the number of days between a child being made subject to a Placement Order and the Agency decision on a match with an adoptive family from 2011 to 2014 for children adopted was 315 days. This has improved for all children who were matched and placed with adoptive families in 2014/15 had reduced considerably to 121 days. This is a reduction of 194 days and therefore excellent progress.

Table 2: Adoptive Scorecard Measure 2 – Improvement Trend

Period and children measured	Days	Target
3 year average 2011-14 for children adopted	315	2014 Target = 152
Performance for the 24 children placed in adoptive families as of 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2015	179	2014/15 Target = 121
2014/15 performance for all children adopted	170	2014/15 Target = 121
Performance for all children matched and placed in 2014/15	121	2014/15 Target = 121

## 8. Family Finding Activity

The Agency has been very successful at finding families for children needing adoption, as evidenced by the high number and percentage of children leaving care via adoption in Rotherham. The Agency has two full time social workers dedicated to family finding activity as well as a support worker, and has enthusiastically implemented new and innovative family finding initiatives including exchange days, profiling events and activity days.

In July 2014 the Agency co-hosted its own activity day for the Yorkshire and Humber Consortium Adoption Agencies and this was successful in linking one harder to place sibling group with a suitable adoptive family.

The Agency used 7 interagency placements in 2014/15 and 19 in-house adoptive placements. The Agency wants to provide more of its own adoptive families for children and to provide adoptive families for other local authorities, working in partnership to ensure more children are enabled to be placed with adoptive families without unnecessary delay.

With this aim in mind, the Agency wants to continue to reduce inter-agency placements and increase the number of adoptive families the Agency provides for other local authorities in 2015/16.

## 9. Early Permanence Planning

The Agency has further developed its procedure and process for establishing and implementing Early Permanence (EPP) planning in 2014/15. In 2014/15 the Agency succeeded in placing 4 children in Early Permanence Placements. This has enabled these 4 children and their adoptive families to begin the attaching and bonding process considerably earlier than would have been the case without the implementation of Early Permanence. This is a very positive development which provides the children with consistency of care from a very young age. So



far in 2015/16 the Agency has placed 5 children in Early Permanence Placements. The Adoption Team has an EPP champion who is able to provide advice and support to Locality social workers, and promotes this process with social work teams and other Agencies by leading presentations on Early Permanence.

#### **10. Staffing in the Adoption Team**

The Adoption Team expanded in 2013/14 as a result of additional funding from the Adoption Reform Grant. This funding enabled the team to create several new temporary posts, as follows:

- 1 Additional Team Manager
- 2 full-time Social workers
- 1 Support worker

These posts have been made permanent in 2015, in recognition of the positive impact the extra capacity has had on the service and the overall performance of the Agency.

The team is now made up of:

- 2 full-time Team Managers
- 2 full - time family finding social workers
- 4 full - time assessing social workers
- 1 full-time Recruitment/Initial contact social worker
- 4 part – time assessing social workers (equivalent of 2.5 posts)
- 1 Letterbox Co-ordinator
- 2 Support workers
- Vacancies – 1 three day post following retirement.

#### **11. Key Performance Statistics in the 12 month period as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015:**

Timeliness of Adoptions

Of the 43 children adopted between April 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015:

- 31 met the Adoption Scorecard Measure 1 target of 487 days between becoming looked after and being placed with adoptive family, and
- 16 met the Adoption Scorecard Measure 2 target of 121 days between being made subject to a Placement Order and the Agency Decision on a match.

Of the 24 children placed with families as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015:

- 18 met the Adoption Scorecard Measure 1 target of 487 days between becoming looked after and placement with adoptive family, and

- 12 met the Adoption Scorecard Measure 2 target of 121 days between being made subject to a Placement Order and the Agency Decision on a match.
- 12 met both Adoption Scorecard Measure 1 and Adoption Scorecard Measure 2.

For the 18 children placed with their adoptive families as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 who met the measure 1 target of 487 days, the average number of days between being looked after and being placed with adopters was **271 days**.

For the 12 children placed with their adoptive families as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 who met the measure 2 target of 121 days, the average number of days between being made subject to a Placement Order and an Agency Decision on a match was **69 days**.

## **12. Developments and Targets for 2015/16**

The Agency has an Adoption Service Development Plan setting out its development aims and objectives for 2015/16.

These include:

- Increasing the number of adoptive families the Agency approves
- Reduced numbers of inter-agency adoptive placements it is required to use
- Increasing the number of adoptive families we provide for other local authorities
- Embedding Early Permanence planning
- Recruiting more adoptive families able to adopt sibling groups
- Continuing to improve timeliness of adoptions as measured against Adoption Scorecard Measures 1 and 2.

With regards to the functioning of the panel the Agency will be looking to:

- Provide further training and workshops for panel members to improve panel performance and understanding of new legislation and guidance.
- Ensure panel provides a robust quality assurance function to the Agency in respect of reports received and matches made.

## **13. Summary and Conclusions**

In summary, 2014/15 has been a time of development and positive change for the Adoption Panel and the Adoption Agency.

There have been more adoptive families approved, more children adopted in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14, and the Agency is succeeding in improving the timeliness of adoptions, as follows.

- Adoptive families recruited increased from 18 to 32.
- Children placed decreased from 45 to 32 .

- Children adopted increased from 36 to 43.
- The percentage of children leaving care via adoption increased from 26.7% to 27%.
- The number of days between a child becoming looked after and placement with adopters reduced from 661 days for children adopted in the three years to 2014 to 385 days for the group of 24 children placed in adoptive families as at 31st March 2015.
- The number of days between a child becoming subject to a Placement Order and the Agency Decision on a match reduced from 315 days for children adopted in the three years up to 2014 to 121 days for the group of 24 children placed in adoptive families as at 31st March 2015

Other positive developments surrounding the panel have included:

- Continued frequency of Panel Meetings and careful planning of agenda's has ensured children's plans for permanence are agreed in a timely manner to avoid any unnecessary delay.
- Current recruitment of new panel members to the central list to fill vacancies has ensured panels are quorate and able to function appropriately.
- Continuing to ensure that panel is a positive experience for everyone attending by providing a welcoming atmosphere, and support for prospective adopters from their assessing social worker and the Adoption Support Worker.

In addition, a very positive development has been the continued progress of the Early Permanence initiative in Rotherham, which has so far seen the placing of 5 children in 2015/16 in Early Permanence Placements.

The Agency has permanent additional staffing in the Adoption Service for 2015/16 and has set itself ambitious targets to improve performance further in 2015/16.

On reflection then, 2014/15 has been a productive year for the Adoption Agency, with a focus on new initiatives such as Early Permanence Placements. The improved performance detailed above has resulted from investment in additional staffing capacity, the on-going enthusiasm, commitment and hard work of the staff and panel members, and the Agency's continued pro-active approach to streamlining the adoption process and using new and innovative family finding initiatives such as exchange days, profiling events and activity days.

The Agency invites the Adoption Panel Chair, on behalf of the panel, to comment on the work of the panel and the Agency as detailed in this report and to make any other comments relating to quality assurance and the performance of the Agency so that the Agency can take account of this in its future development.

**Jill Stanley**

**Adoption Team Manager**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J.A. Stanley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a distinct 'A'.

Signed: .....

Jill A Stanley  
Adoption Panel Advisor

Dated: 18.06.15 .....

## Summary Sheet

### Council Report

Corporate Parenting Panel

### Title

Support to Rotherham Care Leavers

### Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

### Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jane Parfremment

### Report Author(s)

Maryann Barton

Service manager Looked after children and Leaving Care

Children and young people's service

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### Ward(s) Affected

All

## Executive Summary

The support provided to young people leaving care is clearly defined within the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and its associated guidance for The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers

This paper sets out the support that Rotherham Council provides to young people leaving care, how we meet our statutory duties and provides examples of how this works with young people on a daily basis.

Financial support to care leavers is reviewed on an annual basis in preparation for each financial year.

## Recommendations

- 1.1 That the report is received and that Councillors are made aware of the support provided to Care Leavers from Rotherham.

1.2 That the annual review of financial support to care leavers is timetabled to be presented to Corporate parenting panel in preparation for the next financial year

1.3 That the corporate parenting panel notes the increase to the Leaving care grant for this financial year to £2000 which brings the support package into line with the advised minimum.

**List of Appendices Included**

None

**Background Papers**

None

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

No

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

**Title (Main Report)**  
**Leaving care Support Package**

**1. Recommendations**

1.2 That the report is received and that Councillors are made aware of the support provided to Care Leavers from Rotherham.

1.3 That the annual review of financial support to care leavers is timetabled to be presented to Corporate parenting panel in preparation for the next financial year.

1.4 That the corporate parenting panel notes the increase to the Leaving care grant for this financial year to £2000 which brings the support package into line with the current advised minimum.

**2. Background**

2.1 The support provided to young people leaving care is clearly defined within the Children (LEAVING CARE) Act 2000 and its associated guidance for The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers

This paper sets out the support that Rotherham Council provides to young people leaving care, how we meet our statutory duties and provides some examples of how this works with young people on a daily basis.

Financial support to care leavers is reviewed on an annual basis in preparation for each financial year.

**3. Key Issues**

**3.1 Support for Care leavers in Rotherham**

Statutory Framework

Support to care leavers is outlined in the Children (leaving care) Act 2000 and has to two main aims:

- To ensure that young people do not leave care until they are ready.
- To ensure that they receive effective support once they have left

When considering the support to our care leavers it is useful to consider the question 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

Who are Care Leavers?

The act categorises young people leaving care and outlines what support they are entitled to

Eligible

Young People who are still in care aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for (a total of) at least 13 weeks from the age of 14.

Relevant

Young People who are aged 16 or 17 who have already left care, and who were looked after for (a total of) at least 13 weeks from the age of 14, and have been looked after at some time while 16 or 17.

Former Relevant

Young People who are aged 18-21 who have been eligible and/or relevant Children In Care.

Qualifying care leavers

Young people who were in care after the age of 16 but who are not eligible or relevant because they did not fulfil the 13 week criteria.

These care leavers must be under 21, (or 25 if they are in further education or training).

Or they are Young people who are aged 16-21 who are under a Special Guardianship Order or a Special Guardianship Order was in place when the person turned 18 and the person was looked after by the Local Authority immediately before the Special Guardianship Order was made.

Duties of the local authority

Aged 16-18

- Duty to ensure that a pathway plan is in place by 16years and 3 months.
- Duty to undertake a needs assessment of each young person leaving care.
- Duty to undertake an assessment of the young person's financial needs and provide support
- Duty to provide a Personal Adviser
- Duty to ensure appropriate accommodation is in place.

Aged 18-21

- Duty to maintain regular contact with the young person and to provide support through a Personal Adviser
- Duty to assist with the costs of education, employment and training
- Duty to regularly review the pathway plan to ensure it is meeting the young person's needs.

Aged 21 and over

- Duty to continue to support young people if they are still in education or training and they wish to receive support.
- Duty to ensure vacation accommodation is in place for those in higher education



The same Duties do not apply to Qualifying Young people.

For these young people there are duties to offer;

- Advice and assistance when requested.
- Financial Assistance where there is an assessed need.
- Where the person is in higher education or training, assistance in securing vacation accommodation

### 3.2 Current Rotherham Provision

Rotherham has its own dedicated Leaving Care Team that works with Eligible, Relevant, Former relevant and Qualifying young people.

The team consists of both qualified social workers and personal advisors. Personal advisors come from a variety of backgrounds but are all experienced in working with and supporting young people.

The leaving care team currently has 9.2 FTE Personal advisors, 2 of which are social work qualified and 1 Team manager. The team is currently supporting 198 young people.

Numbers of young people leaving care are currently projected to sit between 200 and 220 young people for the next couple of years.

Currently personal advisors hold caseloads ranging from 22 to 24 young people. Nationally case loads within leaving care services are around 18 to 20 young people. In addition the team manager has a high number of supervisees.

To ensure sufficient capacity and skills mix within the service along with robust management oversight a review has commenced of the structure and staffing of the leaving care service. This review should be completed by the end of December 2015.

### 3.3 Assessment and Planning

Qualified social workers undertake the assessment of each eligible and relevant child (those under 18years).

For those young people who are Looked after, this is undertaken by their allocated social worker. Where young people have left care but are still under 18 years the social workers within the Leaving care team undertake the assessment for the Pathway plan.

The Young Person must be involved in the preparation and review of this assessment and their views, wishes and feelings should be included and listened to throughout.

All young people leaving care should have a Pathway plan that is reviewed with the personal advisor on a regular basis (at least every 6 months or sooner if requested by the young person or the needs have changed). The Plan should be informed by the assessment and should detail how these needs will be met until the age of 21 (or longer when the Young Person is in education or training).

Pathway plans **must** include information on;

- Accommodation

- Practical life skills
- Education and training
- Employment
- Financial support
- Specific support needs e.g. Health and Family
- Contingency plans for support if independent living breaks down

### **3.4 Personal Advisor**

All Eligible, Relevant and Former relevant Young people **must** have a named, allocated Personal Adviser. Qualifying young people do have to have a named and allocated Personal Advisor or a Pathway plan unless they request it.

Personal advisors work with young people to establish a positive working relationship and to effectively support the young person in achieving the targets in their Pathway plan.

Personal advisors are responsible for working with the young person to;

- Provide advice and support, including supporting with practical tasks
- Draw up the pathway plan and ensure it addresses any changing needs
- Keep in touch
- Co-ordinate services, link in and advocate with other agencies

### **3.5 Financial support and claiming benefits**

Personal advisors are required to ensure that young people have had an appropriate financial assessment as part of their assessment and pathway plan and that they are supported to access benefits or are directly supported by the Local authority.

Most 16/17 year old care leavers will not be able to claim benefits, therefore, for as long as a Young Person is a relevant child the responsible Local Authority will be their primary source of income.

Where young people aged less than 18 years are living in Semi Independence or supported accommodation the local authority provides financial assistance to meet accommodation costs.

### **Weekly Living Allowance**

Young people aged 16/17 who have left care **or** who are living in Semi or supported living cannot claim benefits. In these cases the local authority provides them with a weekly allowance that is equal to a benefits payment.

The current weekly allowance is £57.90 and this is usually paid directly into a young person's bank account.

Personal advisors support young people to set up a bank account if they do not already have one and a key part of the role of a personal advisor is working with the young person to ensure that they have the appropriate budgeting and financial literacy skills.

In Rotherham the leaving care team have developed a specific resource to assist young people with their transition to independence which has targeted modules on finance. This is called the Moving on Toolkit.

Financial assistance can also be provided in a way that meets the young person's needs, for example a service charge for accommodation may be deducted directly to ensure payment, shopping may be supported or payments could be given directly to the young person or split into payments across the week.

### **Accommodation**

Accommodation costs for those under 18 are met by the Local authority. Personal advisors must work with the young person to ensure that their accommodation is suitable and safe to live in.

Young people leaving care are given priority status on Rotherham's local housing register and when they are assessed as being ready for their own tenancy they will be supported to attend the councils 'moving on' panel.

This panel considers the application for housing and priority status and ensures that appropriate support is in place to guide them through the bidding and allocation process. All young people accessing housing through this panel must agree to tenancy support for at least 3 months.

Where a young person lives in another authority the personal advisor will assist and support the young person to navigate the appropriate housing pathway and access support.

When a young person turns 18yrs old they are supported to claim relevant benefits where required.

Young people who are in part time or low paid employment should not be disadvantaged and all young people will be encouraged to work where appropriate and possible.

Where needed the young person's financial situation would be assessed and the local authority may continue to contribute towards accommodation costs.

Young people who progress to Higher Education are supported with accommodation for 52 weeks of the year.

In Rotherham we are fortunate to have several bespoke accommodation options for our young people leaving care.

Young people who have been living in foster care and wish to remain beyond 18 years old can be supported to 'stay put' through the supported lodgings scheme. Last year all of our 18 year olds who were living with RMBC foster carers chose to 'stay put' with their foster carer's.

We have 2 specialist accommodation projects for young people leaving care in Rotherham; both of these are operated by RMBC.

Nelson Street has 6 bedsit style rooms with shared bathroom facilities.

Hollowgate consists of 10 self-contained flats (2 are 2 bedroom flats). The accommodation needs significant refurbishment and is not in the model of accommodation normally in Leaving Care Services.

The accommodation team provides support to the young people who are residents around their tenancy and independent living skills.

This team has developed the local authorities 'moving on toolkit' which was recognised as an area of good practice by ofsted in 2014. The toolkit supports the young people to evidence their progression towards independence. (A copy of the toolkit will be available at the meeting to review)

This team also provides tenancy support to young people in their own accommodation and dispersed properties.

### **Setting up home Allowance/ Leaving care grant**

In Rotherham young people who have left care are entitled to a grant of £2000. This grant is to be utilised over the lifetime of support from the service and is used to purchase the essential items to furnish a home.

In practical terms this may mean that a small amount is accessed in the first instance when a young person moves into semi-independent or supported accommodation as some items and furnishings are provided. A larger amount would then being accessed when the young person is successful in getting a tenancy.

Spending from this grant has to be supervised and agreed to ensure that young people get all the essential items for the home. Personal advisors and accommodation support workers are vital to this as they often have well established contacts for affordable and suitable items.

### **Other needs**

The young person's assessment and Pathway plan may identify other financial needs. The leaving care team can provide support young people with assessed needs where appropriate.

This might include;

- Travel
- Family contact
- Clothing
- Childcare costs
- Education support costs
- Work support costs
- Health costs
- Prom/ Graduation costs.

### **3.6 Keeping in touch/ out of Area**

If we lose touch with a care leaver the personal advisor takes reasonable steps to re-establish contact with the young person and they will continue to do so until contact

is re-established or the young person confirms that they no longer wish to receive support.

We retain responsibility for our young people wherever they live. This means that Personal advisors will continue to support our young people if they move out of area. Young people are also entitled to short-term or emergency assistance from the authority they are living in. To support this the leaving care service always ensures that if our young person is living in a different area that they know where the local leaving care service is based and that the local area is informed that they are living there.

Contact is generally made with our young people at least once every 2 months; however this may be more or less frequent if identified in the pathway plan. This contact will include visiting the young person in their accommodation.

### **3.7 Education, Training and Employment**

This is a major focus for personal advisors and young people. Personal advisors work closely with the Virtual School and the Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS – connexions) to ensure that young people have a clear plan, encouragement and support to access Education, training and Employment.

Young people under the age of 18 are required to have a PEP (personal education plan) this is supported by Rotherham's virtual school. Young people can be supported to access Employability group work sessions to provide additional support and guidance where needed.

In Rotherham the local authority operates a flexible 30 day work program for young people leaving care. This is a guarantee that any Rotherham Care leaver will be matched to a work placement within the council should they wish to be. We have also been able to match young people to opportunities within other organisations and businesses.

The program is flexible in its approach as we recognise that young people may not be ready for the world of work and the commitments of 9-5, Monday to Friday. Young people may initially start out with one afternoon a week and build up to a regular pattern.

Young people are matched with suitable employees from across the council to mentor them throughout their time in work. A support plan is established which sets out the pattern of work and the tasks to be undertaken.

On completion the young person is provided with feedback and a letter to be placed alongside their CV.

We have a good number of young people in Education, training and Employment at around 71%. Whilst there is still room to progress this is above statistical neighbours and national average.

