



# **CABINET/ COMMISSIONERS' DECISION MAKING MEETING**

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**Monday, 6 June 2016**

**10.00 a.m.**

**Council Chamber, Town Hall,  
Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH**

**Cabinet Members:-**

Leader of the Council – Councillor Chris Read  
Deputy Leader of the Council – Councillor Gordon Watson  
Councillor Saghir Alam – Corporate Services and Budgeting  
Councillor Dominic Beck - Housing  
Councillor Emma Hoddinott – Waste, Roads and Community Safety  
Councillor David Roche – Adult Social Care and Health  
Councillor Denise Lelliott – Jobs and the Local Economy  
Councillor Taiba Yasseen – Neighbourhood Working and Cultural Services

**Commissioners:-**

Lead Commissioner Sir Derek Myers  
Commissioner Patricia Bradwell  
Commissioner Julie Kenny  
Commissioner Mary Ney

## **CABINET/COMMISSIONERS' DECISION MAKING MEETING**

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

**Date:** Monday, 6th June, 2016

**Time:** 10.00 a.m.

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

**1. Apologies for Absence.**

To receive apologies of any Member or Commissioner who is unable to attend the meeting.

**2. Declarations of Interest.**

To invite Councillors and Commissioners to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting, to confirm the nature of those interests and whether they intend to leave the meeting for the consideration of the item.

**3. Questions from Members of the Public.**

To receive questions from members of the public who wish to ask a general question.

**Decisions for Commissioner Bradwell:-**

**4. Rotherham: A Child-Centred Borough (report herewith) (Pages 1 - 54)**

To agree the ambition for Rotherham to become a Child-Centred Borough, the establishment of a member-led working group to develop the actions and the publication of the Voice of the Child Lifestyle Survey report.

Report of the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

Cabinet Member: Councillor Watson and Roche

Commissioner: Bradwell

**5. Consultation on the proposal for a planned closure of Silverwood and Cherry Tree House children's homes and the agreement to the relocation of Nelson Street Leaving Care Service to Hollowgate. (Pages 55 - 160)**

To agree the commencement of consultation on the proposal for a planned closure of Silverwood and Cherry Tree House children's homes and the agreement to the relocation of Nelson Street Leaving Care Service to Hollowgate.

Report of the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services  
Cabinet Member: Councillor Watson (in advisory role)  
Commissioner: Bradwell

**Decisions for Cabinet:-**

**6. Update of the Transport Policy Statement: Learners Aged 16-19 March 2016 and Home to School Transport Policy - April 2016 (Pages 161 - 190)**

To approve the updates to the Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 years and the Home to School Transport Policy, which include details covered within the statutory guidance documents issued by the Department for Education (July 2014)

Report of the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment Services  
Cabinet Members: Councillor Watson  
Commissioner: Bradwell (in advisory role)

**7. Exclusion of the Press and Public.**

If necessary, the Chair to move the following resolution:-

That under Section 100(A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**8. Reductions to the Public Health Grant and initial proposals for the Council achieving the savings (Pages 191 - 207)**

To endorse the initial measures introduced and further proposals for identifying the additional budget savings required in respect of the Public Health Grant reductions; to endorse the intention and timeline for a stakeholder and public consultation on the future direction of Public Health Services in Rotherham

Report of the Director of Public Health  
Cabinet Member: Councillor Roche  
Commissioner: Ney (in advisory role)

**9. Strategic Acquisition of 15 Affordable Homes on Phase 1D and 1E, Waverley and at Lindum Drive/ Hall Croft, Wickersley (Pages 208 - 219)**

To approve the strategic acquisition of 15 Affordable Housing units, 12 of which are on the Waverley Development (phase 1D and 1E) from Barratt / David Wilson Homes; and a further 3 Affordable Homes at Lindum Drive/ Hall Croft, Wickersley from Redrow Homes.

Report of the Interim Strategic Director of Adult Care and Housing

Cabinet Member: Councillor Beck

Commissioner: Myers (in advisory role)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Kemp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**SHARON KEMP,**  
Chief Executive.

## Summary Sheet

### Cabinet/Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016

**Title:** Rotherham: A Child-Centred Borough

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

#### Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director, Children and Young People's Services

#### Report Author(s)

Nicole Chavaudra, Joint Assistant Director, Commissioning, Performance and Quality, Children and Young People's Services (Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council) and NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group.

**Ward(s) Affected** All

#### Summary

1. One of the priorities in the Improvement Plan for Rotherham Council is for Rotherham to become a 'Child-Centred Borough'. The aim of a Child-Centred Borough is for communities of children, young people and adults, including the Elected Members as locally democratically elected representatives, to combine their resources to support every child to be the best they can. The strength of resources within families can be better utilised in realising the potential of children and young people and therefore the strategy will focus on how better links can be made, both within the council and with partners, to ensure that families are supported to thrive.
2. This paper sets out the aspirations for Rotherham to become a borough that is recognisably child centred in the development of its policies, its community developments, its building programmes, its sports and leisure facilities and in its service delivery. It is intended that Rotherham becomes a place where it is clear that it is understood that children and young people represent the most important investment that can be made in order to secure a vibrant, healthy

and productive future for its people and for generations to come. Given the impact across communities it will be essential to garner the views of, and ensure ongoing engagement with, stakeholders of all ages.

3. The ambition starts by declaring that Rotherham wants every child to have a positive start in life and a good childhood so they can grow into well adjusted, emotionally resilient individuals who will enjoy healthy and mutually respectful relationships in adulthood, become responsible citizens and be able to be good parents to their own children when the time comes. The first group of children who must benefit from the following proposal must be the children who are in the care of the council and for whom the council are the 'Corporate Parents'.
4. The proposal makes recommendations about how, as a Borough-wide community, Rotherham can translate the ambitions into a tangible reality through creation of a member-led working group. The approach will seek for every child, including children in the care of the Council, to have a good childhood and work together to give every child the best start in life and to support the development of the next generation of citizens.
5. The paper recommends that Rotherham's Lifestyle Survey can provide insights into the experiences of children and young people, and measure the success of plans to become a Child-Centred Borough. It also sets out an aspiration for a Child-Centred Borough around the following six principles:
  - a focus on the rights and voice of the child;
  - keeping children safe and healthy;
  - ensuring children reach their potential;
  - an inclusive borough;
  - harnessing the resources of communities;
  - a sense of place.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that Commissioner Bradwell agree:

1. The ambition for Rotherham to become a Child-Centred Borough;
2. The six priority principles of a Child-Centred Borough;
3. The establishment of a member-led working group to develop the actions to achieve the priorities for a Child-Centred Borough, including how impact will be measured;
4. The publication of the Voice of the Child Lifestyle Survey report, as a benchmark for future years' monitoring of the success of the Child-Centred Borough ambitions in changing the experiences of children and young people in Rotherham;
5. A report on progress at regular intervals, commencing with a follow up report in October 2016.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1: Lifestyle Survey Report: 2015

Appendix 2: Trend data from the Rotherham Lifestyle Survey

**Background Papers**

Rotherham Improvement Plan, 2015

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

None

**Council Approval Required** No

**Exempt from the Press and Public** No

**Title: Rotherham: A Child-Centred Borough**

**1. Recommendations**

1.1 It is recommended that Commissioner Bradwell agree:

- 1.1.1 The ambition for Rotherham to become a Child-Centred Borough;
- 1.1.2 The six priority principles of a Child-Centred Borough;
- 1.1.3 The establishment of a member-led working group to develop the actions to achieve the priorities for a Child-Centred Borough, including how impact will be measured;
- 1.1.4 The publication of the Voice of the Child Lifestyle Survey report, as a benchmark for future years' monitoring of the success of the Child-Centred Borough ambitions in changing the experiences of children and young people in Rotherham;
- 1.1.5 A report on progress at regular intervals, commencing with a follow up report in October 2016.

**2. Background**

2.1 The Leader of Rotherham Council has set out his vision for Rotherham, which includes four priorities:

- 1. Every child making the best start in life
- 2. Every adult secure, responsible and empowered
- 3. A strong community in a clean, safe environment
- 4. Extending opportunity, prosperity and planning for the future

2.2 In addition, a further priority is to make sure the Council is an organisation capable of delivering this vision, namely running a modern, efficient Council.

2.3 Further to the commitment that every child makes the best start in life, one of the priorities in the Improvement Plan for Rotherham Council is for Rotherham to become a 'Child-Centred Borough'.

2.4 There have been positive developments for Rotherham children over recent months and years. For example, school readiness (children achieving a good level of development at the end of reception year) has improved to now be above national averages, trends of GCSE achievement are now better than national averages, and the rate of under-18 conceptions in the borough has reduced and is now the same as the England average.

2.5 However, there is more to be done to ensure that Rotherham children have the best start in life, and have high aspirations. For example, 18.3% of Rotherham mothers smoke during pregnancy, compared to 11.4% nationally, which contributes to increased risk of stillbirth, low birth weight and neonatal deaths. A figure of 21.6% of children leaving primary school are obese, compared to 19.1% nationally, and 5.9% of 16-18 year olds in Rotherham are not in employment, education or training, compared to 4.7% nationally.



- 2.6 The aim of a Child-Centred Borough is for communities of children, young people and adults, including the Elected Members as locally democratically elected representatives, to combine their resources to support every child to be the best they can – the family is the nucleus of the community and the child. As a Borough-wide community, Rotherham can seek for every child to have a good childhood, and work together to give every child the best start in life, and to support the development of the next generation of citizens.
- 2.7 It is suggested that such a strategy be developed around the following principles that will enable children to thrive: a focus on the rights and voice of the child; keeping children safe and healthy; ensuring children reach their potential; an inclusive borough; harnessing the resources of communities; and a sense of place.

### **3. Key Issues**

#### **3.1 A focus on the rights and voice of the child**

- 3.1.1 Children and young people are the next generation of citizens. To ensure a focus on the voice and rights of the child there needs to be a commitment to the inclusion of children and young people in decisions that affect them. This enables young people to be active in local democracy. It also requires an asset-based, strengths-focused approach to children and young people, which recognises when behaviours do not meet the expected standards.
- 3.1.2 A commitment to developing the voice and rights of the child in Rotherham also requires the Council to consider how it connects to children and young people via the digital world, using the communication currencies with which young people participate in their lives. It also requires a commitment to children's rights, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.

#### **3.2 Keeping children safe and healthy**

- 3.2.1 Fundamental to ambitions for a Child-Centred Borough is that all Rotherham children should be safe. Following the Ofsted Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, looked after children, care leavers and review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (October 2014), Rotherham Council has established an Improvement Programme to act on the recommendations within the Inspection report, and those from Professor Jay's Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham, findings of Louise Casey's Corporate Governance Inspection (CGI); and address the systemic improvement needed internally within RMBC Children and Young People Services and across our partnership structures to safeguard our children and young people. Progress has been made against the early priorities, and focus is now on sustained improvements and embedding high quality services. This is particularly true of the experiences and outcomes of Rotherham's children in care population where much improvement is

still required before the council can be satisfied it is being a good 'Corporate Parent'.