Currently the leaving care team tracks the progress of those young people who have progressed beyond Y11, in the future this role will be undertaken by the virtual school.

This year we had a number of young people who have achieved in their chosen courses of education and training and some young people who have progressed on to Higher education.

The table below highlights the achievements and progression of the young people who have completed academic courses this year.

<b><u>Young Person</u></b>	<b><u>Grades</u></b>	<b><u>Where they are going</u></b>
1	English A2 - C Business studies A2 – D General studies A2 – D Drama A2 - A	Currently on a year out and seeking employment.
2	Biology AS – U Physics AS – U Chemistry AS – U Maths AS - U	Resitting qualifications
3	Btec Engineering	Kingston University. Degree in Engineering
4	2:1 Degree in Geography	Undertaking a teaching qualification and working at Brinsworth Comprehensive.
5	Degree in Youth and Community work	Currently Seeking work
6	BTEC Applied Science	Sheffield Uni to study Law Degree
7	Degree in Public Services	Currently Seeking work
8	Veterinary Nursing level 3	Bishop Burton College to study for Level 4
9	Level 2 in Music and Drama	RCAT to study for Level 3 Music and Drama
10	Level 2 in Health and Social Care	Wolverhampton College to study for Level 3 Health and social care
12	Btec Law – A Distinction* Btec Health and social care -Distinction Sociology - U Government and Politics - U	Birmingham University to study Law and Criminology

We are very proud of all our young people and achievements in education, training and employment and we celebrate these with all corporate parents in the annual 16+ Achievement awards. This year's awards will take place on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

### **3.8 Duty/ Emergency support**

The Leaving care team provides a face to face duty/ drop in service for young people leaving care every week day. This is currently based in the Eric Mann's youth support building in the town centre. This is an essential service for young people leaving care as they require someone to talk to when they are in need, the leaving care team is able to provide emergency financial and Crisis support to young people throughout the week. Where there is a need the leaving care team will also work with colleges from the accommodation team to provide support to young people into the evening and at weekends.

### **3.9 Group Work and Other Opportunities**

The leaving care team provide opportunities for young people to participate in group work and activities with other young people leaving care.

Group work is targeted around themes to support young people e.g. employability or health.

Outings and events are also provided to ensure young people are able to enjoy social activities.

It is vital that the young people leaving care have a specific building where the service is based.

This base is the 'hub' of the service provision and is somewhere that young people can come to when in need or to 'drop in' to have contact with staff.

Young people leaving care do not always have positive links with their birth family or previous carers so it is vital that we can create a homely environment where they feel comfortable to drop into as we are their corporate family.

Currently the leaving care team services for young people are based in the Eric Mann's building and that staff team are in Riverside, this has led to problems as the team is not based with the service delivery.

Young people tell us that this isn't how they want their leaving care service to be, whilst they access the service they tell us that they don't feel that it is their building as it is shared with other services.

They tell us that they don't always feel comfortable in Eric Mann's and they don't feel that they can just drop in to see staff.

Young people tell us that they would like a like a building that is for young people leaving care only where they can drop in to

At the remit of the Eric Mann's building is changing we are currently looking to relocate the Leaving care service somewhere in the town centre. We have taken the young peoples and the teams wishes into account and we are currently undertaking a property search. RMBC do not currently have anything in their property portfolio that is suitable so we are currently looking for alternative venues.

National Leaving care week is an opportunity for the service to run a range of events and activities for young people.

This year leaving care week is from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> October. The focus is on improving emotional wellbeing and its connection with health and fitness.

The leaving care service is undertaking a range of activities with young people over care leaver's week including;

- Cinema trip
- The Great Bridges Bake Off
- Developing a young person's recipe book
- Participation in a regional football tournament.
- 10 pin bowling

Two of our young people have been successful in their application to take part in the Care to Cook workshop with Jamie Oliver and the apprentices at his restaurant 15 in London.

We have also contributed to the national leaving care forum's conference on managing risk and presented at the south Yorkshire Criminal justice boards event around leaving care. This event in particular has been useful in raising awareness of the needs of young people leaving care with colleges from adult services and probation.

### **3.10 Health**

The Specialist Looked after children's nursing team includes support to young people leaving care. Young people leaving care are able to access a health assessment if required from this team or can be supported to access their GP and universal health services.

There are also specialist young people's health services on offer from the Eric Mann's building where the leaving care service is based including, Sexual health, substance misuse and Youth Start. Personal advisors can support young people to access clinics and drop in sessions where required.

### **3.11 Case studies.**

The case study below demonstrate how this support is delivered to young people on a day to day basis.

The name of the young person has been changed to maintain their confidentiality.

#### James

James lives in specialist young peoples supported accommodation.

He moved into his accommodation when he was 17 and was managing well.

He was undertaking an apprenticeship but was concerned that when he became 18 he would not be able to pay his rent and utilities.

James's wage of £105 a week was not enough to cover all his rent and living expenses.

He had 3 months left to complete his apprenticeship and it was a real risk that he would end his course to claim benefits or seek out high cost loans.

James and his personal advisor worked together to do a detailed financial assessment and budgeting plan.

Together they were able to find some areas where James could budget and make some savings however this would have been a real struggle and it was unlikely that he would have kept to the plan without additional support for this amount of time.



The leaving care service supported James with a small 'top up' of £20 a week for the duration of his apprenticeship to ensure that he was able to maintain his accommodation and meet his living costs.

James's personal advisor referred him for increased tenancy support specifically to assist him with his weekly shop and keeping to his budgeting plan.

James successfully completed his apprenticeship and maintained his accommodation. James has since been successful in gaining employment.

Comments from James

'My PA (Personal advisor) is great; he got me the support I needed so I didn't lose my flat'

#### **4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

None

#### **5. Consultation**

RMBC Directorate Leadership Team 26/10/15

#### **6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

Not Applicable

#### **7. Financial and Procurement Implications**

7.1 Finance for care leavers is detailed within the councils leaving care financial guidance.

This guidance was updated in April 2015 and it requires annual review.

#### **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 RMBC must ensure that they are meeting their legal requirements under the Children (leaving care) Act 2000

#### **9. Human Resources Implications**

9.1 To ensure sufficient capacity and skills mix within the service along with robust management oversight a review has commenced of the structure and staffing of the leaving care service. This review should be completed by the end of December 2015.

## **10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

10.1 The Leaving care service provides advice, guidance and support directly to young people leaving care.

## **11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

11.1 Young people leaving care are one of the most vulnerable groups in our society

According to research they are:

- Three times more likely to be cautioned or convicted of an offence
- Four times more likely to have a mental health disorder
- Five times less likely to achieve five good GCSEs, eight times more likely to be excluded from school and less likely to go to university
- One in five homeless people are care leavers  
(DfES, 2007, Care Matters: Time for Change

The Leaving care service aims to support young people to mitigate against these risks by providing appropriate consistent support in the right way at the right time.

## **12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

12.1 In order for young people leaving care to be supported effectively partners and other directorates are required to provide services and ensure that Young people leaving care are supported by their corporate parent this is relevant to the whole council

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 Service for Care leavers is part of the ofsted inspection framework and as such carries a separate judgement; in 2014 this area of the service was graded as inadequate.

Focus on improvement and development of the service is required to ensure that progress is made and young people's outcomes are improved.

## **14. Accountable Officer(s)**

Jane Parfremment  
Director for safeguarding children and young people

Approvals Obtained from:- N/A

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- Named officer

Director of Legal Services:- Named officer

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):-

Maryann Barton. Service manager Looked after Children and Leaving care.

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<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>

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## Summary Sheet

**Council Report:**

Corporate Parenting Panel

**Title:**

Missing Children and Young People

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

No

**Director Approving Submission of the Report:**

Ian Thomas – Interim Strategic Director

**Report Author(s):**

Nancy Meehan, Head of Safeguarding and QA

**Ward(s) Affected:**

All

**Executive Summary:**

This report provides an update on the progress of improvements being undertaken to understand the patterns, trend and identify the vulnerabilities of young people who go missing.

**Recommendations:**

Board members are asked to note the update for missing children and young people and developments outlined in this report.

**List of Appendices Included:****Background Papers:**

None

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel:**

No

**Council Approval Required:**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public:**

No

**Title:** Corporate Parenting Missing Children and Young People Report

## **1. Recommendations**

1.1 Board members are asked to note the update for missing children and young people and developments outlined in this report

## **2. Background**

2.1 Rotherham, in common with all other areas of the country, has a number of children and young people under the age of 18 who go missing from home or placement each year. In addition there are those who absent themselves while thought to be in school or taking part in other supervised activities: the potential for harm to happen to such children is self-evident, now well documented and nationally acknowledged.

2.2 At the time of the inspection in August 2014 Ofsted found that procedures for identifying and tracking children missing from home were inadequate. Shortfalls were exemplified by the disparity between the missing episodes notified to children's social care and the completion of return home interviews. This missing information is significant and impacted on the ability of the local authority and its partners to identify trends and patterns in other CSE data and intelligence.

2.3 South Yorkshire Constabulary and the four local authorities served by it, have an agreed protocol for every child reported as, or discovered to be, missing from their usual residence. The ethos of the protocol is based on Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 which requires local authorities and other statutory partners to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including effective and realistic planning to prevent their going missing and, should this fail, to find and protect them when they do.

2.4 Since 1st August 2015 we have been building a fuller picture of missing incidents by using the raw data with inclusion of the information from the Return Home Interviews (RHI's) and our pre-existing individual records in respect of each child. This is in the form of a 'tracker' spreadsheet. This is the first time we have been able to analyse the data to this level to identify trends and patterns. The data gathered covers the period from August to October 2015 and work is being undertaken to retrospectively build a picture back to April 2015 to give year to date. The development of the tracker this is still "work in progress".

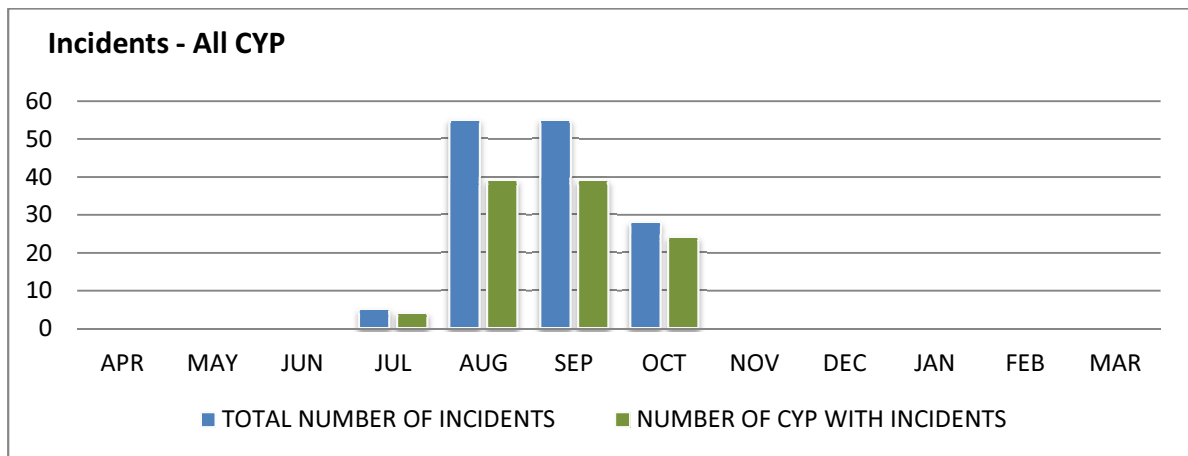
## **3 Key Issues**

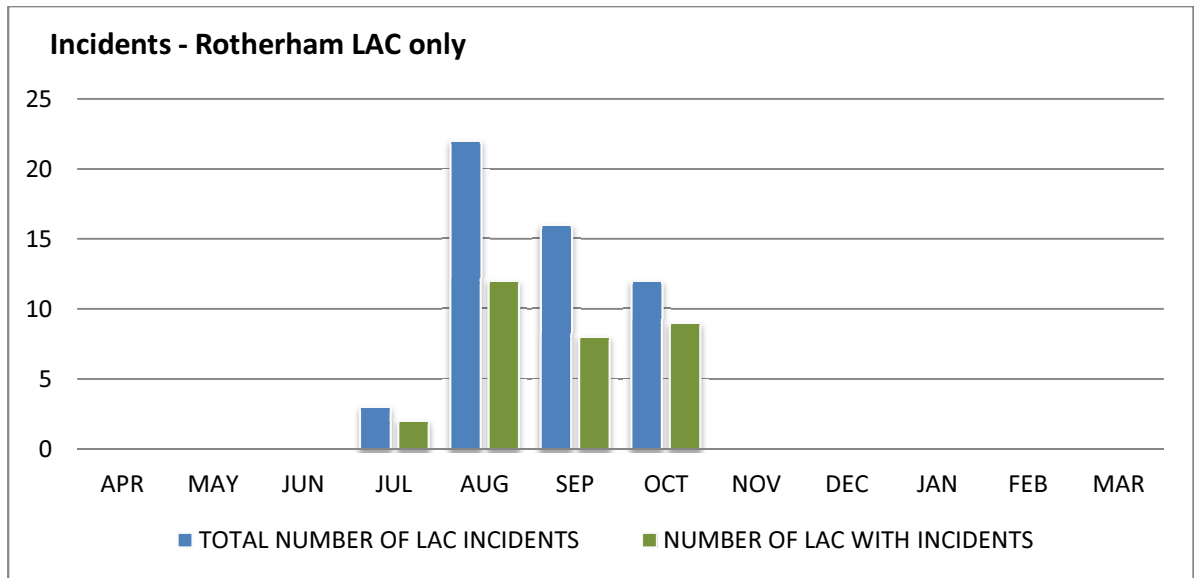
3.1 Analysis of the data gathered in the 'Tracker' tells us that the cohort of young people in Rotherham who go missing are generally in the upper age range of childhood but nevertheless should be responded to as diligently, carefully and responsibly as we would younger children.

- 3.2 A designated senior officer in the local authority has the responsibility for monitoring policies and the effectiveness of their implementation for all aspects of children going missing. This post (Missing Co-ordinator) is currently filled by Jean Gunn who has a safeguarding background with experience of CSE, children who go missing and Human Trafficking.
- 3.3 Those that come to the attention of the local authority for other reasons who have run away but whose parents or carers have not reported as missing are particularly vulnerable.
- 3.4 We know from research and from the reporting of the Office of the Children's Commissioner that children from BME communities together with those who are not in education are less likely to be reported missing. Within Rotherham part of the tracking and monitoring system established is to liaise with colleagues from education in order to ensure we are aware of which children that not only are missing from home but are also known due to 'Children Missing Education' (CME), attendance or exclusion issues. Making the connections where they exist between these groups and vulnerable groups known to the youth offending service and to health colleagues for example will improve our understanding about the factors that increase the likelihood of children going missing.
- 3.5 Vulnerabilities are identified from each missing episode relating to CSE, Children Missing Education (CME), criminal activity and those where there are education welfare issues.
- 3.6 Trafficking of children within the UK is increasing for which statutory agencies also have responsibilities. Rotherham MBC has acknowledged the seriousness of these issues and having a designated officer within safeguarding is an important step in achieving a service that understands the importance of early identification and a timely response. The causal link between Missing From Home (MFH) and Child Sexual Exploitation is proven and intuitive. Children going missing for the first time may have not previously been victims of CSE but their vulnerability is readily recognised by all predators, including some of their peers. There are close links with the Rotherham CSE team, EVOLVE and a sharing of the present data of missing to identify those children that are also known to be at risk of CSE is now in place.
- 3.7 Government guidance requires local authorities to record the numbers of children reported missing and regularly analyse the data to look for trends and to identify locations that attract unsupervised young people and thereby also those who wish to exploit them. Since the 1st August 2015 the Safeguarding Unit have established a tracking mechanism, which although in its infancy, has started to identify this information, this is shared with the Evolve team and will support any intelligence obtained by the police in respect of "hot spots".
- 3.8 Every professional who works to prevent children going missing needs an understanding of the likely underlying causes that motivate them to stay away from what should be a safe and secure base, together with that of the ability to recognise indicators of vulnerability, such as naivety, rebelliousness, perversity, propensity to 'hang out' in places that have earned notoriety etc. The Missing Co-ordinator has now established links to the Education, CAMHS, and Children's Homes and South Yorkshire Police. Information is now being obtained in relation

to where children are ‘running from’ and also where they are being located. This information will be shared with partner agencies to be able to recognise and understand patterns and trends of missing.

3.9 The protocol for children who go missing agreed between the Borough Council and the South Yorkshire Constabulary creates a service structure and defines how we work together. There are other statutory partners with their own distinct roles and responsibilities who are also called upon to contribute. Preventing children going missing and thereby removing the inherent risks of this is an important element in the overall aim of shielding them from harm. The table and graphs below refers to the number of children reported missing in recent months, this is separated into; all incidents and is further filtered to show how many children this relates to and subsequently of these how many were children who are looked after by the local authority and by virtue of this, those we have specific corporate parenting responsibility for.