- 3.2.2 Rotherham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the Borough, also has some ambitious visions for local children and young people, including: giving every child the best start in life; improving emotional health and wellbeing for children and young people; improving health outcomes for children and young people through integrated commissioning and service delivery; and ensuring children and young people are healthier and happier.
- 3.2.3 Ambitions for a Child-Centred Borough can support achievement of these objectives for children and young people by seeking to nurture confidence, self-worth and resilience in the next generation of citizens.

### **3.3 Ensuring children reach their potential**

- 3.3.1 To ensure children in Rotherham can thrive, become active and productive citizens, and fulfil their potential, a Child-Centred Borough can support children to have the highest possible level of education, access to training and learning, businesses, universities, apprenticeships, work experience, work opportunities; and training in enterprise. In particular, the Council can support children in its own care to be the best they can be by using its own resources, and its influence to secure better outcomes and opportunities, such as apprenticeships for care leavers, and young people who are looked after. This is just one example of something tangible that could be done for children in care to support them into adulthood.
- 3.3.2 Children can be supported to be school ready through the vital role of parents, and the role of Rotherham's public services in supporting parents to be the best they can be. As a civic leader, the Council can support where it is needed, and support and challenge our partners regarding their role in ensuring children are school ready. The digital literacy of children in Rotherham can be prioritised, to prepare them for the jobs of the future – the code clubs in libraries are a good example currently in Rotherham which can be built on. Plentiful out of school activities available for all children that combine fun, freedom and creativity, such as those provided by libraries, including the summer reading challenge can provide positive diversionary activities.

### **3.4 An inclusive borough**

- 3.4.1 Underpinned by an Equalities Strategy, which is currently under development, a Child-Centred Borough can support improved services for vulnerable children, ensuring that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background. This can include fewer exclusions from school, stronger support for children with special needs and disabilities and using transport developments to strengthen the accessibility of support and services.
- 3.4.2 In particular, the role of the 'Corporate Parent' can be promoted within the Council and beyond, to increase contributions to the development of Rotherham's looked after children. This should include the promotion of fostering, development of apprenticeships within the Council for care leavers, and provision of high quality housing for young people leaving care.
- 3.4.3 It is important that, given the intended impact on the place, over generations, stakeholders across all age groups are involved in shaping the services which will translate the ambition for Child-Centred Borough into reality.

### **3.5 Harnessing the resources of communities**

- 3.5.1 Children are citizens of the future, and a Child-Centred Borough is an investment for the future of the population of Rotherham as a whole. It can support the engagement of children and young people and families in inter-generational community projects, seeking to solve established local problems, particularly through repeated activities that inspire a deeper attachment. This can be developed around elected members in the local community, as the elected representative. For example, toddler groups could be held in care homes, or young volunteers could run luncheon clubs for isolated older people.
- 3.5.2 A Child-Centred Borough can facilitate a commitment to working together with local people, including children and young people, on all major developments, including planning decisions, as part of the democratic process of the Council.

### **3.6 A sense of place**

- 3.6.1 As part of a Child-Centred Borough, children in Rotherham can have access to a mix of creativity and culture, including the arts and local heritage. These embed a sense of pride, knowledge and insight into the town which has nurtured them. Examples can include: heritage activities by schools, both in the classroom and in heritage settings such as museums,

archives and exhibitions, run by the Council and Community Groups; investment in knowledge of Rotherham history and heritage for Rotherham teachers and workers engaged with children; and easy access by children and families to the wealth of Rotherham's treasures, including Clifton Park Museum, York and Lancaster Regimental Museum, Rotherham Archives and Local Studies, Boston Castle and other heritage sites. Such examples would support the development of the next generation.

- 3.6.2 Children and young people growing up in a Child-Centred Borough can be proud ambassadors for Rotherham, surrounded by positive messages about Rotherham's achievements and potential, and supported to become proud Rotherham citizens in adulthood.

### **3.7 Measuring the success of a Child-Centred Borough**

- 3.7.1 The Council undertakes an annual survey, which provides a unique insight into the lived experience of children and young people in Rotherham. The Lifestyle Survey is carried out with young people in year 7 and year 10 in Rotherham secondary schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRU). The survey covers a range of issues for local young people including healthy eating, sport and exercise, aspirations, and feeling safe. The Lifestyle Survey report for 2015 is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.7.2 The data from the 2015 Lifestyle Survey provides a benchmark for measuring the success of Rotherham as a Child-Centred Borough over future years, as it provides the opportunity to track changes in the experience, ambitions, behaviours and feelings of local children and young people. Information about trend analysis from previous years' data is included as Appendix 2.
- 3.7.3 A few Local Authorities carry out a similar survey. Contact has been made with Sheffield City Council and Leeds City Council who both undertake a very similar survey. Information will be able to be exchanged with the councils to enable a benchmarking exercise to compare results.
- 3.7.4 The national 'What About Youth Survey' was undertaken at a similar time last year and similar questions will be included in the Rotherham survey to allow for a direct comparison in future.
- 3.7.5 Introducing new measures to gauge the involvement of adult community stakeholders from a variety of sectors, in the development of services to ensure that Rotherham is a place where families thrive.

- 3.7.6 Learning from previous years' Lifestyle Survey data, which has enabled a number of improvements, including:

### **3.8 Food And Drink**

- 3.8.1 Children's Weight Management Services were retendered and new providers commenced last year which included services for 4 to 17 year olds
- 3.8.2 Schools have campaigned to stop the sale of high calorie and high sugar content snacks.
- 3.8.3 The sale of high caffeine drinks was reduced in schools. The percentage of young people reporting that they do not drink energy drinks has increased from 41% in 2013 to 55% in 2015.

### **3.9 Mental Health**

- 3.9.1 The 'My Mind Matters' website launched offering support, advice and guidance to young people and their parents.
- 3.9.2 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) distributed tools and coping strategies to all secondary schools.
- 3.9.3 Information provided to young people and schools around suicide and self-harm awareness.

### **3.10 Feeling Safe**

- 3.10.1 The South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE) (Bus Station) updated information on their websites and put in place reporting mechanisms.
- 3.10.2 Personal, Health and Social Education (PHSE) sessions have been run with colleagues from the SYPTTE around feeling safe. The Lifestyle Survey for 2015 shows that more young people feel safe in Rotherham.

### **3.11 Smoking**

- 3.11.1 A campaign has been held in all secondary schools to promote non-smoking.
- 3.11.2 Trading Standards have issued warnings to local shops who sold tobacco to young people. The Lifestyle Survey reports that more young people are reporting that they do not smoke in 2015 than in 2014.

### **3.12 Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness**

3.12.1 A total of 3,852 Rotherham learners attended Chelsea's Choice awareness sessions in schools. 98% report that they are better informed about child sexual exploitation as a result.

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

- 4.1 This report has described the ambition for a Child-Centred Borough as one that starts by declaring that Rotherham wants every child to have a positive start in life and a good childhood so they can grow into well adjusted, emotionally resilient individuals who will enjoy healthy and mutually respectful relationships in adulthood, become responsible citizens and be able to be good parents to their own children when the time comes. The first group of children who must benefit from the following proposal must be the children who are in the care of the council and for whom the council are the 'Corporate Parents'.
- 4.2 The proposal makes recommendations about how as a Borough-wide community, Rotherham can translate the ambitions into a tangible reality. The approach will seek for every child, including children in the care of the Council, to have a good childhood, and work together to give every child the best start in life, and to support the development of the next generation of citizens.
- 4.3 The paper sets an aspiration for a Child-Centred Borough around the following six principles: a focus on the rights and voice of the child; keeping children safe and healthy; ensuring children reach their potential; an inclusive borough; harnessing the resources of communities; and a sense of place.
- 4.4 It is therefore recommended that the ambition to become a Child-Centred Borough is endorsed, and that the six principles of the ambition are approved.
- 4.5 To ensure that actions are developed to achieve the priorities for a Child-Centred Borough, and measure impact, it is also recommended that a member-led working group be established, with progress reports to Cabinet at regular intervals.
- 4.6 The annual Rotherham Lifestyle Survey provides a unique benchmark for measuring the future impact of the Child-Centred Borough ambitions from the perspective of local children and young people. It is therefore recommended that the 2015 Lifestyle Survey results (attached as Appendix 1) are published and is undertaken again with schools in 2016.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 As part of the Community Strategy consultation in 2016, consultation will be undertaken with children and young people regarding how Rotherham becomes a Child-Centred Borough. Furthermore, the

establishment of a member-led working group can include the participation of members of the Youth Council, Looked After Children's Council and Young Inspectors team in its design and purpose to ensure the voice of young people.

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

6.1 It is proposed that the journey toward the new ambitions commences from June 2016.

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

7.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations in this report.

## **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 None identified.

## **9. Human Resources Implications**

9.1 Officer time to implement the Child-Centred Borough Programme would be sourced from existing Council resources.

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

10.1 The Child-Centred Borough Programme would seek for every child to have a good childhood, and for all partners to work together to give every child the best start in life, and to support the development of the next generation of citizens.

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

11.1 The Child-Centred Borough Programme would support the community of Rotherham to develop and demonstrate a commitment to the rights of the child, in fulfilment of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.

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

12.1 The Programme would require commitment and involvement from across Council departments and the broader community of organisations in Rotherham.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 None identified at this stage

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

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director of Children's Services

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- None

Director of Legal Services:- None

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

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



Rotherham  
Voice of the Child  
Education Lifestyle Survey  
2015

Borough Wide Report

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### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to express our thanks to all of the head-teachers and staff at schools who co-ordinated the completion of the Education Lifestyle Survey for 2015. Also thank-you to healthy schools consultant Kay Denton for the support in developing the survey for 2015 and thank-you to Emma Soames for completion of the data analysis.

In 2015 13 out of 16 secondary schools participated in the survey along with all 3 pupil referral units. Schools participating in the survey gave their commitment to engagement with young people, capturing their views on health, well-being and safety.

Also thank you to the 3110 pupils who did participate and shared their views by taking part in this years' survey.

## 1. Background Information

This report presents the summary of findings from the 2015 Education Lifestyle Survey. The survey is open to all young people in Y7 and Y10 in secondary schools and Pupil Referral Units, in 2015 it ran from during the period Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 to Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July.

This is an electronic survey that is accessed by pupils in educational establishments through a web-link. All young people that participated in the survey were able to do so anonymously and this is the 8<sup>th</sup> year that the survey has been run in Rotherham.

Each educational establishment that participated has already received a data pack giving them access to their own level of survey data; they can use this to compare with borough wide information once published.

This report gives a summary of key findings from the survey and some comparisons to national information where this is available.

Parents were given information about the survey and its contents ahead of the survey taking place, the specific questions relating to sexual health were only included in the survey for pupils in Y10.

The borough wide results will be shared with partners and specific trend data shared with partners on their specialism to allow them to update the overarching action plan.

Individual school reports will be used by schools to help them gauge how well they are meeting their own health and wellbeing objectives and help shape their PSHE curriculum.