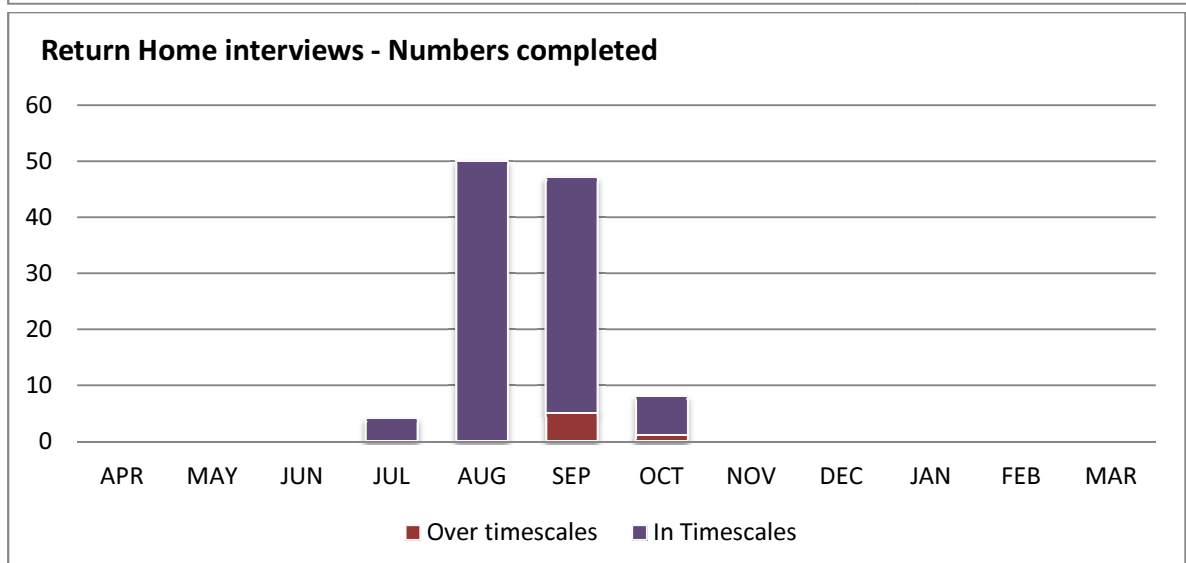
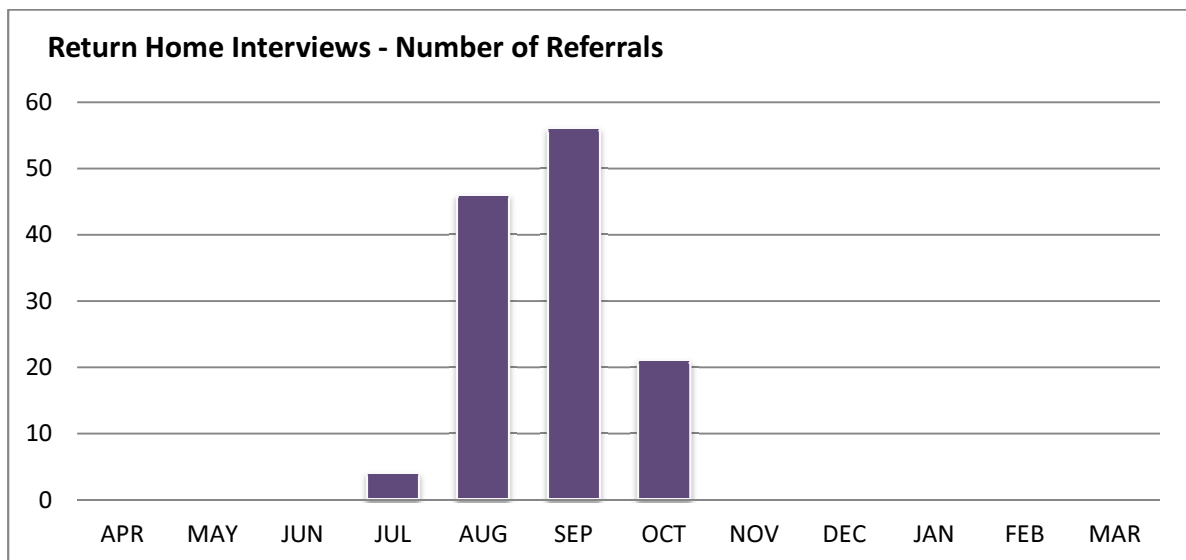
		APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV
INCIDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF INCIDENTS					55	55	28	
	NUMBER OF CYP WITH INCIDENTS					39	39	24	
	TOTAL NUMBER OF LAC INCIDENTS					22	16	12	
	NUMBER OF LAC WITH INCIDENTS					12	8	9	
RETURN HOME INTERVIEWS	NUMBER OF REFERRALS					46	56	21	
	NUMBER COMPLETED					50	47	8	
	NUMBER COMPLETED WITHIN 3 DAYS OF FOUND					50	42	7	
	% COMPLETED WITHIN 3 DAYS OF FOUND					100.0%	89.4%	87.5%	

3.10 Return Home Interviews (RHI) are offered to every child which are of critical importance, require a particular skill-set and if well-conducted reveal the information necessary for our therapeutic and preventive planning in safeguarding these vulnerable children. Upon return from going missing, as much relevant information as possible is gathered about the child covering the child's personal and family history, health and education status, overall and particular home circumstances, social habits and behaviour and any significant recent possibly aetiological factors in respect of the child's decision to go missing

itself. In other words, we attempt to paint an accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the nature of the child and of his or her life.

RHIs were offered to all but a number, not unusually, declined. The crucial importance of the RHI to our work is such that we need to significantly reduce this refusal rate and more determinedly pursue those who do refuse.

Interviews have been conducted by the Independent Youth Service (IYYS) in Rotherham. The significant advantage of this approach lies in the hands-on knowledge, experience and abilities of these Youth Workers, who understand the safeguarding element of what they do. The quality of these RHIs is assured by the lead person for the missing children service to whom they go in the first instance. Any issues arising from the RHI will be communicated to the worker and manager to address.



The co-ordination of the service is beginning to yield some benefits in the understanding of the scale of the problem and in the recognition of recurrent features.

A survey of 50 RHIs is under way. It is a detailed piece of work and is intended to inform planning and understanding of why children go missing and in due course to reduce the number of missing children and the associated risks. Any themes from this work will be communicated to the relevant agencies, thereafter an action plan with timescales compiled to address areas of need and risk.

#### **4 Options considered and recommended proposal**

There are no options to consider in relation to this report.

#### **5 Consultation**

This report as already been considered by the Improvement Board.

#### **6 Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

It is envisaged that during the next 6 weeks the data for the first quarter will also be collated in order that a comprehensive picture and report can be obtained from April 2015, which will give a more robust detailed analysis. From this point reports covering the year to date can be collated with clear analysis

#### **7 Financial and Procurement Implications**

There are no direct financial or procurement implications in relation to this report.

#### **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 There are no immediate legal implications associated with the proposals.

#### **9. Human Resources Implications**

9.1 There are no Human Resources implications associated with the proposals.

#### **10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

10.1 The progress and analysis provided in this report supports the delivery of the Improvement Plan and improved outcomes for children, young people and their families

#### **11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

11.1 Data is recorded routinely around ethnicity of children and young people who go missing and used to support service delivery and understanding of patterns and trends of young people and children who go missing.

#### **12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

Children Act 2004 requires local authorities and other statutory partners to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including

effective and realistic planning to prevent their going missing and, should this fail, to find and protect them when they do.

Capturing and sharing intelligence across Partner agencies is essential to understanding the patterns, trend and identify the vulnerabilities of young people who go missing.

### **13. Risks and Mitigation**

The development of procedures around missing children and young people, the tracking system now in place, the work of the missing coordinator and the protocol for children who go missing agreed between the Borough Council and the South Yorkshire Constabulary all contribute to reducing the safeguarding risk for children and young people and the local authority and partner agencies.

### **14. Accountable Officer(s):**

Nancy Meehan (*Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance*).

#### **Approvals Obtained from:-**

**Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services: Not applicable**

**Director of Legal Services: Not applicable**

**Head of Procurement (if appropriate): Not applicable**

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**Summary Sheet****Council Report:**

Corporate Parenting Panel

**Title:**

Corporate Parenting Performance Report

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?:**

No

**Director Approving Submission of the Report:**

Jane Parfremment, Director of Safeguarding

**Report Author(s):**

Sue Wilson, Head of Service, Performance &amp; Planning

**Ward(s) Affected:**

All

**Executive Summary:**

This report provides an update on the performance of services for looked after children as at the 30<sup>th</sup> August 2015. This report should be considered alongside the data reports attached.

The data presented within the attached report is a subset of the Safeguarding Children and Families Monthly Performance Report August 2015 and the weekly scorecard for Looked After Children and Care Leavers dated 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

**Recommendations:**

That the Panel consider the detail provided in the performance reports in relation to the services for looked after children and care leavers

**List of Appendices Included:****Background Papers:**

Corporate Parenting Performance Report 22nd September 2015

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel:**

No

**Council Approval Required:**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public:**

No

**Title:**

Corporate Parenting Performance Report

**1.Recommendations**

1.1 That the Panel consider the detail provided in the performance reports in relation to the services for looked after children and care leavers

**2.Background**

2.1 This report provides an updated summary of performance under key themes as at the end of August 2015 and also includes the weekly dashboard (13<sup>th</sup> October) that is presented to the CYPS Performance Meeting which specifically covers data and information in relation to Looked After Children and Care Leavers

A number of improvements have been made to the performance management arrangements for Safeguarding Children and Families services since the Ofsted Inspection of 2014 including this new suite of monthly performance information. This wider report has now been in place for 6 months and now this has become embedded work and we better understand our data work has begun to identify appropriate targets which will be included in future reports.

**3.Key Issues**

<b>Good &amp; improved performance (in Month) in relation to LAC</b>	<b>Areas of Concern this month</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Health and Dental assessments – 90.6% &amp; 94.1%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ LAC with up-to-date Personal Education Plans – 68.1%</li> </ul>

## 3.1 Key information:

**At the end of August 2015 there were 416 looked after children (compared with 423 in July 2015) which equates to 73.8 per 10k population. Although this is in line with our statistical neighbours it is higher than the national average and best performing LAs.**

The previous 3 months saw a rise in the number of admissions to care however this has levelled off and the number of children in care has decreased in August. Attention is being focussed on discharges from the care system the LAC service manager along with the Interim LAC improvement advisor is undertaking a review of cases to determine those children in care who could be secured permanence outside the care system for example through Special Guardianship Orders, Child Arrangement Orders and/or reunification with family members. The number of

children placed out of the Borough in independent placements is high and the strategy to reduce usage is multi-faceted and some measures for example foster care recruitment have long lead in times. Our new foster carer recruitment campaign is now completed and will be launched in coming weeks.

**3.2 At the end of August 2015 there were 98.3% of looked after children who had an upto date plan and 98.5% of those children preparing to leave care with a pathway plan.**

**3.3 At the end of August 2015 74.8 % of looked after children have had a stable placement for more than 2 years, with 9.1% of looked after children who had 3 or more moves.**

Our LAC placement stability is good when compared to national averages with 74.8% of long term LAC in the same placement for at least 2 years, compared to 67% nationally and only 9.1% of LAC having 3 or more placements in the last 12 months compared to 11.0%.

However performance will be examined closely as part of our strategy to reduce the number of children in out of authority placements. We need to ensure that stability does not mask case drift and result in children remaining looked after longer than necessary. Our sufficiency strategy identifies that we have too many children placed in residential care and we will need to shift that balance to have more children placed in a family setting. Every child in residential care will be reviewed by a senior manager over the coming months to ensure their care plans take account of their needs and consider whether it is possible and appropriate to plan for a move into a more appropriate family based setting. A new process for Team Around the Placement (TAP) meetings has been introduced to ensure that every support is put in to prevent placements disrupting

**3.4 At the end of August 2015 86.1% of looked after children had a review in timescale and 98.6% had been visited by their social worker in line with national minimum standards (with 90% within our local standards).**

**3.5 During the 5 months to the end of August 2015 there had been 18 children adopted with 13 of this within 12 months of their “should be placed for adoption” decision (SHOBPA) – 72.2%.**

Adoptions performance each month can vary significantly given the small numbers adopted every month. Therefore delays on single cases can make an impact on performance. But it is crucial that every child is matched to an adopter who can meet their needs, this family finding can be impacted by the complexities of these needs.

**3. 6 Performance in PEP’s has declined since April 2015 and is currently at 68.1% against the old local target of 6 monthly updates.** This is of concern, but linked to the changes and adjustment to new systems. This will be addressed in performance meetings with the management team and work has commenced to chase reports where PEP meetings have occurred. The completion of the PEP



moved to an E-PEP system in September (start of Autumn term) this should lead to an improvement as PEPs' will be created directly on the system rather than relying on workers placing the PEP onto the ESCR system as a word document. Work is being undertaken to ensure that all PEP's are schedule in to be completed or reviewed during the Autumn term with an aim to reach over 90% up to date PEP's during the term and thereafter. The new local standard in the new year will be termly updated PEP

#### **4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

There are no options to consider in relation to this report

#### **5. Consultation**

There are no areas required for consultation in relation to this report

#### **6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

6.1 There are no timescales in relation to any decision making in relation to this report and its contents

#### **7. Financial and Procurement Implications**

7.1 There are no specific financial implications in regard to the performance report itself, however supporting looked after child is a key priority and a current and recurring budget pressure, particularly in relation to the cost of those children and young people who are placed out of authority.

#### **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 There are no immediate legal implications associated with the proposals.

#### **9. Human Resources Implications**

9.1 There are no Human Resources implications associated with the proposals.

#### **10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

10.1 This report is to provide information to the Corporate Parenting Panel to ensure they have as much information as possible in relation to the numbers of and performance of services supporting looked after children and care leavers in Rotherham who are potentially one of the most vulnerable groups. As corporate parents of these children and young people it is important that the panel understand the information presented to help shape and improve services to them

## **11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

11.1 Data is recorded routinely around ethnicity of children and young people who are in the care of the local authority and is used in relation to their current and future placements and permanency.

## **12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

12.1 Corporate Parenting responsibility is more than just for elected members and staff and managers in Children & Young People's Services it is also important that key partners and other Directorates play a part in championing our young people and helping to improve their lives.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 Resources have been strengthened in relation to developing improved services for children and young people who are looked after in Rotherham.

13.2 A quality assurance framework has been developed to ensure that the quality of services for children and young people is regularly audited and assured.

## **14. Accountable Officer(s):**

Sue Wilson (*Head of Service, Performance & Planning*)

### **Approvals Obtained from:-**

**Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services: Not applicable**

**Director of Legal Services: Not applicable**

**Head of Procurement (if appropriate): Not applicable**

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# Looked After Children and Care Leavers Weekly Performance Report

**As at:** 13th October 2015

**Document Details**

**Status:**

**Date Created:**

**Created by:** Deborah Johnson, Performance Assurance Manager - Social Care

**Contact:** Ext. 22666 / [deborah.johnson@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:deborah.johnson@rotherham.gov.uk)

	NO.	INDICATOR	MONTH END DATA				CURRENT (13/10/15)	TREND LINE
			Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sept		
LAC Cohort	1.1	NUMBER OF <u>MAINSTREAM</u> LAC	420	425	416	414	414	
	1.2	NUMBER OF SHORT TERM BREAK LAC (V4)	32	33	33	34	33	
Legal status	2.1	NUMBER OF <u>MAINSTREAM</u> LAC - by legal status						
	2.1a	C1 - Interim care order	70 17%	82 19%	76 18%	68 16%	64 15%	
	2.1b	C2 - Full care order	228 54%	235 55%	235 56%	235 57%	236 57%	
	2.1c	E1 - Placement Order Granted	52 12%	50 12%	51 12%	49 12%	54 13%	
	2.1d	L1 - Under police protection in LA accom.	1 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	
	2.1e	J2 - Detained in LA accommodation under PACE	0 0%	1 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	
	2.1f	V2 - Single Period of Accommodated under section 20	69 16%	58 14%	54 13%	63 15%	61 15%	
Legal Proceedings	3.1	Number of Proceedings commenced	18	7	6	5	MONTHLY DATA	
	3.2a	Number of completed legal proceedings	5	17	11	7		
	3.2b	Number and % completed within 26 weeks	4 80%	17 100%	6 56%	7 56%		
	3.2c	Average time taken to complete (in weeks)	23.1	19.3	31.2	20.5		
	3.30	% of those completed where an order was granted	100%	100%	100%	86%		
	3.4a	Number of ongoing legal proceedings	71	68	61	57		
	3.4b	Number of ongoing legal proceedings past 26 weeks	10	11	9	10		
Placement Analysis	4.1	NUMBER OF <u>MAINSTREAM</u> LAC - by placement type (CCM)						
	4.1a	Fostering in House	175 42%	179 42%	174 42%	174 42%	173 42%	
	4.1b	Fostering - IFA	105 25%	102 24%	103 25%	103 25%	107 26%	
	4.1c	Fostering - Relative/Friend	16 4%	20 5%	22 5%	26 6%	22 5%	
	4.1d	Residential - In house	19 5%	15 4%	13 3%	12 3%	10 2%	
	4.1e	Residential - OOA	36 9%	37 9%	34 8%	36 9%	36 9%	
	4.1f	Placed for adoption (not current foster carer)	32 8%	23 5%	23 6%	21 5%	19 5%	

	NO.	INDICATOR	MONTH END DATA				CURRENT (13/10/15)	TREND LINE
			Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sept		
P	4.1g	Placed with parents	12 3%	23 5%	21 5%	15 4%	20 5%	
	4.1h	Independent	10 2%	9 2%	9 2%	8 2%	9 2%	
	4.1i	Other	15 4%	17 4%	17 4%	19 5%	18 4%	
	4.2	Total in a Commissioned Placement (supplied by Commissioning Team)	-	-	148	150	155	
Placement Performance	5.1	Long term LAC in placements which have been stable for at least 2 years	108/152	109/149	110/147	110/148	109/148	
			71.1%	73.2%	74.8%	74.3%	73.7%	
	5.2	LAC who have had 3 or more placements - rolling 12 months	41/417	38/423	37/416	38/416	34/415	
			9.8%	9.0%	8.9%	9.2%	10.8%	
	5.3	DISRUPTIONS						
	5.3a	Number of disruptions (placement breakdowns & unplanned moves) IFAs / independent Residential	10	4	1	2	0	
	5.3b	Number of disruptions (in-house fostering)	1	0	0	0	0	
	5.4	DISTANCE FROM HOME						
5.4a	Number and % of LAC in commissioned placements who are placed over 20 miles from home	-	-	55	57	58		
		-	-	37%	38%	37%		
5.4b	Number and % of <b>all</b> LAC placed over 20 miles from home	-	-	56	58	59	Data Warning: Validation work required of child home postcodes	
		-	-	13.5%	13.7%	14.3%		
5.5	Number of children in an inadequate provision		1	1	1	0	RS, Bluemountain provision in Derbyshire, search for alternative provision is ongoing. Notice has been given on placement.	
Foster Carers	6.1	Number of approved carer households - Total	170	172	173	172	170	
	6.1a	- of which are mainstream	161	163	164	163	161	
	6.1b	- of which are connected persons	9	9	9	9	9	
	6.2	Number of new Foster Carer approvals	2	2	1	1	0	
	6.3	Foster Carer resignations	0	0	0	1	2	
	6.4	Number and % of Long Term Fostering placements approved by panel	49	49	49	49	40	
47%			48%	47%	47%			
TEAM	7.01	Number of Fostering Enquiries	21	11	8	25	8	
	7.02	Number of active assessments						
	7.02a	- Mainstream	15	15	15	13	13	
	7.02b	- Reg 24	6	6	6	6	7	
	7.03	Number of Foster Carer reviews completed	19	13	14	14	not available	

	NO.	INDICATOR	MONTH END DATA				CURRENT (13/10/15)	TREND LINE
			Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sept		
FOSTERING	7.04	% of Foster Carer reviews in timescale	100%	100%	100%	100%	<i>not available</i>	
	7.05	% of Foster Carer's whose reviews are up-to-date (annual review process)				100%		
	7.06	% of Foster Carer with up-to-date Supervisory visits (every 6 weeks)				96%		
	7.07	Number of Allegations		0	1	1		
	7.08	Number of disruptions (in-house)	1	0	0	0	0	
	7.09	Numbers of 'staying put'	12	12	12	13	0	
Residential	8.1	Occupancy - Local residential homes (number of vacant beds)						
	8.1a	- St Edmunds (6 bed total)		0	0	1		
	8.1b	- Silverwood (5 bed total)		0	0	1		
	8.1c	- Woodview (6 bed total)		3	3	3		
	8.1d	- Cherry Tree (5 bed total)		3	3	3		
	8.1e	- Liberty House (224 available 'sessions' per 4wk month)		98	92	125		
	8.2	Number of homes with inspection outcomes which are not at least 'good'		2	2	2		<i>Woodview - Inadequate Cherry Tree - Adequate</i>
	8.3	Number of placement disruptions in local residential		0	1	4		

IDENTIFIED DATA DEVELOPMENTS

Timeliness of FC assessments (16 weeks?? Check)