## 2. Executive Summary

- In total 3110 participated in the 2015 lifestyle survey.
- 3 Schools chose this year not to participate in the survey
- Participation in the survey varied widely between schools, the variances ranged between 14% to 90% participation rates from one school to another.

### 2.1 Positive Results

- Fruit is the most popular snack option
- There has been an increase in the number of young people having school dinners and an overall reduction in the number of young people not having lunch at all
- More young people are participating in regular exercise
- There is greater awareness of where to obtain support if a young person had a weight issue
- Good awareness amongst young people where they can get support if they have any issue relating to mental health
- More young people are aspiring to go to university
- Almost all young people aware of internet safety
- Reduction in the number of young carers
- Greater awareness of Young Carers Service
- Less young people report being bullied
- Fewer young people are drinking high energy drinks
- Increase in positive responses against the participating in smoking, drinking alcohol and use of drugs – gives positive message against the peer pressure to partake in these.
- Reduction in the number of young people actually smoking or trying alcohol
- Improvement on the sale of cigarettes to under-age young people from local shops
- Improvement in all areas of young people feeling safe in all areas including Rotherham town centre locations

### 2.2 Areas for attention

- Greater awareness around disability and long-term illnesses, more young people putting themselves in this category
- More young people saying they have a weight issue
- A proportion of young people in Y7 saying they use the internet to meet new friends
- Increase in the number of young carers, saying they need to care 8 or more hours per day
- Although less young people reported bullying. less young people also said that they felt as though they were helped after being bullied
- Less young people wanting to stop smoking
- Increase in number of young people trying electronic cigarettes
- One third of young people who said they have drank alcohol, have tried it before age of 12
- Large proportion of young people who said they have drank alcohol, said they have been drunk in past 4 weeks
- The use of legal highs increased
- Education around sexual exploitation, 40% of Y7 and 29% of Y10 still need to be taught this
- Almost a quarter of those pupils who said they have had sex, did not use contraception
- Young people visiting Rotherham town centre has reduced
- Y10 girls are the most likely not to recommend living in Rotherham or want to live in Rotherham in 10 years' time
- In response to the questions in relating to recommending Rotherham as a place to live or wanting to live in Rotherham in 10 years' time – more young people were unsure and gave the responses don't know or maybe rather than a definite yes or no.

### 3. Demographic Information

At the time of the survey there were 3251 young people in Year 7 and 3356 in Year 10 attending 16 secondary schools and 3 Pupil Referral Units in Rotherham. The survey was offered to all 16 secondary schools and 3 Pupil Referral Units in Rotherham. 13 out of 16 secondary schools and all pupil referral units took part in the 2015 survey with 3110 young people participated in total.

Participation rates for those 13 schools and Pupil Referral Units was 60%. Overall participation rate for all Y7 & Y10 young people was 47%.

In 2014 all 16 secondary schools participated and 3 pupil referral units in the survey in total 4,123 young people participated give a participation rate of 63%.

#### Participation Table 2015

This table shows the 13 schools and 3 Pupil Referral Units that participated in the survey.

Out of the 3 schools who did not take part in 2015 there were 1179 young people, 573 young people in Year 7 and 606 young people in year 10.

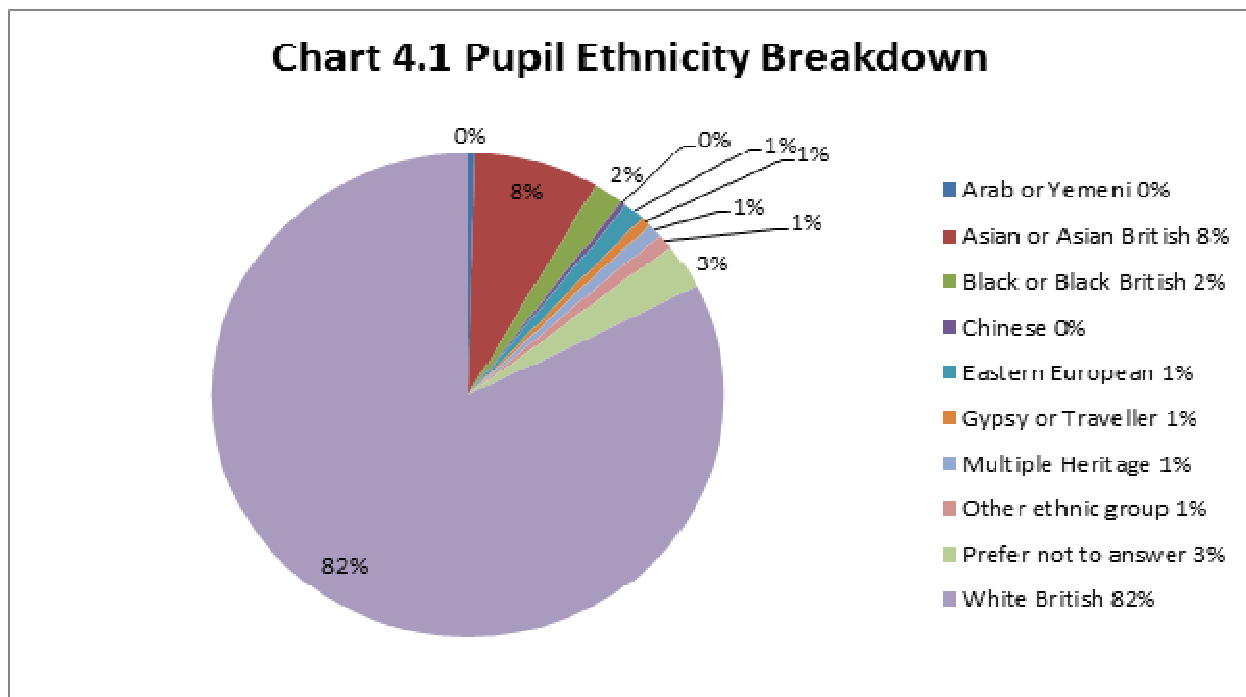
School	Total No. of Pupils Y7	Total No. of Pupils Y10	Overall Total	Total Participation Number	Overall Response Rate %
Aston	314	278	592	327	55
Brinsworth	242	246	488	227	47
Clifton	169	194	363	50	14
Dinnington	188	246	434	272	63
Maltby	192	188	380	297	78
Oakwood	211	203	414	262	63
Saint Pius	127	130	257	192	75
Swinton	151	174	325	293	90
Wales	229	244	473	406	86
Wath	302	296	598	309	52
Wingfield	156	155	311	252	81
Winterhill	250	245	495	195	39
<b>Pupil Referral Units</b>					
Rowan Centre	1	10	11	11	100
Riverside	2	6	8	8	100
Swinton Lock	2	4	6	6	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2536</b>	<b>2619</b>	<b>5155</b>	<b>3110</b>	<b>60</b>

**4. Characteristics**

Of the pupils that completed the 2015 survey, 1624 (52%) were female and 1486 (48%) were male. 1624 (52%) were in year 7 and 1,486 (48%) were in year 10.

**4.1 Ethnic Origin**

When asked about their ethnicity, 2,564 pupils described themselves as White British (82%, slightly down from 84% in last year's survey), 451 were classed as Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) (15%, up from 13% last year) and 95 preferred not to say (3%). Chart 4.1 below shows the breakdown of pupil ethnicity.



Where you born in the UK? (New question added for 2015 Survey)

Overall 2924 (94.5%) of young people said they were born in the UK, with 186 (5.5%) being born outside the UK.

**Y7**

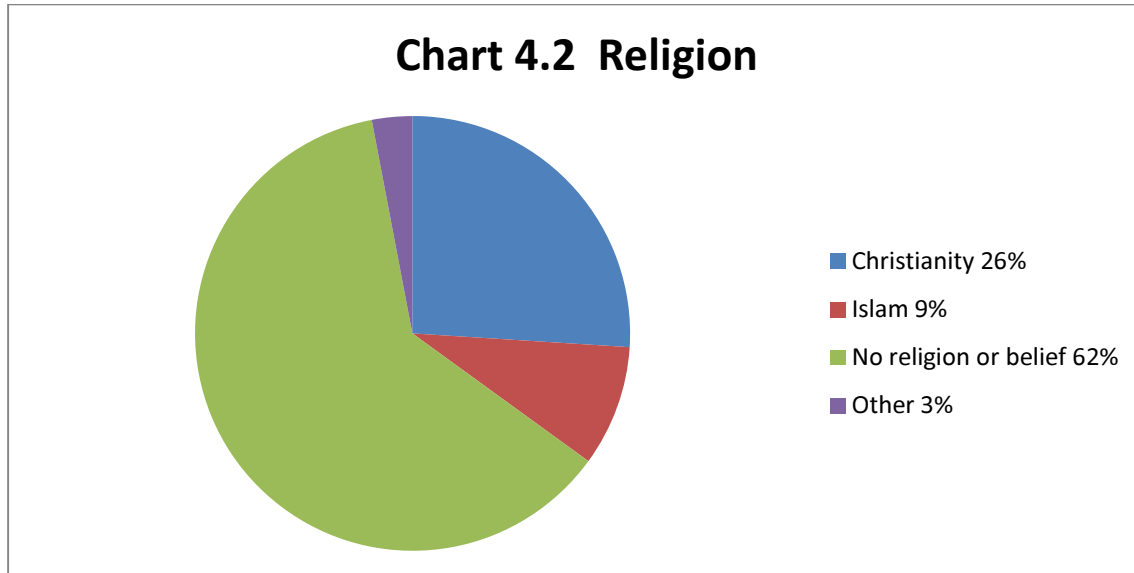
94% said they were born in the UK  
6% said they were not born in the UK

**Y10**

95% said they were born in the UK  
5% said they were not born in the UK

#### 4.2 Religion

The number of pupils with no religion or belief has increased slightly by 1% up to 62% from 61% in 2014. Pupils saying they practiced Christianity has stayed the same as last year's 26%. Slightly more than 1% of pupils said that they practiced one of the following religions: Buddhism, Judaism, Humanism, Sikhism or Hinduism which is slightly more than last year's survey. The breakdown of religion is shown in Chart 4.2 below