Adoption breakdowns within 2yrs of adoption

CME/Education for LAC

**Children & Young People Services**



# **Safeguarding Children & Families Monthly Performance Report**

**As at Month End: August 2015**

**Document Details**

**Status:** Issue 3

**Date Created:** 25/09/2015

**Created by:** Deborah Johnson, Performance Assurance Manager - Social Care

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NO.	INDICATOR	TARGET	GOOD PERF IS	DATA NOTE (Monthly)	2015/16			Year to Date 15/16		DOT (Month on Month)	RAG	YR ON YR TREND		LATEST BENCHMARKING - 2013/14				
					Jun-15	Jul-15	CURRENT Aug-15	YTD	DATA NOTE			2013/14	2014/15	STAT NEIGH AVE	BEST STAT NEIGH	NAT AVE	NAT TOP Q TILE THRESHOL D	
LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN	7.1	Number of Looked After Children	n/a	Info	Count	417	423	416			↓	n/a		407				
	7.2	Rate of Looked After Children per 10,000 population aged under 18	n/a	Info	Rate per 10,000	73.9	75.0	73.8			↓	n/a	70	70	73.5	46.0	60.0	-
	7.3	Admissions of Looked After Children			Count	22	25	6	87	Financial Year	↓	n/a	147	175				
	7.4	Number of children who have ceased to be Looked After Children			Count	17	20	9	83	Financial Year	↓	n/a	136	160				
	7.5	Number & Percentage of LAC who have ceased to be looked after due to permanence (Special Guardianship Order, Residence Order, Adoption)		High	Percentage	3 17.6%	8 40.0%	5 55.6%	30 36.14%	Financial Year	↑	n/a	55 40.44%	60 37.50%				
	7.6	LAC cases reviewed within timescales	98%	High	Percentage	95/103 92.2%	105/115 91.3%	31/36 86.1%	300/338 88.8%	Financial Year	↓	Red	98.6%	352/371 94.9%				
	7.7	Percentage of children adopted			Percentage	2 11.8%	8 40.0%	1 11.1%	17 20.5%	Financial Year	↓	n/a	26.5%	26.3%	22.7%	32.0%	17.0%	21.0%
	7.8	Health of Looked After Children - up to date Health Assessments	88%	High	Percentage	92.1%	89.9%	90.6%			↑	Green	82.7%	81.4%				
	7.9	Health of Looked After Children - up to date Dental Assessments	84%	High	Percentage	86.6%	94.1%	94.1%			→	Green	42.5%	58.8%				
	7.10	% of LAC with a PEP		High	Percentage	94.5%	93.2%	92.9%			↓	n/a	65.7%	68.7%				
	7.11	% of LAC with up to date PEPs	90%	High	Percentage	76.3%	75.0%	68.1%			↓	Red	72.9%	71.4%				
	7.12	% of eligible LAC with an up to date plan	80%	High	Percentage	95.5%	98.8%	98.3%			↑	Green	67.0%	98.8%				
	7.13	% LAC visits up to date & completed within timescale - National Minimum standard		High	Percentage	94.0%	99.3%	98.6%			↓	n/a		94.9%				
	7.14	% LAC visits up to date & completed within timescale - Rotherham standard		High	Percentage	76.0%	91.3%	90.0%			↓	n/a		64.0%				
CARE LEAVERS	8.1	Number of care leavers	n/a	Info	Count	198	190	198			↑	n/a		183				
	8.2	% of eligible LAC with an up to date pathway plan	98%	High	Percentage	92.8%	94.2%	98.5%			↑	Yellow		69.8%				
	8.3	% of care leavers in suitable accommodation	95%	High	Percentage	98.0%	98.4%	98.0%			↓	Green	96.3%	97.8%	74.2%	100.0%	77.8%	90.0%
	8.4	% of care leavers in employment, education or training	65%	High	Percentage	70.8%	71.6%	73.2%			↑	Green	52.3%	71.0%	40.8%	65.0%	45.0%	55.8%
PLACEMENTS	9.1	% of long term LAC in placements which have been stable for at least 2 years	70%	High	Percentage	108/152 71.1%	109/149 73.2%	110/147 74.8%			↑	Green	68.8%	110/153 71.9%	67.6%	79.0%	67.0%	71.1%
	9.2	% of LAC who have had 3 or more placements - rolling 12 months	10%	Low	Percentage	41/417 9.8%	39/422 9.2%	38/419 9.1%			↑	Green	11.2%	49/409 12.0%	9.6%	7.0%	11.0%	9.0%
ADOPTIONS	10.1	% of adoptions completed within 12 months of SHOBPA		High	Percentage	1 / 2 50%	6 / 8 82.1%	1 / 2 50.0%	13 / 18 72.2%	Financial Year	n/a	n/a	55.6%	84.6%				
	10.2	Average number of days between a child becoming Looked After and having a adoption placement (A1) (Rolling 12 months)	487	Low	Rolling year - ave count	399.6	379.7	384.2	417.9	Financial Year	↓	Green	661	417.5	507.3	328.0	525.0	468.0
	10.3	Average number of days between a placement order and being matched with an adoptive family (A2) (Rolling 12 months)	121	Low	Rolling year - ave count	148.9	139.6	144.7	175.4	Financial Year	↓	Red	315	177.3	217.1	45.0	217.0	163.0



# PLANS - IN DATE

## DEFINITION

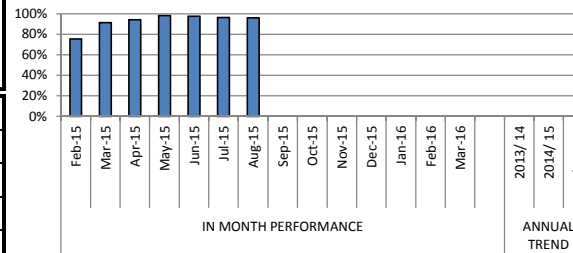
A child's plan is to be developed for an individual child if they have a "wellbeing need" that requires a targeted intervention. Each type of plan has a completion target. When a Looked After Child reaches 16 years and 3 months they become eligible for a 'Pathway Plan' - this plan focuses on preparing a young person for adulthood and their future (For example; future accommodation, post 16 Education/Training and Employment)

## PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

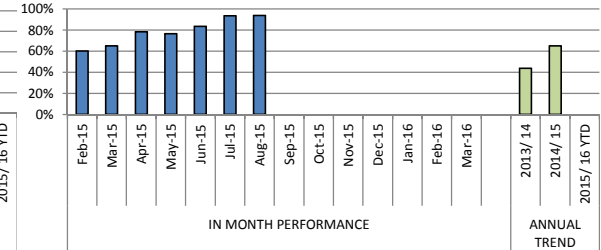
There has been a marked improvement in the children in need with up to date plans. With all plans the exceptions are reviewed at the weekly performance meetings so the reasons for an absence of a plan is clearly understood by senior managers. Performance in relation to Plans for Looked After Children and care leavers has also improved. Absence of an up to date LAC plan in almost all cases has been due to the presence of an alternative plan - for example the child has had a pathway plan put in place as they have reached age 16 years and 3 months or because the correct process has not been followed on the IT system to link the document to the section where data is extracted. Pathway plans completion have steadily risen over the last quarter. The next few months will be concentrating on the quality of the plans that are in place and the quality of the work which the plans should be driving. The remits of both the locality and looked after children teams are being adjusted in order to enable social workers to develop a more specialist approach to distinct areas of work and the move towards embedding the Strengthening Families model is expected to contribute to the improvement in the quality of plans generally that is required.

		5.4	5.5	6.13	7.12	8.2
		CIN with a recorded plan (open at least 45 days)	CIN with an up-to-date plan (open at least 45 days)	CPP with an up to date plan	LAC with an up to date plan	Eligible LAC with an up to date pathway plan
IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Feb-15	75.4%	60.3%	97.8%	92.9%	67.2%
	Mar-15	91.4%	65.1%	97.6%	98.8%	69.8%
	Apr-15	94.1%	78.3%	97.0%	94.1%	77.6%
	May-15	98.3%	76.5%	100.0%	94.3%	85.2%
	Jun-15	97.7%	83.5%	100.0%	95.5%	92.8%
	Jul-15	96.2%	93.5%	99.2%	98.8%	94.2%
	Aug-15	96.1%	93.8%	100.0%	98.3%	98.5%
	Sep-15					
	Oct-15					
	Nov-15					
	Dec-15					
	Jan-16					
	Feb-16					
Mar-16						
ANNUAL TREND	2013/14		43.8%		67.0%	
	2014/15		65.1%	97.6%	98.8%	69.8%
	2015/16 YTD					
LATEST BENCHMARKING	SN AVE					
	BEST SN					
	NAT AVE					
	NAT TOP Q TILE					

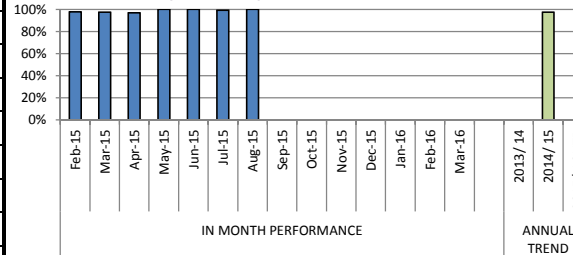
CIN with a recorded plan - open at least 45 days



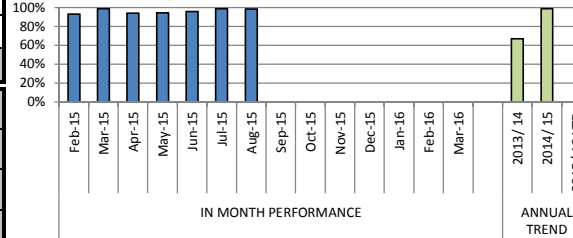
CIN with an up-to-date plan - open at least 45 days



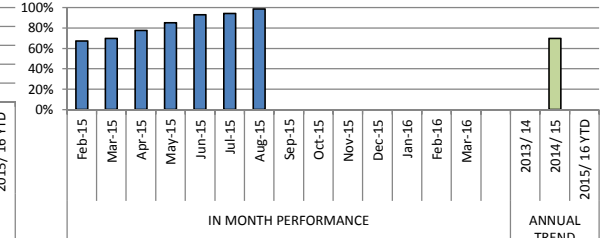
CPP with an up to date plan



LAC with an up to date plan



LAC with an up to date pathway plan

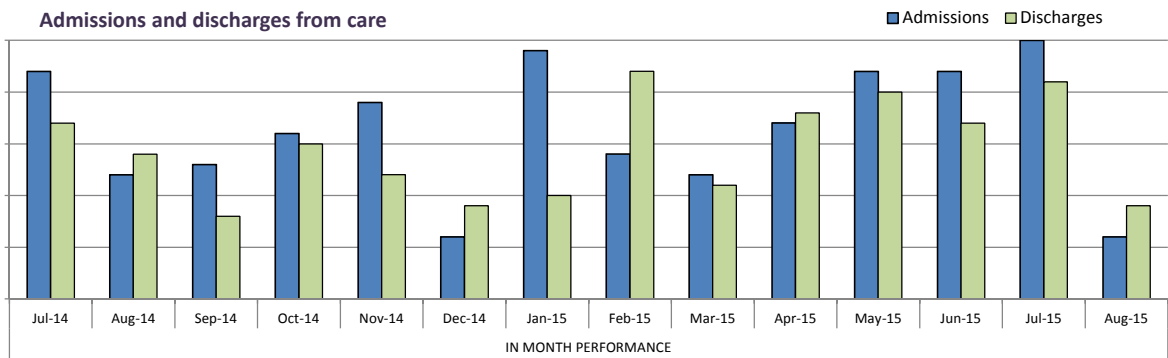
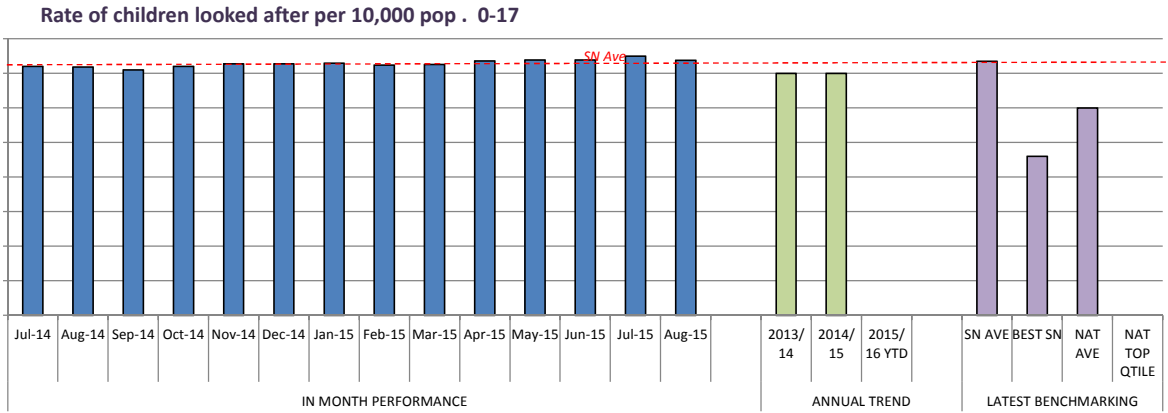


# LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

**DEFINITION** Children in care or looked after children are children who have become the responsibility of the local authority. This can happen voluntarily by parents struggling to cope or through an intervention by children's services because a child is at risk of significant harm.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** Although the numbers of LAC are in line with our statistical neighbours they are higher than the national average and best performing LAs. They are also steadily rising which is a concern. Early help arrangements need to be strengthened over time to prevent the need for children to come into care this is part of the departmental strategy. The previous 3 months saw a rise in the number of admissions to care however this has levelled off and the number of children in care has decreased in August. Attention is being focussed on discharges from the care system the LAC service manager along with the Interim LAC improvement advisor is undertaking a review of cases to determine those children in care who could be secured permanence outside the care system for example through Special Guardianship Orders, Child Arrangement Orders and/or reunification with family members. The number of children placed out of the Borough in independent placements is high and the strategy to reduce usage is multi-faceted and some measures for example foster care recruitment have long lead in times. Our new foster carer recruitment campaign is now completed and will be launched in coming weeks.

		7.2	7.1	7.3	7.4
		Rate of children looked after per 10K pop	Number of LAC	Admissions of children looked after	No. of children who have ceased to be LAC
<b>IN MONTH PERFORMANCE</b>	Jul-14	72.0	404	22	17
	Aug-14	71.8	403	12	14
	Sep-14	70.9	398	13	8
	Oct-14	72.0	404	16	15
	Nov-14	72.7	408	19	12
	Dec-14	72.7	408	6	9
	Jan-15	72.9	409	24	10
	Feb-15	72.4	406	14	22
	Mar-15	72.5	407	12	11
	Apr-15	73.6	415	17	18
	May-15	73.9	417	22	20
	Jun-15	73.9	417	22	17
Jul-15	75.0	423	25	21	
Aug-15	73.8	416	6	9	
<b>ANNUAL TREND</b>	2013/ 14	70.0		147	136
	2014/ 15	70.0		175	160
	2015/ 16 YTD			87	83
<b>LATEST BENCHMARKING</b>	SN AVE	73.5			
	BEST SN	46.0			
	NAT AVE	60.0			
	NAT TOP QTILE	-			

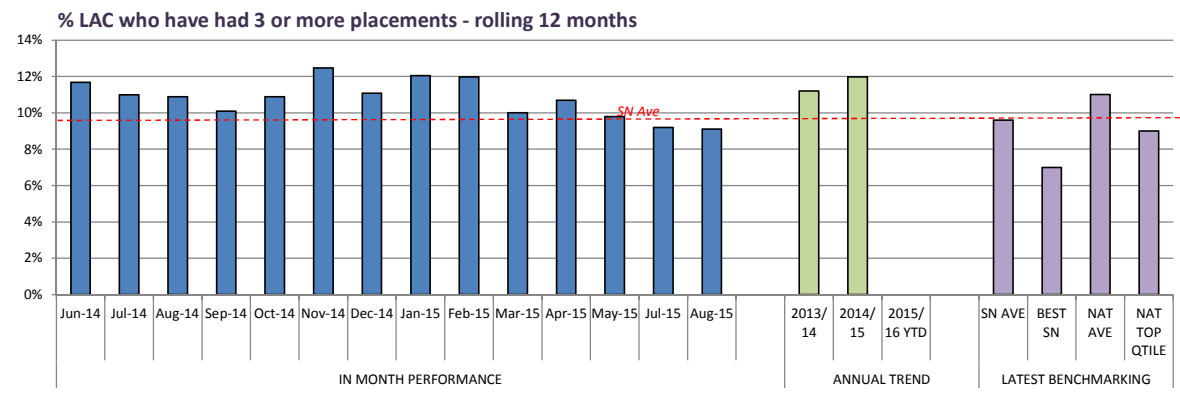
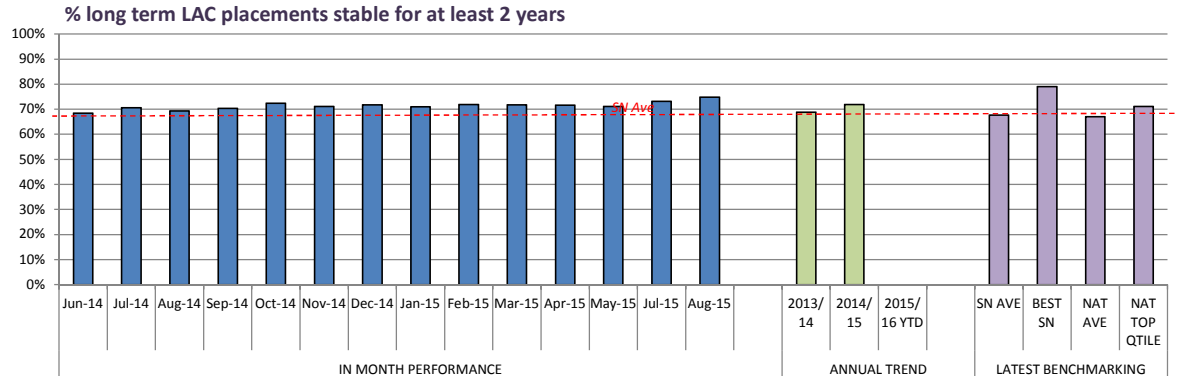


# LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - PLACEMENTS

**DEFINITION** A LAC placement is where a child has become the responsibility of the local authority (LAC) and is placed with foster carers, in residential homes or with parents or other relatives.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** Performance in relation to LAC stability will be examined closely as part of our strategy to reduce the number of children in out of authority placements. We need to ensure that stability does not mask case drift and result in children remaining looked after longer than necessary. We are also aware that data quality related to recording of missing episodes may impact on the '3 or more moves stability' indicator. There is specific work being undertaken in relation to this over the next month and it is possible that once this is corrected this indicator may deteriorate. Our sufficiency strategy identifies that we have too many children placed in residential care and we will need to shift that balance to have more children placed in a family setting. Every child in residential care will be reviewed by a senior manager over the coming months to ensure their care plans take account of their needs and consider whether it is possible and appropriate to plan for a move into a more appropriate family based setting. A new process for Team Around the Placement (TAP) meetings has been introduced to ensure that every support is put in to prevent placements disrupting

		9.1		9.2	
		No. of long term LAC placements stable for at least 2 years	% long term LAC placements stable for at least 2 years	No. of LAC who have had 3 or more placements - rolling 12 months	% LAC who have had 3 or more placements - rolling 12 months
<b>IN MONTH PERFORMANCE</b>	Jun-14	113 of 165	68.5%	46 of 394	11.7%
	Jul-14	115 of 163	70.6%	43 of 391	11.0%
	Aug-14	113 of 163	69.3%	43 of 395	10.9%
	Sep-14	114 of 162	70.4%	40 of 396	10.1%
	Oct-14	115 of 159	72.3%	44 of 404	10.9%
	Nov-14	111 of 156	71.2%	50 of 401	12.5%
	Dec-14	109 of 152	71.7%	46 of 415	11.1%
	Jan-15	105 of 148	71.0%	49 of 407	12.0%
	Feb-15	110 of 153	71.9%	49 of 409	12.0%
	Mar-15	109 of 152	71.7%	41 of 409	10.0%
	Apr-15	106 of 148	71.6%	44 of 412	10.7%
	May-15	108 of 152	71.1%	41 of 417	9.8%
	Jul-15	109 of 149	73.2%	38 of 422	9.2%
Aug-15	110 of 147	74.8%	38 of 419	9.1%	
<b>ANNUAL TREND</b>	2013/ 14	108 of 157	68.8%	44 of 393	11.2%
	2014/ 15	110 of 153	71.9%	49 of 409	12.0%
	2015/ 16 YTD				
<b>LATEST BENCHMARKING</b>	SN AVE		67.6%		9.6%
	BEST SN		79.0%		7.0%
	NAT AVE		67.0%		11.0%
	NAT TOP Q TILE		71.1%		9.0%

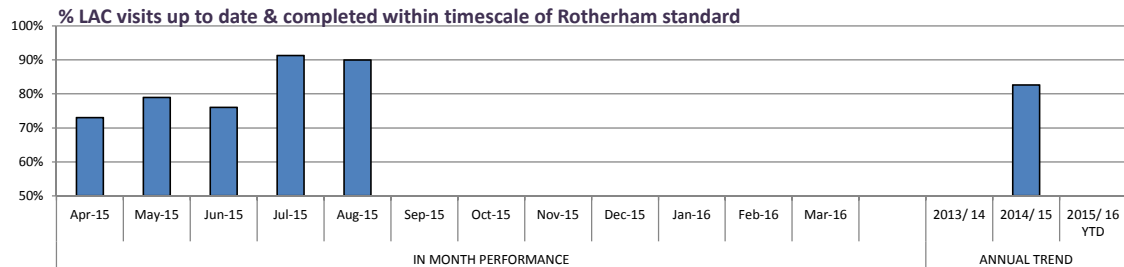
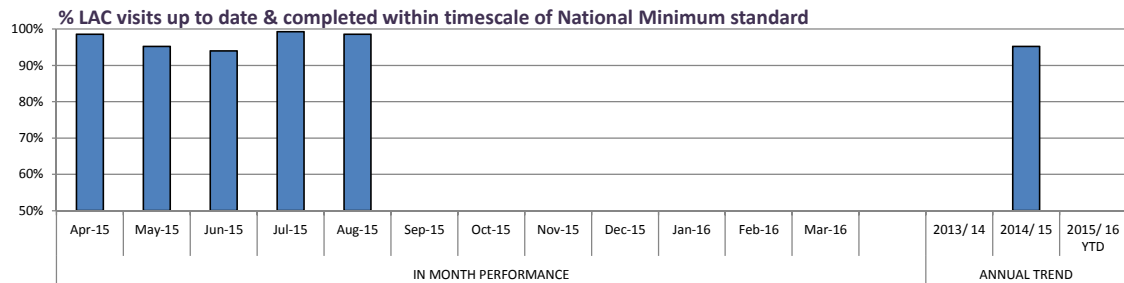
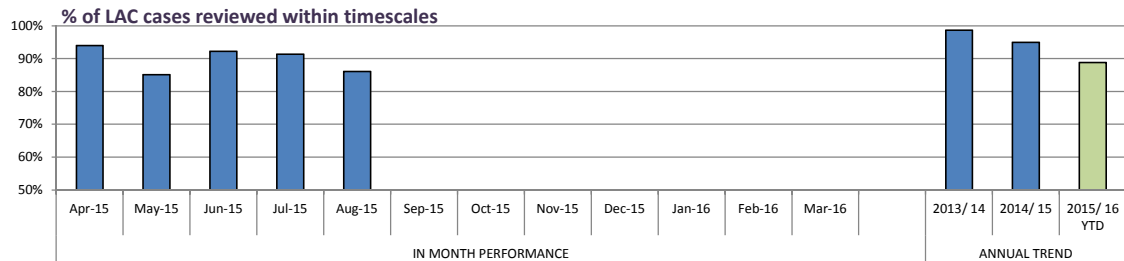


# LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - REVIEWS & VISITS

**DEFINITION**  
 The purpose of LAC review meeting is to consider the plan for the welfare of the looked after child and achieve Permanence for them within a timescale that meets their needs. The review is chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer(IRO)  
 The LA is also responsible for appointing a representative to visit the child wherever he or she is living to ensure that his/her welfare continues to be safeguarded and promoted. The minimum national timescales for visits is within one week of placement, then 6 weekly until the child has been in placement for a year and the 12 weekly thereafter. Rotherham have set a higher standard of within first week then 4 weekly thereafter until the child has been permanently matched to the placement.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**  
 LAC Reviews: The figures state that 5 children's reviews were completed in August that are out of timescale. In all 5 instances the reviews were commenced in timescale and run as a series of meetings. In 4 of these the issues were related to the social worker being absent or the correct information not being available for the review, so it could not be fully completed. These cases have been addressed with the workers and Team managers. To address these issues, LAC reviews are now being planned at 5 months rather than 6, to give time for meetings to be rearranged and completed, even if they need to be stood down to support a thorough and robust review. The 5th meeting case was also started as a series of meetings in agreement with all agencies due to significant in foster carers circumstances.  
 LAC Visits are monitored at the weekly performance meeting. Performance in relation to visits within the National minimum standards remains above 90% any visit exceeding statutory minimum timescales is examined on a child by child basis to ensure they have been subsequently visited and to ensure the reason for lateness is understood, at the time of writing there were 15 such visits. In addition to statutory minimum standard Rotherham has set a local standard that exceeds the National one, performance in relation to local standard has stagnated although still at 90% and will be picked up through the performance meetings.

		7.6		7.13		7.14			
		No. LAC cases reviewed within timescales		% of LAC cases reviewed within timescales		% LAC visits up to date & completed within timescale of National Minimum standard		% LAC visits up to date & completed within timescale of Rotherham standard	
<b>IN MONTH PERFORMANCE</b>	Apr-15	79	of 84	94.0%		98.6%		73.0%	
	May-15	63	of 74	85.1%		95.2%		79.0%	
	Jun-15	95	of 103	92.2%		94.0%		76.0%	
	Jul-15	105	of 115	91.3%		99.3%		91.3%	
	Aug-15	31	of 36	86.1%		98.6%		90.0%	
	Sep-15								
	Oct-15								
	Nov-15								
	Dec-15								
	Jan-16								
	Feb-16								
	Mar-16								
	<b>ANNUAL TREND</b>	2013/ 14			98.6%				
2014/ 15		19	of 371	94.9%		95.2%		82.6%	
2015/ 16 YTD		300	of 338	88.8%					
<b>LATEST BENCHMARKING</b>	SN AVE								
	BEST SN								
	NAT AVE								
	NAT TOP Q TILE								

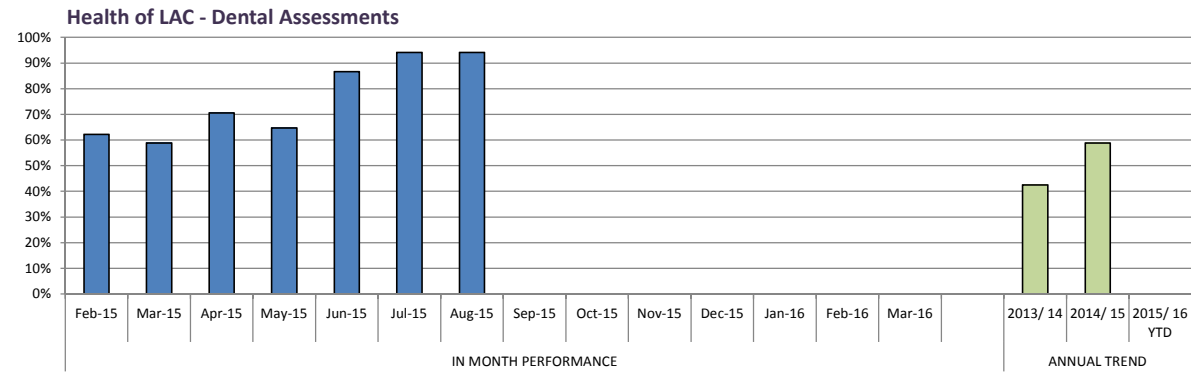
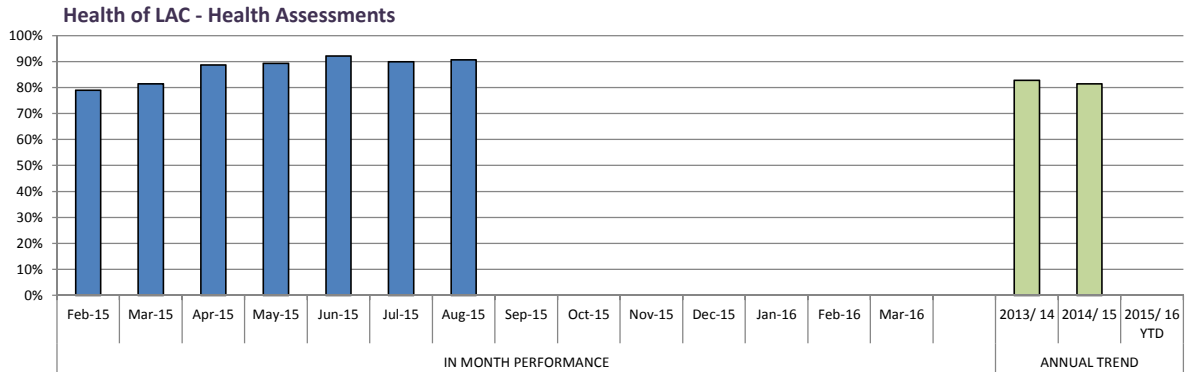


# LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - HEALTH

**DEFINITION** Local authorities have a duty to safeguard and to promote the welfare of the children they look after, therefore the local authority should make arrangements to ensure that every child who is looked after has his/her health needs fully assessed and a health plan clearly set out.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** Performance in relation to health and dental assessments has been poor and has been the focus of concerted joint effort and is now showing improvement with both health and dental checks in timescales over 90%. This will continue to be closely monitored to ensure this is maintained and that all children receive regular and timely health and dental checks.

		7.8	7.9
		Health of LAC - Health Assessments	Health of LAC - Dental Assessments
<b>IN MONTH PERFORMANCE</b>	Feb-15	79.0%	62.2%
	Mar-15	81.4%	58.8%
	Apr-15	88.7%	70.5%
	May-15	89.3%	64.7%
	Jun-15	92.1%	86.6%
	Jul-15	89.9%	94.1%
	Aug-15	90.6%	94.1%
	Sep-15		
	Oct-15		
	Nov-15		
	Dec-15		
	Jan-16		
	Feb-16		
Mar-16			
<b>ANNUAL TREND</b>	2013/ 14	82.7%	42.5%
	2014/ 15	81.4%	58.8%
	2015/ 16 YTD		
<b>LATEST BENCHMARKING</b>	SN AVE		
	BEST SN		
	NAT AVE		
	NAT TOP QTILE		



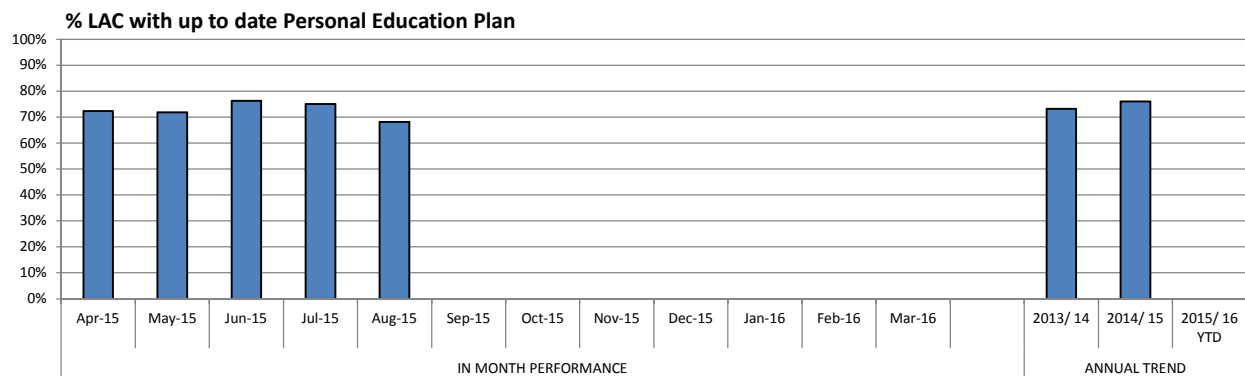
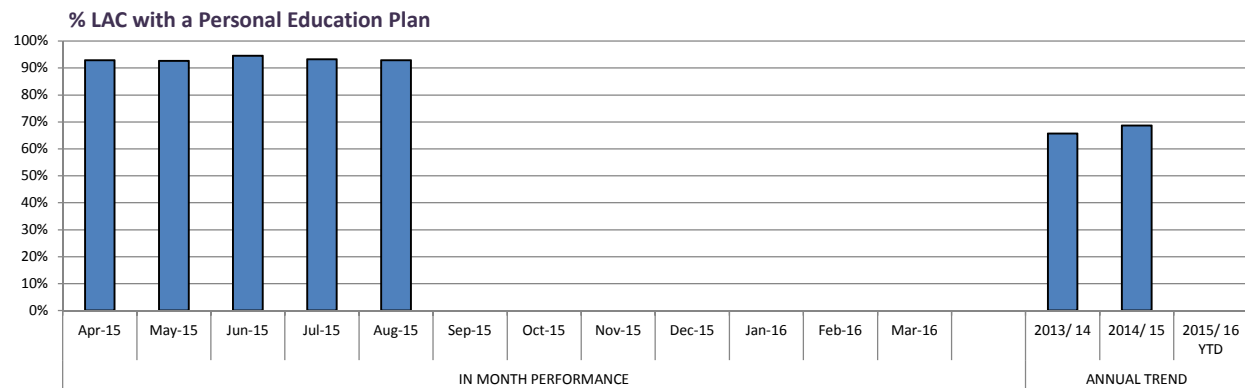
# LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS

**DEFINITION** A personal education plan (PEP) is a school based meeting to plan for the education of a child in care. The government have made PEPs a statutory requirement for children in care to help track and promote their achievements.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** Previously education of Looked After Children was supported by The Get Real team this team ceased to exist from the 1st April 2015 and this has been replaced by a new Virtual School in line with National best practice guidance. Performance in PEP's has declined since April 2015 which is of concern this is linked to the changes and adjustment to new systems. This will be addressed in performance meetings with the management team and work has commenced to chase reports where PEP meetings have occurred.

The completion of the PEP moved to an E-PEP system in September (start of Autumn term) this should lead to an improvement as PEPs' will be created directly on the system rather than relying on workers placing the PEP onto the ESCR system as a word document. Work is being undertaken to ensure that all PEP's are schedule in to be completed or reviewed during the Autumn term with an aim to reach over 90% up to date PEP's during the term and thereafter

		7.10	7.11
		% LAC with a Personal Education Plan	% LAC with up to date Personal Education Plan
<b>IN MONTH PERFORMANCE</b>	Apr-15	92.9%	72.3%
	May-15	92.6%	71.8%
	Jun-15	94.5%	76.3%
	Jul-15	93.2%	75.0%
	Aug-15	92.9%	68.1%
	Sep-15		
	Oct-15		
	Nov-15		
	Dec-15		
	Jan-16		
	Feb-16		
	Mar-16		
<b>ANNUAL TREND</b>	2013/ 14	65.7%	73.3%
	2014/ 15	68.7%	76.0%
	2015/ 16 YTD		
<b>LATEST BENCHMARKING</b>	SN AVE		
	BEST SN		
	NAT AVE		
	NAT TOP QTILE		



# ADOPTIONS

**DEFINITION**

Following a child becoming a LAC, it may be deemed suitable for a child to become adopted which is a legal process of becoming a non-biological parent.

The date it is agreed that it is in the best interests of the child that they should be placed for adoption is known as their 'SHOPBA'. Following this a family finding process is undertaken to find a suitable match for the child based on the child's needs, they will then be matched with an adopter(s) followed by placement with their adopter(s). This adoption placement is monitored for a minimum of 10 weeks and assessed as stable and secure before the final adoption order is granted by court decision and the adoption order is made .

Targets for measures A1 and A2 are set centrally by government office.

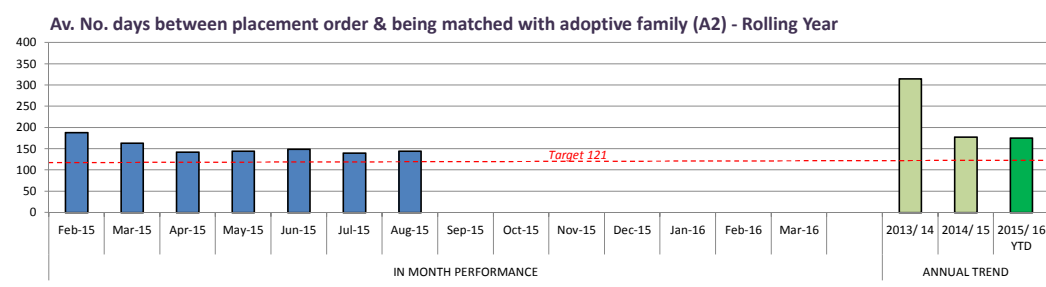
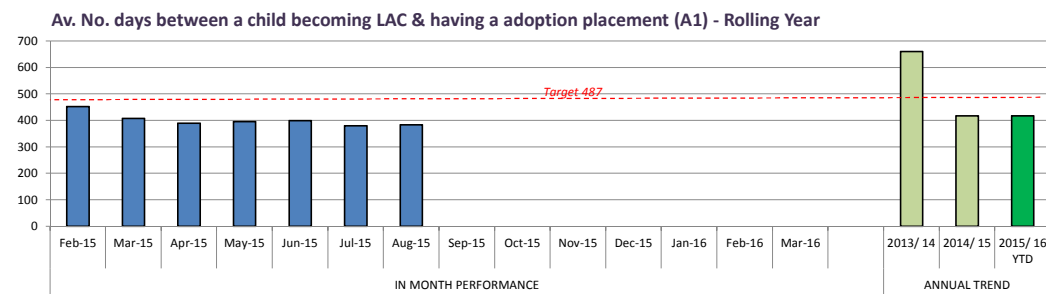
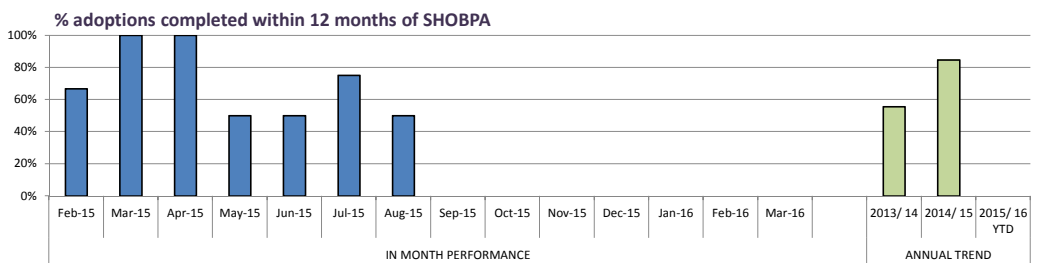
**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

Performance each month can vary significantly given the size of the cohort therefore any delays on single cases can make an impact on performance. It is crucial that every child is matched to an adopter who can meet their needs, this family finding can be impacted by the complexities of these needs.