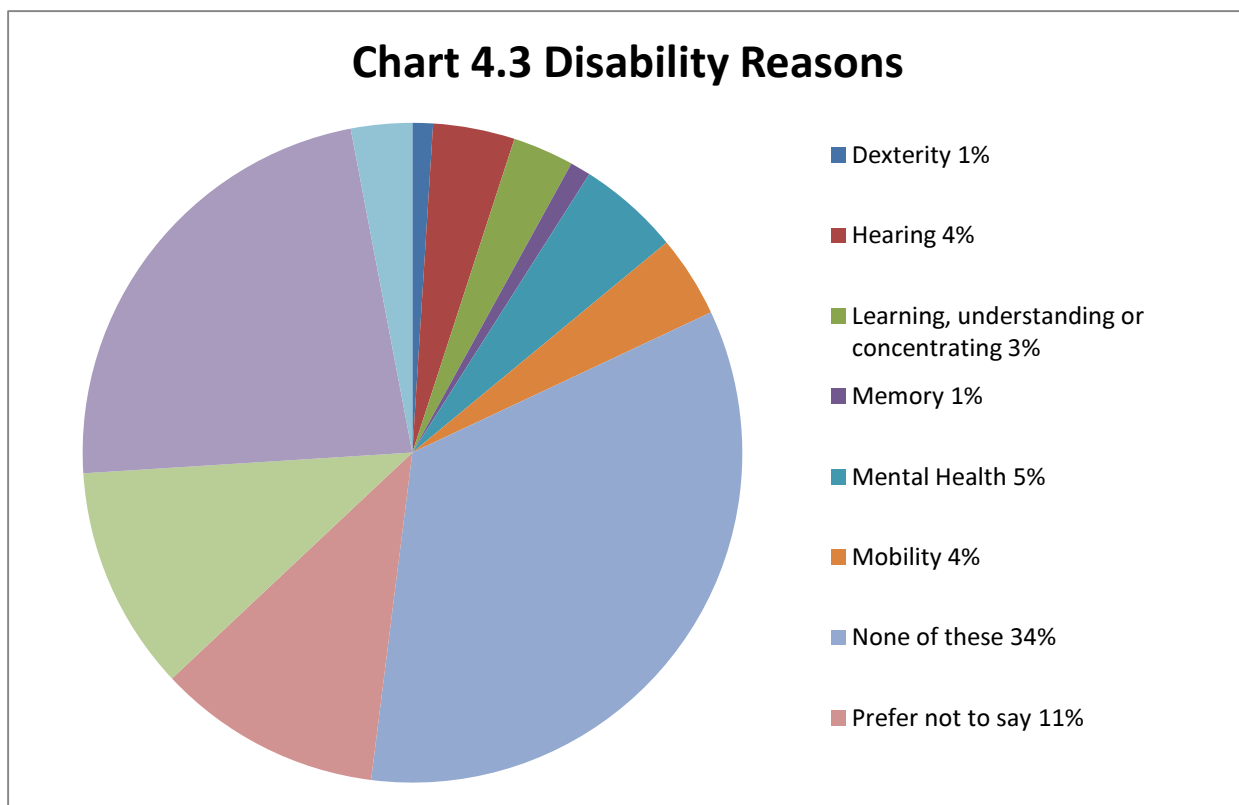
#### 4.3 Sexual Orientation (Year 10 Question Only)

When asked about their sexual orientation, 1323 (89%) of year 10 pupils said that they were heterosexual, down from 90% in last year's survey. 59 (4%) said that they were bisexual (3% in 2014 and 30 (2%) said that they were lesbian or gay (up from 1% last year). 45 (3%) identified themselves as 'I don't know' and 45 (3%) preferred not to say.

#### 4.4 Health

496 (16%) of pupils said they had a long term illness, health problem or disability, this is a 7% increase from 2014. This large increase could be due to the change in the question in 2015; this was changed to ask if they had a diagnosed long-term disability/illness or medical condition. In 2014 pupils were asked if they had a long-term illness or disability.

Out of the 496 (16%) of pupils in 2015 who said they had a condition, Chart 4.3 below shows the breakdown of the conditions, they said they had.



Out of the 496 pupils who said they had a condition, 273 (55%) said they had to take some medication (this is 4.1% of all pupils in years 7 & 10) and 218 (44%) said it affected their attendance or participation at school (this is 3.3% of all pupils in years 7 & 10)



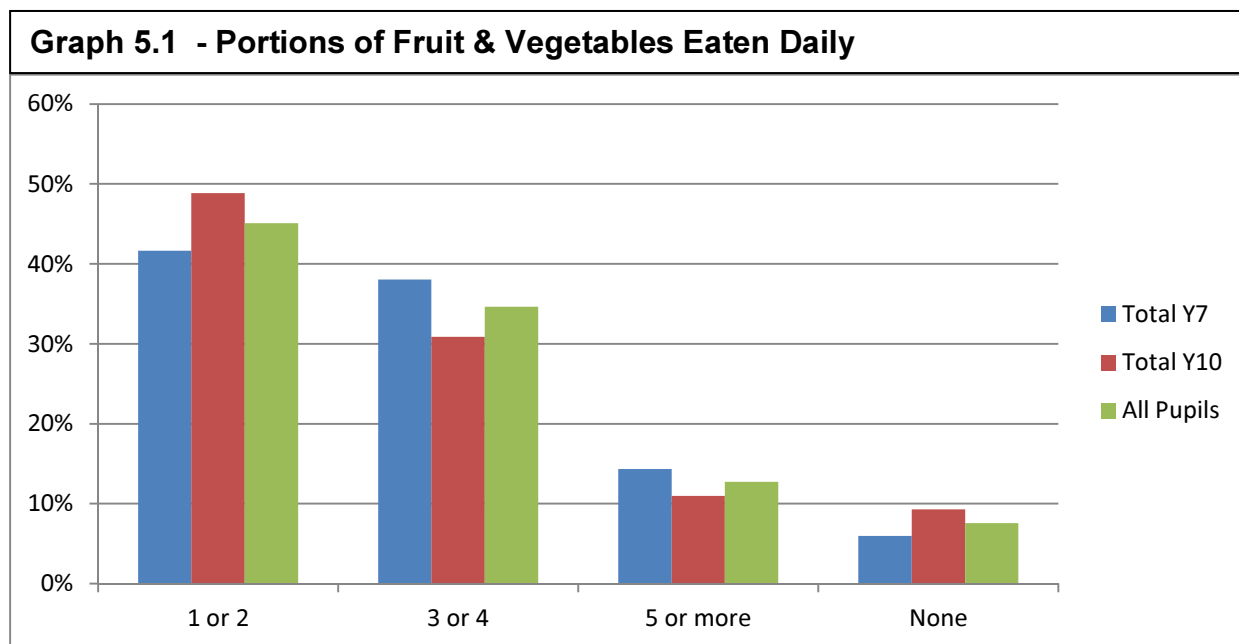
## 5. Food and Drink

Questions in these categories have been changed to capture more detailed information and to match the questions in the What About Youth National Young Person's Survey.