Some cases can also be impacted by delays in the early stages of the process when applying to the court for agreement to take the child into care.

The total year to date figures for 15/16 suggest a decline from performance in 14/15 which had significantly improved from 13/14. There is a current pressure in relation to the available number of in house adopters and this is likely to result in the need to purchase placements from other adoption providers. The adoption recruitment campaign is being redesigned and shared arrangements with other South Yorkshire authorities are being explored.

			10.1	10.2	10.3	
		Number of adoptions	% adoptions completed within 12 months of SHOBPA	Av. No. days between a child becoming LAC & having a adoption placement (A1) (rolling yr)	Av. No. days between placement order & being matched with adoptive family (A2) (rolling yr)	
<b>IN MONTH PERFORMANCE</b>	Feb-15	3	2	66.7%	453.0	187.9
	Mar-15	4	4	100.0%	407.6	163.0
	Apr-15	4	4	100.0%	389.9	142.2
	May-15	2	1	50.0%	396.3	144.7
	Jun-15	2	1	50.0%	399.6	148.9
	Jul-15	8	6	75.0%	379.7	139.6
	Aug-15	2	1	50.0%	384.2	144.7
	Sep-15					
	Oct-15					
	Nov-15					
	Dec-15					
	Jan-16					
	Feb-16					
Mar-16						
<b>ANNUAL TREND</b>	2013/ 14			55.6%	661.0	315.0
	2014/ 15			84.6%	417.5	177.3
	2015/ 16 YTD	18	13	72.2%*	417.9	175.4
<b>LATEST BENCHMARKING</b>	SN AVE					
	BEST SN					
	NAT AVE					
	NAT TOP QTILE					





Public/Private Report  
Council/or Other Formal Meeting

Identify clearly if the report is open or confidential at first glance. If the report is private it needs to quote both the clause from legislation and a plain English explanation e.g. 'Commercially confidential'

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### **Council Report**

Improving Lives Select Commission 4/11/15  
Corporate Parenting Panel 10/11/15

### **Title**

Report on the Children's Residential Service Ofsted Judgements and Regulation 44 Reports

### **Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

No

### **Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Ian Thomas – Strategic Director for Children & Young People's Service

### **Report Author(s)**

Dana Marrett – Interim Improvement & Development Manager  
Children and Young People's Service  
01709 334067 / [dana.marrett@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:dana.marrett@rotherham.gov.uk)  
Michelle Whiting Interim Head of Looked After Children

### **Ward(s) Affected**

All

### **Executive Summary**

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council had five mainstream children's homes until the recent closure of Woodview. Three of these were long-term homes for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The remaining two are for young people with disabilities; one is a long term home and the other a short breaks provision.

Subsequent to three Ofsted Inspection Judgements between June and October 2015; the Service Director and Responsible Individual applied to Ofsted for voluntary closure. The three young people at the home were moved to suitable alternative accommodation judged to be either good or outstanding and the home closed on 13 October 2015. Staff were advised to remain at home, on full pay, pending investigation.

St Edmunds children's home is one of the two remaining mainstream homes. Ofsted inspected the home on 12 October 2015 and judged it to be inadequate.

### **Recommendations**

This report is for information only.



**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix A – Woodview Ofsted Inspection Report – 9/10 June 2015  
Appendix B – Woodview Ofsted Inspection Report – 29/30 July 2015  
Appendix C – Woodview Ofsted Inspection Report – 12 August 2015  
Appendix D – St Edmunds Ofsted Inspection Report – 12 October 2015  
Appendix E – St Edmunds Ofsted Response

**Background Papers**

Not Applicable

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

No

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Report on the Children's Residential Service Ofsted Judgements and Regulation 44 reports**

### **1. Recommendations**

1.1 This report is for information.

### **2. Background**

#### **2.1 The Children's Residential Service**

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council had five mainstream children's homes until the recent closure of Woodview. Three of these were long-term homes for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The remaining two are for young people with disabilities; one a long term home and the other a short breaks provision.

#### **2.2 Woodview Children's Home**

Woodview was one of the three mainstream homes prior to recent closure. The maximum number of placements was five and there were three young people living there at the point of closure.

2.3 The home had already been judged by Ofsted to be 'declining in effectiveness' when a number of complaints from young people, residential care staff and various other professionals were received during the early months of 2015; highlighting a number of core concerns directly related to poor leadership and management at Woodview since around 2009 which had resulted in an entrenched negative culture within the home that included the following:

- a. A lack of safeguarding to a good enough standard which is particularly related to non-identification of risk and poor quality Risk Assessments.
- b. Poor relationships between staff and young people, with a detrimental impact on the quality of care being provided.
- c. Deficiency in child centred practice, 'team around the child' and collaborative partnership working with key professionals and support services.
- d. An accepted context of bullying and blame, preventing effective team work and consistency in good practice.
- e. Insufficient training and development to support individual managers/staff to fulfil their roles and identify/meet the needs of young people successfully
- f. Unacceptable quality of recording, reporting and auditing, particularly in relation to Care Plans and Risk Assessments.

## 2.4 Management Response

The above detailed context led to a number of immediate management actions:

- a. Initiating the council's Capability Procedure in respect of the Registered Home Manager prior to her sickness absence.
- b. Recruitment of an experienced Interim Home Manager who was praised for the excellent work he is doing and the positive things he has already achieved in Ofsted's Report. This includes bespoke/specialist training and development, team building, and increased levels of individual Supervision.
- c. The Operations Manager supported the Interim Home Manager since first Inspection and was subsequently based at the home on a full-time basis to support/cover the Interim Home Manager in meeting Ofsted notifications and recommendations.
- d. Recruitment of an experienced Interim Deputy Home Manager who commenced in post on 17.9.15.

## 2.5 Ofsted Inspection Judgements

The above detailed context was reflected in Ofsted's Inspection findings:

- 2.6 Ofsted carried out a full inspection at Woodview children's home on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2015 and judged the provision to be inadequate.
- 2.7 This decision related specifically to historical findings in respect of the poor leadership and management of the home by the permanent Registered Home Manager and Deputy Home Manager; and is particularly related to substandard management pertinent to risk/safeguarding, people management, fractured relationships between staff and young people, and the quality of care provided.
- 2.8 Ofsted praised the Interim Registered Home Manager who had been in post for four weeks at the point of Inspection - since June 2015; for the improvement actions he had already achieved and for future plans for continuous improvement.
- 2.9 The home was issued with a compliance notice and a detailed action plan was completed in direct response to this.
- 2.10 When a home is judged to be inadequate by Ofsted, they return within six weeks to undertake a further Full Inspection to review progress.
- 2.11 The follow up inspection took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2015 and the home was again judged to be inadequate. Whilst there was an acknowledgement of significant progress in some areas there had not been sufficient progress in relation to the quality of care/practice; safeguarding and protection; taking the wishes and feelings of young people into account in decision making; staff relationships with young people; the Statement of Purpose; Risk Assessments and significant incidents. A further action plan was completed in direct response to this.

- 2.12 This led to Ofsted instigating an urgent meeting with the Strategic Director which took place on Wednesday 12 August 2015. Subsequent to holding an internal Case Review, Ofsted were clear that they were not going to prosecute the local authority or take any other type of legal action but left no doubt about how seriously they viewed the non-compliance, particularly related to meeting the needs of young people and improving their outcomes.
- 2.13 The Compliance Notice was fully accepted, however Ofsted were asked to take into consideration when determining timescales for completion of actions the nature of the change required, for example, changing the culture of a service requires substantial ongoing activity. Ofsted did acknowledge/accept this however we clearly need to address as a matter of urgency, improving the level of care these children are receiving.
- 2.14 On Tuesday 22 September 2015, the Ofsted Inspector and the Regional Manager completed a further Full Inspection. The home was judged to be inadequate for a third time. This decision was based largely on concerns regarding safeguarding, managing risk, a poor level of reporting/recording.
- 2.15 Ofsted reported that they would be issuing a closure notice to the Responsible Individual [Jane Parfremment, Director] unless a Voluntary Closure Application was submitted no later than Wednesday 23 September 2015.
- 2.16 Jane Parfremment completed and submitted the required C13 Form for Voluntary Closure Application within the required deadline. The agreement with Ofsted included a definitive plan to move all of the young people living at Woodview by Tuesday 6 October 2015. This has been successfully achieved with alternative placements to meet the assessed individual needs of each young person in either good or outstanding provisions. The home closed Tuesday 13 October 2015.
- 2.17 The Service Director (Responsible Individual) met with the staff team from Woodview on Friday 2 October 2015 with representatives from HR and the unions. Detailed feedback from Ofsted was shared and the process of applying for voluntary closure was shared. Staff were informed that they would not be required to report for work from Wednesday 14 October 2015 pending investigation. Further updates on the outcomes of these investigations will be reported in due course.

#### **2.18 St Edmunds Children's Home**

St Edmunds is one of the two remaining mainstream homes. The maximum number of placements is six and there are currently five young people living there.

#### **2.19 Ofsted Inspection Judgement**

St Edmunds children's home was judged by Ofsted to be 'declining in effectiveness' in September 2014.

**2.20 The home was inspected by Ofsted on 12 October 2015 and judged to be inadequate based on the following findings:**

- a. Safeguarding practice is poor and procedures are not followed.
- b. Analysis, evaluation and actions to address risks to young people is insufficient.
- c. Risk Assessments are not up to date. They contain conflicting information to Missing from Home Risk Assessments.
- d. Information is lacking relating to young people missing from home. It does not adhere to the Protocol.
- e. The kitchen areas are dirty.
- f. Young people's health is not adequately monitored.

2.21 A detailed Action Plan was submitted to Ofsted following the Inspection and this led to Ofsted deciding that they would not issue a Compliance Notice as intended.

2.22 A further Inspection will take place within six to eight weeks. Ofsted have advised that a second judgement of inadequate will result in the closure of the home; and that application for voluntary closure from the Responsible Individual will not be an option.

2.23 The young people currently living at St Edmunds children's home are being 'looked after' in a provision which is judged to be inadequate by Ofsted. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council would never place or leave a young person in an inadequate residential home. If the young people remain at the home they are experiencing inadequate care; requiring a decision from their corporate parents about whether they remain there or whether alternative placements are sought in their best interests.

**3. Overarching Service Improvement Strategy**

Senior managers also responded by implementing the following:

- a. Recruitment of an expert management consultant as Interim Improvement & Development Manager for the Children's Residential Service. The Improvement Plan being implemented includes ethnographic research looking at behaviour, culture and relationships within homes [awaiting final report] and consultation with young people about their care and what they would like to improve [see below]. Findings from each of these pieces of independent work will influence the overarching Improvement Strategy.
- b. A Staffing Restructure is currently being developed in order to ensure that employees are confident and competent to improve the experience, progress and outcomes of the young people we look after.
- c. Subsequently, all staff within the restructured service will be trained in Social Pedagogy [planning almost completed] and this will form the fundamental basis for

developing positive/meaningful relationships with young people, meeting their needs and improving their outcomes. It will also drive continuous service improvement.

Social Pedagogy is a practice discipline of care and education based on the well-being, learning and growth of young people. It focusses on the relationship with the young person.

- d. There are a significant number of other service projects within the Improvement Strategy including [but not exclusively] the following:
- e. Ethnographic research has been completed by ESRO which is an award winning organisation; looking at culture, relationships and behaviour in all children's homes. We are awaiting a report of findings which will objectively inform the Improvement Strategy.
- f. Independent consultation with young people has been completed by Jenny Molloy who is a nationally recognised care leaver, author, adviser to Ofsted and Patron of BASW [British Association of Social Workers]; and provides consultation to various local authorities and independent providers. This will culminate in a high profile 'reveal'/presentation by young people about their experience of care and what they feel needs to be different, which will strongly influence the Improvement Strategy in an authentic and meaningful way.

The Report on Consultation written by Jenny Molloy emphasises the poor quality of this provision and includes the following comments and conclusions specifically in relation to Woodview:

'The building inside is stark, unloved and institutional looking, the young people appeared to have a total lack of emotional and practical connection with this home, as their 'home', and the complacent attitude from the staff towards the young people was sad to witness.'

'There was no sense of love, care, compassion or empathy within this home, with the exception of one member of staff, the Interim Manager.'

'There appeared to be a lack of any emotional investment and aspiration on behalf of the children in this home, sadly, it is one of the worst examples I have seen.'

- g. Recruitment of a Therapeutic Intervention worker who is supporting all staff teams in children's homes and will deliver an innovative model for Therapeutic Care Planning for individual young people prior to their admission to care. This and a model of therapeutic parenting which is responsive to trauma and attachment, will complement/strengthen social pedagogy.
- h. A programme of the full refurbishment of all homes is being implemented in consultation with young people and staff. [Woodview has been prioritised.]

- i. Training and Development Audit and resulting Service Training Matrix which increases both mandatory and specialist training requirements for all staff.
- j. Staffing Audit reviewing staffing levels required in each home related to meeting the specific needs of young people, reviewing capacity/costs and an innovative approach to recruitment, for example recruitment of a service specific Clinical Psychologist and/or Occupational Health Consultant. This will strengthen in-house provision and the ability to meet the needs of Rotherham children and avoid out of authority placements.
- k. Policy development including Referral and Matching, Risk Assessment, Care Planning and Preparation for Independence.
- l. This plan had was put in place prior to Woodview failing the inspection. Following this Senior managers felt that the changes required a more robust approach. A highly experienced Interim Head of Residential Service was appointed on 16/10/15 to lead an intensive improvement programme focusing on the Regulatory requirements and the experience of children together with the Interim Service Manager for Disability.
- m. Jane Parfremment Service Director has met with all the Residential Home Managers to look at the reasons why Woodview and St Edmunds failed and required that these matters are dealt with in the other homes.
- n. St Edmunds has a detailed action plan which has been agreed by Ofsted. They will be visiting in 4 to 6 weeks to evaluate whether this plan has been successful and the home now meets the required standards.
- o. An experienced residential homes managers has examined Silverwood's files and a similar exercise will take place at all of the Children's Homes.
- p. The Children and Young People Senior Leadership team approved a report for a proposed Review of Residential, Leaving Care ,SEN respite and Homelessness Provision. This proposal will be coming before members.

### **3.2 Notification of Members**

Ofsted met with the responsible person Jane Parfremment at the conclusion of each inspection to share their findings and these were relayed to senior managers the lead member and the commissioner within 12 hours. Woodview's status as inadequate was discussed at Corporate Parenting panel on 20/7/15.

A detailed briefing note on the outcome of recent inspections has been placed on the agendas for Improving Lives Select Commission on 4/11/15 and Corporate Parenting Panel on 10/11/15.

### **3.3 Regulation 44 reports formally Regulation 33 reports**

These detailed monthly reports on each of the homes are undertaken by the independent visitor Margaret Rowley. Her reports are sent to the Registered Manager of the home the Responsible Person who is Jane Parfremment the Service Director and Ofsted. These reports include a detailed look at all aspects of the home including meetings with staff and young people which are triangulated by contacting parents social workers and Independent Review Officers. They are designed to pick up any issues within the home.

The Interim Head of Residential is now meeting with the independent visitor on a monthly basis to consider her findings and ensure that recommendations are actioned.

The role of councillors in visiting children's homes and regulation 44's was discussed in detail at Corporate Parenting Panel on 20/7/15 and the need for this and LAC champions within the member group was raised again at Corporate Parenting Panel on 22/9/15

Present at both of those meetings was Councillor Watson (chair) and Councillors Hamilton and Vines. Councillor Watson informed the September meeting that other Councillors wished to become members but couldn't make a day time meeting. It was agreed to change the time of the Corporate Parenting Panel to 5pm to accommodate more members.

Jane Parfremment Service Director and Michelle Whiting, (then interim Lac Advisor) met with Councillor Watson on 16/10/15 to discuss recruitment of volunteers for these roles and he agreed to send out an email to be drafted by officers.

### **3.5 Rotherham Residential Children's Homes current Ofsted status:-**

- Woodview –Inadequate closed until further notice.
- St Edmunds - Inadequate
- Silverwood - Good
- Cherry Tree (disability) - Requires Improvement
- Liberty House (short breaks) - Adequate

## **4. Key Issues**

This report is for information only. The decision maker is not required to approve anything.

## **5. Options considered and recommended proposal**

Not Applicable

## **6. Consultation**

Not Applicable



**7. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

Not Applicable

**8. Financial and Procurement Implications**

The Woodview property will be upgraded and used for St Edmunds and Silverwood to decant during refurbishment. Subsequently, the property will be considered for either disposal or alternative use.

**9. Legal Implications**

All residential children's homes are subject The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015. These strengthen regulations came into force in on the first of April 2015

**10. Human Resources Implications**

Post investigation, the staff at Woodview will either be deemed confident and competent to return to work within the Directorate, or will be subject to appropriate processes (e.g. Disciplinary) or could be made redundant with associated costs.

**11. Implications for Children and Young People**

The young people currently living at St Edmunds children's home are being 'looked after in a provision which is judged to be inadequate by Ofsted. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council would never place or leave a young person in an adequate residential home. If the young people remain at the home they are experiencing inadequate care; requiring a decision from their corporate parents about whether they remain there or whether alternative placements are sought in their best interests.

**12. Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

None

**13. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

The need for substantial refurbishment or new accommodation is under consideration the relevant directorates

**14. Risks and Mitigation**

It is within Ofsted's power to close any residential children's home which is not meeting the required regulatory standard. As with Woodview the Local Authority would be required to source alternative appropriate accommodation for those children.

**15. Accountable Officer(s)**

Ian Thomas – Strategic Director for the Children and Young People's Service

Jane Parfremment – Responsible Individual and Director for the Children and Young People's Service.

**16. Approvals Obtained**

**Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services Named Officer:**

**Director of Legal Services Named Officer:**

**Head of Procurement (if appropriate):**

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:-

<http://modern.gov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>

## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>09/06/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC375540</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 1AE</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Ms Jane Parfremment</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Ms Karen Kennedy</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Ms Richardson</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>09/06/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected and their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded. Their care and experiences are poor and they are not making good progress.	
<b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>

## SC375540

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is inadequate because:**

- This home is inadequate because young people are not kept safe.
- Young people's risk assessments do not reflect their current risks. They lack detail of risk management and reduction. Young people continue to engage in criminal activity, substance misuse and going missing.
- Young people's plans do not include their current care or health needs. All young people continue to smoke in their bedrooms. They are restricted at certain times of the day from moving freely around their home by locked doors. Their behaviour is not effectively managed resulting in frequent calls to the police to assist staff to do this. Young people do not always have access to meaningful activities that motivate and build on their strengths.
- Staffing levels during the night shift are not sufficient to ensure young people are safeguarded. Night staff do not receive regular quality supervision. Not all staff are trained to meet young people's specific needs. Effective multi-agency working to support young people specialist needs is not in place.
- The home is not maintained to a suitable standard inside and out.

#### **The children's home strengths**

- There is a new manager in place who recognises the strengths and weaknesses of this home. He has plans in place to address the issues in this home.

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The leadership and management standard In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to-lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>Uses monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (2)(a)(h)) Specifically ensure consistency and clarity in the recording of risk assessments and unauthorised absences</p>	24/07/2015
<p>Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff- seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended the children's home is to provide care and accommodation (Regulation 5(d)) Specifically in relation to working with other agencies such as psychology and therapeutic services in the best interest of young people</p>	24/07/2015
<p>The children's views, wishes and feelings standard The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who- develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	24/07/2015
<p>The enjoyment and achievement standard The enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural intellectual,</p>	

physical and social interests and skills (Regulation 9(1))	
<p>The protection of children standard</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure- that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to child; (Regulation 12(2) (a)(i)). Specifically ensuring that young people's risk assessments are up to date. Staff are evaluating risky situations such as ligature and self-harm risks, young people under the influence of alcohol and substances and how this impacts with the medication they are taking. Arrangements are made, such as extra staffing to ensure young people's welfare is monitored to ensure they are safe.</p>	24/07/2015
<p>The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to- ensure staff have the experience, qualification and skills to meet the needs of each child; (Regulation 13 (2)(c)). Specifically in relation to staff receiving training to meet young people's specific needs for example alcohol and substance misuse, Legal highs, self-harm and ligature training.</p>	24/07/2015
<p>Privacy and access</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that- any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premise- allows children as much freedom as possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe (Requirement 21(c)(iv)). This is specifically in relation to the kitchen being locked at night, unless it is in the specific plans for young people in order to safeguard them.</p>	24/07/2015
<p>Fire precautions</p> <p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must- take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home; (Regulation 25(1)(a)). This is in relation to stopping young people from smoking in bedrooms.</p>	24/07/2015
<p>Fire precautions</p> <p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must- ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that the person working at the home and, so far as reasonably practical, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire (Regulation 25(1)(d))</p>	24/07/2015

<p>The care planning standard The care planning standard is that children- receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; (Regulation 14 (1)(a))</p>	24/07/2015
<p>*The protection of children standard In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure- that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm (Regulation 12 (2)(b)). Specifically this relates to; minimising the risk of fire by encouraging children and young people to reduce their use of cigarettes and ensuring that young people do not smoke in their bedrooms; ensuring that staff build positive relationships with young people enabling them to manage behaviour effectively; addressing the practice of locking doors and restricting access to parts of the home; ensuring that rationale for locking doors is recorded; and ensuring that the restriction of specific parts of the home is limited to those that young people should not have access to.</p>	24/07/2015



## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The children's home is run by a local authority. It is registered to accommodate up to six young people of either gender. The home provides care and accommodation to young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties on a long-term basis.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/02/2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
23/09/2014	Full	Adequate
11/02/2014	Interim	Inadequate progress

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p><b>inadequate</b></p>
<p>This home is not well maintained. The grass requires cutting and the garden gate has fallen off. Areas of the garden are littered with cigarette ends and rubbish. This conflicts with the home's Statement of Purpose which states, 'The property has a front, rear and side garden providing space for badminton, picnics and barbecues. Young people are encouraged to look after the garden'.</p> <p>Inside the property some décor is dated and certain paint work is damaged. Carpets are stained and the stairs light broken. This does not match the home's Statement of Purpose which states, 'the house is furnished to a high standard'. This does not provide the young people with a sense of value and belonging. It does not provide them with high standards to aspire to now or in the future.</p> <p>During the night the young people are prevented from going into the kitchen as the door is locked. This is not part of any young person's plan. It is not accepted by the management team, however some staff continue to lock the door. One young person commented, 'I cannot even get a drink. You would not have this in your home would you?'. This restricts young people from moving freely around their home. It does not fit with the home's Statement of Purpose which states, 'a homely environment comparative to any conventional family home'.</p> <p>There are basic activities in place for young people. Forty per cent of young people report they never take part in activities they like. One young person commented, 'we should get more things to do in the home on a night time'. Other young people commented, 'it's boring'. This does not promote young people's life experiences or adding to their skills. It does not build on their strengths and motivate them to engage with staff and other young people positively.</p> <p>Some young people continue to engage in risk taking behaviour such as smoking, substance misuse, crime and going missing from home. Some staff and young people do not have strong relationships. As a result, despite staff efforts to support young people, they are unsuccessful in doing so and this behaviour continues. One young person commented, 'some staff are good, some are not, some just come for the money, you can tell'. Three young people reported not feeling welcomed back by staff when they have been missing. They did not feel staff do not try and understand why this has happened. There is no independent organisation completing return home interviews at this time.</p> <p>Positive behaviour management strategies are not consistent in this home. Staff</p>	

frequently ring the police to assist them to manage young people's behaviour. Young people now expect this in times of crisis. This does not promote positive relationships between staff and young people. It is not helping young people to make positive changes to their behaviour.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>inadequate</b>
<p>Young people's risk assessments do not reflect the current situation. For example, some individual's current level of alcohol and substance misuse is not clear. The assessments do not provide staff with strategies to manage or reduce the risk. This potentially leaves young people at risk of harm as there are no strategies in place to monitor young people who return under the influence of a substance.</p> <p>Not all staff are trained in meeting young people's specific needs. Six out of 14 staff have had no drugs and alcohol training or training in self-harm. None have had training in specific risks some young people present, such as use of ligatures or the dangers of legal highs. Consequently despite staff efforts to protect young people they are not equipped with the training to do so. This does not match with the home's Statement of Purpose which states, 'A management and caring team fully trained in keeping young people safe from harm'.</p> <p>Care plans, missing person records, health and risk assessments lack detail and information about young people. Information varies on each form. For example for one young person the sexual exploitation risks are briefly mentioned in his risk assessment but are not identified in his care plan or missing records. This does not allow staff to easily identify young people's needs to enable them to keep young people safe. This creates risk that key information such as a young person's risk of suicide may get missed. This could potentially result in a young person coming to serious harm.</p> <p>Staffing levels at night do not keep young people safe. When young people come home under the influence of substances or alcohol, no plans are in place to assess and monitor them. This does not ensure their safety through the night. Young people have accessed each other's bedrooms. This potentially leaves young people unsupervised for long periods of time when they could come to harm.</p> <p>Risk of fire is an issue in this home. All young people smoke in their bedrooms. Despite staff efforts this behaviour continues. The risks have not been robustly addressed. This leaves young people vulnerable to harm from fire. Three staff have never experienced a fire evacuation at this home. In the event of a fire not all staff have the experience to get young people and themselves out safely.</p>	

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>inadequate</b>
<p>Staff are not supported by effective regular supervision. Three out of four staff who have recently started have not received supervision in line with local authority policy. This leaves staff feeling unsupported by managers. Staff have little guidance on positive practice which leaves young people exposed to an inadequate quality of care.</p> <p>The staff team are not working together to support young people effectively. One professional commented, 'the staff team here do not necessarily support each other. They have the same goal but do things differently. They want the best for young people but there is no consistency. It does not feel that the team has been managed effectively. Difficulties have never been looked at or resolved'. This impacts of the effectiveness of staff to manage young people's behaviour. As a result continuous police calls are made to help manage challenging situations.</p> <p>Multi-agency working at this home is not effective. For some young people there is a lack of consultation with health professionals and their health needs are not addressed. For example, one young person is taking illegal substances but there has been no assessment of the effect on the prescribed drugs they take. Other services report finding it difficult to implement support for young people due to the lack of management encouragement. As a result, the staff team functions inconsistently and young people do not benefit from specialist support which could enhance their care and progress.</p> <p>There is a new manager in place in this home, he has been in post four weeks. He is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake this position. Despite the short time he has been in post he has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of this home. He has a clear vision and robust plans to support staff to assist young people to a good standard. He is enthusiastic about effecting change in the best interests of young people and strives to lead by example.</p>	

## What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>29/07/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC375540</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>Riverside House, Main Street, ROTHERHAM, South Yorkshire, S60 1AE</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Jane Parfremment</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Karen Kennedy</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Jamie Richardson</b>



<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>29/07/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>A compliance notice was issued at the last inspection</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	Inadequate
There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not fully protected and their welfare is not promoted. Their care and experiences are poor.	
<b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	Inadequate
<b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	Inadequate

## SC375540

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is inadequate because:**

- A compliance notice set at the last inspection to ensure young people are safe has not been fully met. Risk assessments do not reflect young people's current risks. Ineffective communication of information to safeguard young people and others remains.
- Four out of ten requirements set at the last inspection have not been met, remaining shortfalls include:
  1. Unsatisfactory recording of significant incidents and poor clarity of information.
  2. Some staff have negative relationships with young people.
  3. Lack of engagement with young people resulting in their wishes and feeling not being ascertained.
  4. Poor care planning and evaluation resulting in some young people's basic care need not being addressed.
- Some staff lack qualifications which do not reflect information contained in the Statement of Purpose.
- Not all staff are following safeguarding procedures such as whistle blowing to protect young people.

## The children's home strengths

- The acting manager of this home continues to work tirelessly to improve this setting. He has been able to address some shortfalls in a limited space of time. However he remains without any middle management support which limits the progress he can make in isolation, given the challenges this home presents.

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>7: The children's views, wishes and feelings standard</p> <p>In order to meet the children's views, wishes and feelings standard the registered person must–</p> <p>(1) ensure that children receive care from staff who–</p> <p>(a) develop positive relationships with them;</p> <p>(b) engage with them; and</p> <p>(c) take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p>	21/09/2015
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must–</p> <p>(2) (a) ensure that staff–</p> <p>(i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to child.</p> <p>Specifically ensuring that young people's risk assessments are up-to-date. Staff are evaluating risky situations such as young people obtaining knives and slashing furnishings and waving them at other people.</p>	21/09/2015
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must–</p> <p>(2) (a) ensure that staff–</p> <p>(vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p>	21/09/2015

<p>(vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. This is in relation to staff reporting any concerns about a child and following safeguarding procedures such as whistle blowing.</p>	
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must–</p> <p>(2) (a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose.</p>	21/09/2015
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must–</p> <p>(2) (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. Specifically ensure consistency and clarity in the recording of risk assessments and significant incidents.</p>	21/09/2015
<p>13: The leadership and management Standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must–</p> <p>(2) (b) ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate. Specifically in relation to ensuring all are working consistently together in the best interests of young people. Any negative staff relationship with each other and young people should be addressed.</p>	21/09/2015
<p>The Registered Person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children safety. (2) The registered person may only – (a) employ an individual to work at the children's home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). (3) The requirements are that– (b) the individual has the appropriate experience, qualifications and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) &amp; (3)(b))</p>	21/09/2015

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The children's home is run by a local authority. It is registered to accommodate up to six young people of either gender. The home provides care and accommodation to young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties on a long-term basis.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/06/2015	Full	Inadequate
17/02/2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
23/09/2014	Full	Adequate
11/02/2014	Interim	Inadequate Progress

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p>Inadequate</p>
<p>Despite efforts to improve the quality of care planning, a number of serious shortfalls remain. Some young people's needs have not been successfully addressed and their progress has not been effectively evaluated. Consequently some young people have not made progress with tasks such as self-care. This has caused others to comment how they look and smell. As a result young people's basic care needs are not being met or helping them preparing for independence. Their social relationships and self-esteem are likely to be effected.</p> <p>At the last inspection a requirement was raised to ensure young people do not smoke in bedrooms. This has been achieved. Overall efforts to help young people to stop smoking have been unsuccessful. They continue to smoke outside the home and litter the grounds with cigarette ends. Staff efforts to encourage good health have had little impact. Some young people continue to use substances and fail to attend much needed medical appointments.</p> <p>Young people can now move freely around this home at all times of day. No doors are locked. The requirement made for this has been met. The addition of waking night staff ensures that young people are safe. Staff report, 'It's easier to relax. We are sleeping better and now we can work with young people better.' There is no permanent waking night staff and therefore they are not always known to young people. Young people do not like this and one young person reported, 'Waking night staff, I don't even know them. They just sit up in my home all night.'</p> <p>A requirement was made at last inspection to reduce the number of times police are called to the home to manage young people's behaviour. This has been met. However consistent behaviour management strategies are still not fully embedded. The staff team do not always work together and still have varying views on consequences for young people. As a result young people experience different approaches and attitude towards them and their behaviours. This makes them feel that not everyone is treated equal.</p> <p>More meaningful activities for young people are now on offer. Two out of three young people have enjoyed a summer holiday. One young person travelled abroad for the first time and one young person reported, 'We went on holiday to the log cabin. I liked it in the hot tub.'</p>	

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	Inadequate
<p>Verbal communication between some staff and management is weak. As a result vital information regarding young people's behaviours and risks are missed. This leaves not only the individual vulnerable, other young people and staff are exposed to potential harm because risks remain unaddressed.</p> <p>Recording of behavioural incidents are poor. Risk assessments are not updated and do not reflect young people's present risks. Consequently management knowledge and oversight about what has happened is limited. The requirement to improve this area of practice has not been met.</p> <p>Not all young people and staff enjoy positive relationships. One young person commented to the independent visitor, 'I am okay but angry sometimes as staff do not listen to me when I ask for things.' Varying care approaches from staff has significant impact for individuals. They feel they are treated differently to others. One young person reported, feeling they are refused requests or need to ask several times. Consequently some young people choose not to engage with staff and have chosen not to go on holiday with them. The requirement set around young people's wishes and feelings has not been met.</p> <p>Safeguarding procedures are not being put into practice. Staff are not taking effective action when they have a concern about a young person's welfare. Consequently young people remain fully unprotected. This was immediately addressed during inspection with the Senior Manager. The lack of safeguarding is not fulfilling the Statement of Purpose which states, 'Young people have the right to stay safe and protected from harm and neglect the manager and staff will ensure this.'</p> <p>Young people continue to go missing from this home. Some young people's missing episodes have recently increased. The evaluation of these incidents is insufficient. As a result the possible reason why this is happening remains unknown. This leaves young people exposed to on-going risks such as substance and alcohol misuse. There is no current evidence of child sexual exploitation.</p>	



	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	Inadequate
<p>The acting manager of this home is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake this role. He is fully aware of the weakness in this setting. He is dynamic and committed to ensuring issues are addressed at the root. However there is no deputy or middle management to support him. Consequently progress is limited because issues are widespread.</p> <p>Despite management efforts to strengthen relationships between young people and staff, problems remain. Relationships between some staff are still negative, despite management efforts to address this. Some staff feel others have a different role to them. Some staff are in positions which they do not hold the qualification to fulfil the role. Some staff do not have basic qualifications and are not up to date with some communication systems which are vital to the running of this home. This affects the relationship within the staff team and the overall functioning of the home.</p> <p>The Statement of Purpose is not fulfilling its commitment to young people in this home. It is not currently 'Meeting individual need and improving outcomes for young people whatever it takes.'</p> <p>A requirement set at last inspection to ensure staff are trained to meet individual needs has been met. All staff have now undertaken training around self-harm and ligature risks. Staff have now received up to date training around the use of substances to be able to support individuals.</p> <p>Multi-agency working is improving. One professional commented, 'The new manager has given it a new lease of life. He's keen to know about what's going on in the consultations and is driven by it. I have noticed some staff have been seeking support and advice. Some are accessing the service more. There are still odd staff that are struggling to engage.'</p> <p>Effective supervision is lifting some staff confidence and morale. One member of staff commented, 'When I was coming into work it was like going back 20 years in care work practice and now its brilliant we are heading back the right way. I love coming to work. It's exciting now.' Another member of staff commented, 'Supervision is brilliant now. My supervision needs have not been met here before, now they have. Supervision and the quality is excellent.'</p>	

## What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>22/09/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC375540</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>Riverside House, Main Street, ROTHERHAM, South Yorkshire, S60 1AE</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Jane Parfremment</b>
<b>Registered manager</b> <b>Acting manager</b>	<b>Karen Kennedy</b> <b>Tyrel Simpson</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Jamie Richardson</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>22/09/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	Inadequate
<b>Children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded. Their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.</b>	
<b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	Inadequate
<b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	Inadequate

## SC375540

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is inadequate because:**

- Children and young people are not kept safe
- Risks of young people exposed to child sexual exploitation are not always recognised. They remain poorly assessed and reviewed.
- Missing procedures are ineffective. Local missing from home protocol is not followed. Assessments and young people's individual information is not up to date. Not all staff can access young people's essential information relating to missing.
- Injuries to young people are not robustly investigated. Safeguarding procedures are not consistently implemented by staff. Whistle blowing procedures are not being used.
- Some staff lack awareness of young people's risks.
- Medication recording and administration is poor.
- Young people's offending behaviour continues in this home.
- Some young people make no progress with their self-care skills or health. This leaves some health issues unassessed.
- Lack of management monitoring leaves safeguarding issues unaddressed and problems unrecognised.
- Agency staff recruitment is weak. Staff skills and experience matching young people's needs is unknown to management. Agency staff receive no oversight or supervision.
- Notification of serious incidents and safeguarding matters are not consistently reported to Ofsted.
- Four out of six requirements were not met from the last inadequate inspection.

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must–</p> <p>(2) (a) ensure that staff–</p> <p>(i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to child.</p> <p>Specifically ensuring that,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Young people’s information regarding them going missing from home is up to date and all staff can access this.</li> <li>▪ Child Sexual exploitation risks are assessed and are subject to regular review</li> <li>▪ All staff are aware of young people's risks</li> <li>▪ Any injuries to young people are fully investigated and assessed following safeguarding procedures.</li> </ul>	09/10/2015
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must–</p> <p>(2) (a) ensure that staff–</p> <p>(vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and</p> <p>(vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies.</p> <p>This is in relation,</p>	09/10/2015



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To staff reporting any concerns about a child and following safeguarding procedures such as whistle blowing.</li> <li>▪ Any injuries to young people are fully investigated and assessed following safeguarding procedures</li> </ul>	
<p>13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must–</p> <p>(2) (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. Specifically ensure consistency and clarity in the recording of risk assessments, significant incidents and outcomes of child protection enquires for example involving injury to young people.</p>	09/10/2015
<p>The Registered Person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children safety.</p> <p>(2) The registered person may only –</p> <p>(a) employ an individual to work at the children’s home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>(3) The requirements are that–</p> <p>(b) the individual has the appropriate experience, qualifications and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.</p> <p>(Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) &amp; (3)(b)) Specifically in relation to agency staff</p>	09/10/2015
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the positive handling, recording safekeeping and safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home (Regulation 23 (1))</p>	09/10/2015
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant persons without delay if there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious (Regulation 40( e))</p>	09/10/2015

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The children's home is run by a local authority. It is registered to accommodate up to six young people of either gender. The home provides care and accommodation to young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties on a long-term basis.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/07/2015	Full	Inadequate
09/06/2015	Full	Inadequate
17/02/2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p>Inadequate</p>
<p>Procedures for recording and administering medication are not robust. It is not evident on occasions that young people have been offered medication. When medication has been given it is not clear young people have actually taken it. Prescribed vitamins have not been administered to a young person even though they have an identified deficiency. Safety procedures of two staff administering controlled drugs are not always being followed. Large amounts of painkilling drugs have been signed into young people's care, with no risk assessment, or clear rationale. As a result young people could be at risk of overdose.</p> <p>Some young people do not enjoy good health. Staff attempts are unsuccessful in helping young people to stop smoking and using illegal substances. Some young people do not attend medical appointments. Consequently they experience ongoing health issues, which are not well controlled. Some health issues remain unassessed and diagnosed. This leaves young people at risk of ongoing infection or illness.</p> <p>Despite staff efforts to promote independence skills, some young people are making no progress with their personal hygiene. Support and monitoring of this is inconsistent. This is not promoting positive self-care now or providing young people with the skills they need for the future.</p> <p>All young people have appropriate educational placements. Some young people achieve well in their exams. For others educational attendance is poor. This leaves them without structure to their day. It does not help them prepare for employment in the future.</p> <p>Young people benefit from a range of leisure activities. They enjoy go karting, swimming, football matches and trips to the spa. This helps young people to structure their time positively and promotes their life experiences.</p>	

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	Inadequate
<p>Missing from home protocol is not followed. Young people are not reported as absent. Staff do not actively look for young people when they are missing. Information is not shared effectively with the police. It leaves significant periods of time where young people's whereabouts are unknown.</p> <p>Information surrounding young people going missing from home does not reflect their current risks. Some staff cannot access information about young people because they do not have access to computer systems. As a result poor information is shared with the police. This potentially hinders the police in looking for young people. It can affect the police risk assessment, which would leave young people vulnerable. On return from missing episodes young people are welcomed back by staff, however a lack of independent return interviews, does not give young people the chance to share any worries. It does not allow triggers and risk to be effectively assessed.</p> <p>Despite staff efforts to update risk assessments, some staff are not fully aware of young people's risks. This leaves young people vulnerable as staff are not able to identify potential hazards or make sound assessments of situations. Some risk assessments give conflicting information. For example it is unclear how the risks of sexual exploitation are identified, assessed, and reviewed. This is a significant risk to young people's safety as potentially this issue remains unknown. A requirement set around risk assessments and evaluating risk has not been met.</p> <p>Young people are not protected by safeguarding procedures. Some injuries to young people are not robustly investigated. Some staff are not following whistle blowing policy and reporting concerns. This potentially leaves young people without support and vulnerable to harm. A requirement around staff taking effective action to protect young people has not been met.</p> <p>Despite staff efforts young people continue to engage in ongoing risk taking behaviour. Two out of three young people have gained criminal records whilst living in this home. Consequently offending behaviour presents ongoing risks and could affect chances of employment and opportunity in later life.</p>	

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	Inadequate

The acting manager of this home is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake this role. This home is suffering significant issues in all areas of its functioning. It is now inadequate for the third time. The acting manager is aware of the weakness in this setting; however it is proving a vast role for a single person. A deputy manager has been recruited, but is not yet in post. Consequently management monitoring and oversight is insufficient. Issues which include safeguarding concerns have gone unidentified and addressed. This potentially leaves young people at risk of harm.

Notifications of significant incidents are not always reported. This does not allow the regulatory body to have oversight of staff practice and to analyse safety and risk management.

The recruitment and management of agency staff is poor. Although relevant checks for identification and criminal offences are undertaken the management have no assessment of their skills and experience to meet the young people's specific needs. Agency staff are not receiving supervision. As a result this does not allow the manager any oversight of their practice and it does not give staff support to voice any concerns.

Supervision of the permanent staff team has significantly improved. Regular quality and reflective supervision allows staff to share positive practice, concerns and ideas. As a result they report feeling well supported by the manager. It has improved some staffs confidence and lifted morale.

Regular team meetings provide a forum where information is shared effectively and care practice is reflected on. As a result staff report having more understanding of young people's needs and what is expected. Consequently some staffs relationships are now developing more positively with young people. Other areas such as activities for young people have improved.

## What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>12/10/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC033587</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>Riverside House, Main Street, ROTHERHAM, South Yorkshire, S60 1AE</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Jane Parfremment</b>
<b>Registered manager Acting manager</b>	<b>Shaun Scales Glyn Brown</b>
<b>Lead Inspector Inspector</b>	<b>Jamie Richardson Rachel Holden</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>12/10/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Declined in effectiveness</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	Inadequate
There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected and their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded. Their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.	
<b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	Inadequate
<b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	Inadequate

## **SC033587**

### **Summary of findings**

#### **The children's home provision is inadequate because:**

- Safeguarding practice is poor and procedures are not followed
- Analysis, evaluation and actions to address risks to young people is insufficient
- Risk assessments are not up to date. They contain conflicting information to missing from home risk assessments
- Information is lacking relating to young people missing from home. It does not adhere to local protocol
- The kitchen areas are dirty
- Young people's health is not adequately monitored.

Requirement	Due date
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>(2) In Particular, the standard in Paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure-</p> <p>(a) that staff–</p> <p>(i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to child.</p> <p>Specifically ensuring that,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Young people’s information regarding them going missing from home is up to date. All individuals' details and historical information including favoured places and addresses are included in line with local protocol.</li> <li>▪ Child Sexual exploitation risks are assessed and are subject to regular review</li> <li>▪ Any injuries to young people are fully investigated and assessed following safeguarding procedures.</li> </ul>	30/10/2015
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>(2) In Particular, the standard in Paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure-</p> <p>(2) (a) that staff–</p> <p>(vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and</p> <p>(vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies.</p> <p>This is in relation,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To staff reporting any concerns about a child and following safeguarding procedures.</li> <li>▪ Any injuries to young people are fully investigated and assessed following safeguarding procedures</li> <li>▪ Any issues relating to internet safety are followed through, investigated appropriately and online safety is monitored</li> </ul>	30/10/2015

<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure</p> <p>(d) That the premises used for the purpose of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. Specifically in relation to ensuring that kitchen and their contents are clean. To prevent any hygiene issues and risks to children's health.</p>	30/10/2015
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>(2) in particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to-</p> <p>(2) (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>Specifically ensure consistency and clarity in the recording of risk assessments, significant incidents and outcomes of child protection enquires for example involving injury to young people.</p>	30/10/2015
<p>10: The health and wellbeing standard</p> <p>(1)The health and well-being standard is that-</p> <p>(a) the health and well-being needs of children are met.</p> <p>Specifically in relation to,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff having knowledge of indicators of risk in relation to individual's health needs. This includes potential eating disorders or nutrition deficiencies.</li> <li>▪ This specifically relates to young people's emotional health needs being met and consistently supported. Their requests for support to be listened to.</li> <li>▪ Staff know where to access appropriate advice and treatment for individual health needs.</li> </ul>	30/10/2015
<p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent persons report") which sets out, in particular, the independent persons opinion as to whether</p> <p>(a) Children are effectively safeguarded</p> <p>(b) The conduct of the home promotes the children's well- being (Regulation 44 (4) (a)(b))</p>	30/10/2015

## Recommendation

Regulation 11(2) sets out the expectations on staff in building a positive relationship with each Child and helping the child to have a positive relationship with others. (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 38, paragraph 8.6) This is specifically in relation to staff not allowing young people to overhear adult conversation.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The children's home is run by a local authority. It is registered to accommodate up to six young people. The home provides long-term residential care to young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/09/2014	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
04/07/2014	Full	Good
24/01/2014	Interim	Inadequate Progress

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p>Inadequate</p>
<p>Some young people's health needs are not fully recognised. Indicators of problems, such as eating disorders, are not identified, explored or monitored. This leaves young people with on-going health issues. Young people's health have suffered through poor food intake and lack of nutrition.</p> <p>Young people do not benefit from consistent support with their emotional health. Some individuals who have requested care coordinators have not been supported to access this service. As a result some young people continue to suffer poor mental health and remain anxious.</p> <p>The kitchen areas of this home are dirty. In certain cupboards there are hairs and crumbs of old food. Some kitchen surfaces and floors are unclean. There are dirty ovens and unclean pans. This raises potential health and hygiene issues. It is not setting high standards for young people to aspire to now or in the future.</p> <p>On occasions young people overhear staff conversation and views. For example they overhear staff discussion about changes to the home. At other times young people have been given information about potential admissions. The information is un-confirmed and does not actually transpire, resulting in undue stress. This influences their thinking and raises anxiety for young people as they do not always have full understanding of adult issues. Despite this some young people enjoy relationships with staff. One young person commented 'I like the staff.'</p> <p>Education for young people in this home is variable. All young people attended their examinations. Despite staff commitment to supporting young people to attend education, some currently remain without placement. For others there has been a recent decline in attendance. Lack of education is likely to affect young people's employment and life chances in the future.</p>	

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	Inadequate
<p>Safeguarding procedures are not being followed. As a result, injuries to young people, such as bruises and scratches have not been investigated. This does not protect young people from immediate and future harm. It also leaves injuries without medical attention.</p> <p>Assessment and analysis of risk is poor. Evidence of consultation and decision making which involves appropriate professionals is lacking. Consequently decision making in the best interests of young people is unclear. For example the decision to remove night staffing and cease room searches for some individuals was not evidenced or evaluated. This potentially leaves young people at risk of harm.</p> <p>Some individual risk assessments are not up to date. They do not contain recent risk taking behaviours. This does not provide staff with the necessary information to analyse incidents and to protect young people from future harm. The information on general risk assessments and missing from home assessments is inconsistent. For example, in relation to child sexual exploitation, information and grading of risk varies. As a result understanding of risk is not demonstrated. It does not assist staff to make informed decisions and protect the vulnerable young people in this home.</p> <p>The local missing from home protocol is not being followed. Individual information relating to young people going missing from home is insufficient. Details such as favoured places, relatives and friends are not documented. This is likely to hinder efforts to find young people who are missing, because staff and police have no information where to look. This leaves young people vulnerable to associated risks such as child sexual exploitation and abuse.</p> <p>Risks around young people's internet use are not fully known. Concerns about who young people are contacting via the internet are not robustly monitored and assessed. This leaves young people vulnerable to inappropriate adults and potential abuse.</p> <p>Staff have not been effective, in helping young people to understand others individual needs. Consequently bullying has been an issue in this home over the last six months. This remains closely monitored but has had a negative impact on some young people's behaviour.</p>	



	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	Inadequate
<p>The registered manager has been in post since June 2011. He is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake this role. He has been covering a vacant post as Operation's Manager since September 2014. An acting manager has been overseeing the home since this date.</p> <p>Internal monitoring systems have failed to identify issues raised at this inspection. External monitoring processes have identified some themes; however vital safeguarding issues have been overlooked. As a result significant child protection concerns remained unassessed. This leaves young people vulnerable to significant harm. External monitoring services have failed to provide opinion regarding, if young people are safeguarded and their wellbeing is promoted. This does not comply with regulation.</p> <p>The senior external management as well as internal management do not demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and weakness of this home. Despite having increased capacity in the external oversight from senior managers no shortfalls have been identified or addressed before this inspection. They have failed to recognise or demonstrate in-depth understanding of young people's health needs, safeguarding and missing from home protocol. Consequently vital procedures which help to keep young people safe are not imbedded in practice.</p> <p>The matching process for young people to enter this home, has on occasion failed to identify conflicting needs and risks of young people. Consequently some young people have been inappropriately placed. This has resulted in safeguarding issues, which have caused young people to be moved on without planning and preparation.</p> <p>Regular supervision of staff ensures they feel well supported by management. It helps staff to feel valued and confident about their role. One Member of staff commented 'We get on with managers, I have regular supervision but I can ask anything anyway'. The acting manager receives regular supervision from his line manager; this helps him feel valued and supported. However the evidence to assess supervision quality was unavailable at the time of the inspection.</p> <p>Staff benefit from regular training. One member of staff reported 'We have had more training recently. This has been good.' This increases staff knowledge in supporting young people's needs.</p>	

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**The following immediate actions have been taken today by St Edmunds Avenue Children's home following an inadequate inspection carried out 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2015.**

**Further to the inspection the following evidence has been located that we do not believe was made available to you yesterday. Whilst we fully understand this does not address all the issues raised that contributed to the judgement we wish to make you aware of the fact that it has been located.**

- **Child A Completed trigger plan and CSE risk assessment was on the CCM system however was not placed on the young person's file within the home.**
- **Child A- An e mail sent to the Social Worker dated 2<sup>nd</sup> of September was found which reported the scratches and bruises. Staff had discussed how these happened with Child A at the time and expressed an opinion about this suggesting it could be self- inflicted. Staff did not follow this e mail up when they did not get a response and should have made this report via a direct discussion with the social worker or the social workers manager. We accept that in this case procedures were not followed.**

	<b>Action taken</b>	<b>Date completed</b>
<b>Safeguarding of young people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate reinstatement of waking night staff between the hours of 11.00pm to 7.00am. These are covered by substantive St Edmunds staff. Agency staff will be used where own staff are unable to cover these should be agency staff familiar with the home.</li> <li>• Advice has been sought from CAMHS in relation to Child A with regard to welfare checks throughout the night. Advice given was for waking night staff not to disturb Child A during the night by repeated checks, but to advise them that should they feel the need to talk to someone, a member of staff is available.</li>   <li>Care plan has been updated to this effect.</li>   <li>• Room searches have been reinstated with immediate effect specifically in relation to Child A due to associated risks of self-harm. A record sheet has been placed on file to record reason/concern requiring the need to search, any items found and removed, detail of dialogue with SW/other relevant parties and any agreed follow up required, following completion of the search. These are to be carried out only by residential care workers.</li>   <li>• Missing from Home – Co-ordinator visited today and confirms the 2015 protocol is on site. The aide memoire on site is current and checked with missing coordinator</li> </ul>	<p>13.10.15</p> <p>13.10.15</p> <p>14.10.15</p> <p>14.10.15</p> <p>13.10.15</p> <p>13.10.15</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missing From Home Trigger plans-  Child A - a missing from home Assessment and trigger plan dated 31.7.15 was found today associated onto CCM which was not on the young person's file at inspection which details protective factors, identified risks and vulnerabilities (including-History of absconding, current situation, Mental health/Self harm, Relationships, Risk of CSE, associates and previous places they has or may be at and places frequented.) This has been updated today with the social worker.  A plan detailing actions when the young person goes missing including timescales, is also attached.  An overall risk assessment covers Missing from Home, CSE, Self harm and Emotional wellbeing.  Description including photograph.  2 CSE risk assessments were found on CCM today relating to Child A dated 25.7.14 and updated 25.3.15. These were not on the young person's file at the inspection. The social worker is to check with the Evolve Team and make any updates that are required.</li> </ul>	13.10.15
	<p>Discussed with the Social Worker to request updated CSE risk assessment with the EVOLVE team.</p>	14.10.15

	<p>Child B - a missing from home Assessment and trigger plan was completed today by the manager and was placed on the young person's file which details protective factors, identified risks and vulnerabilities (including-History of absconding, current situation, Mental health/Self harm, Relationships, Risk of CSE, associates and previous places they have or may be at and places frequented.) An action plan when the young person goes missing including by whom and timescales is also attached.</p> <p>An overall risk assessment covers Missing from Home, CSE, Self -harm and Emotional wellbeing. Description, including photograph.</p> <p>This sent to the Social Worker today by the manager for immediate review.</p> <p>This has been returned with a few minor amendments. Now on the residential home's file.</p> <p>Child C - a missing from home Assessment and trigger plan was completed today by the manager and was placed on the young person's file which details protective factors, identified risks and vulnerabilities (including-History of absconding, current situation, Mental health/Self harm, Relationships, Risk of CSE, associates and previous places they have or may be at and places frequented.) An action plan when the young person goes missing including timescales is also attached.</p> <p>An overall risk assessment covers Missing from Home, CSE, Self harm and Emotional wellbeing. Description, including photograph.</p> <p>This has been sent today to the Social Worker by the manager for immediate review. We are awaiting a reply from the Team Manager</p>	<p>13.10.15</p> <p>13.10.15</p> <p>14.10.15</p> <p>13.10.15</p> <p>13.10.15</p> <p>13.10.15</p> <p>14.10.15</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting procedures The manager has discussed today at a staff meeting the immediate need to ensure that all concerns involving self-harm, injuries and any other child protection concerns are reported to the appropriate agencies without delay. The manager has instructed the staff to read the Child Protection reporting procedures and sign to say they have done this and understand them.</li> </ul> <p>In relation to Child A (Scratches/Bruises)- A Strategy meeting booked and is to be held 1.00pm 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015.</p> <p>A disclosure made 14.10.15 by a young person regarding Facebook and inappropriate images has been reported to relevant parties and will be discussed at a Strategy meeting being held 1.00pm 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring of bullying The manager has discussed at a staff meeting today the immediate need to ensure that all concerns relating to bullying are recorded and action taken to address this.</li> <li>• Internet safety The manager has instructed all keyworkers at a staff meeting to book individual key work sessions this week to discuss keeping safe in relation to accessing social networking sites and the sharing of person mobile phones. Staff have been instructed to access the CEOP website resources.</li> <li>• Food monitoring sheets have been reviewed to capture what has been offered on the menu and what has been consumed. The manager has discussed the need to record effectively in young people's files.</li> </ul>	<p>13.10.15</p> <p>14..10.15</p> <p>14.10.15</p> <p>13.10.15</p> <p>13.10.15</p> <p>13.10.15</p>
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<p><b>Cleanliness of the kitchens</b></p>	<p>The current menu was discussed and amended following a young person's meeting 23.9.15. This will be reviewed again in consultation with young people 22.10.15. The manager has instructed key workers to carry out specific discussions in relation to healthy eating with all young people prior to the young people's meeting.</p>	
	<p>Food shopping took place on the day of the inspection and fresh fruit was again purchased locally the following day. The manager has instructed staff to ensure that items of food are checked daily. Any items found to be "tired" will be replaced.</p>	13.10.15
	<p>Fruit, fresh vegetables and salad although already offered daily, have now been added to the menu.</p> <p>Weight Up (More life) have been contacted to deliver healthy eating sessions for the young people and carers. First session : 26.10.15 3-3.30pm and 3.30-4pm. This will be in relation to healthy eating and services young people can access.</p>	14.10.15
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The manager has reviewed the cleaning regime of both the domestic and the staff.</li> </ul> <p>Sunday- Clean ovens. (This is in addition to oven cleaning during the week by the domestic)</p> <p>Tuesday- Clean all cupboards in both kitchens. (This is in addition to cleaning during the week by the domestic)</p> <p>Daily checks of both kitchens to be carried out by staff during the day and clean as required.</p>	13.10.15

<p><b>Staff discussions in front of young people</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The manager has discussed in a staff meeting today issues raised regarding information discussed in front of or within ear shot of young people. Staff have been reminded about professional boundaries and appropriate content of information discussed.</li> </ul>	<p>14.10.15</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All risk assessments to be reviewed and cross referenced to care plans.</li> </ul>	<p>14.10.15</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E mail has been sent to Nutrition and Dietetics department RDGH to discuss current Feeding plan for Child A as dated July 2015. The manager is also to discuss issues/concerns in relation to weighing scales/bucket found in room. The bucket has since been removed.</li> <li>• Discussion held with Social Worker today. She is aware of the issues. The Social Worker will attend the meeting with dieticians when arranged to discuss these concerns.</li> <li>• Awaiting a return call from the dieticians.</li> </ul>	<p>14.10.15</p>
	<p>The Registered Manager to return to St. Edmunds to resume duties from week commencing 19.10.15</p>	<p>14.10.15</p>

**Signed: Acting Manager**

**Job title: Acting Manager**

**Setting: St Edmunds Ave URN: SC033587**

**Date: 13/10/2015**