In 2014 pupils were asked if they ate 5 portions of fruit and vegetables per day the responses in 2014 were 60% No and 40% yes.

In 2015 pupils were asked how many portions of fruit & vegetables they ate daily.

The graph 5.1 below shows the breakdown of 2015 responses. Less young people said they are eating 5 portions of fruit and vegetables per day.



Looking at the data, Y7 are more likely to eat 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day, this maybe likely that they have food prepared for them at meal times by their parents.

Boys in year 10 are the most likely not to eat any fruit or vegetables per day this being at 12%, compared to girls in Y7 being as low as 5% not to eat any fruit or vegetables per day.

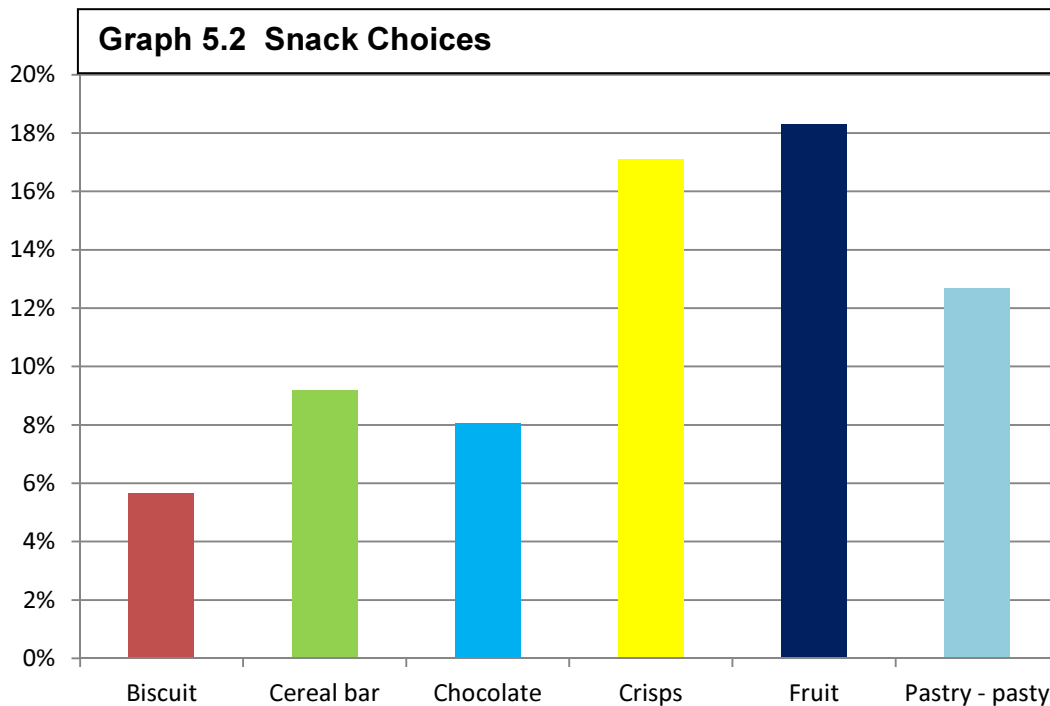
When asked about how many glasses of water they drank a day, 2114 (68%) of young people questioned said that they drank 1 to 5 glasses of water (down from 73% in 2014), 746 (24%) said they had 6-10 glasses (up from 18% in 2014) and 249 (8%) said that they drank no water at all (1% lower than 2014). More year 7 pupils said that they drank 6-10 glasses than year 10 (28% compared to 20%) and more year 10 pupils said that they drank no water (10% compared to 6% of year 7 pupils). More boys said they drank no water at all, 9% compared to 7% of girls.

Pupils who said they had breakfast has dropped by 1% from 2014. 2457 (79%) of all pupils said that they ate breakfast (compared to 80% in 2014). Year 7 pupils are more likely to have breakfast 1413 (87%) compared to 1040 (70%) of year 10). Of the 2457 pupils who said that they have breakfast, 1720 (70%) had breakfast at home (lower than last year's figure of 72%). 123 (5%) said that they had breakfast on the way to school and a further 98 (4%) said that they had breakfast at school.

Figures reported in a national newspaper shared information that 30% of school children nationally go to school without having breakfast.

## 5.2 Snacks

2084 (67%) of pupils have a snack at break time (down from 70% in 2014). This year, fruit is the most popular choice compared with crisps last year. The different types of snacks are shown in the graph 5.2 below:



Out of the 2084 pupils that said they had a snack, 47% had snacks brought from home (down from 52% in 2014), 23% bought them from the school snack bar (20% in 2014) and 18% bought them from a shop on the way to school (same as last year). 12% did not say where they go their snacks from.

When asked where they mainly have lunch, 1524 (49%) said that they have a school lunch (up from 44% last year). Year 7 pupils are more likely to have school meals than year 10 pupils (61% of year 7 pupils said they have them compared to 37% of year 10).

When the pupils didn't have school meals, 1150 (37%) said they had brought a packed lunch from home (down from 41% in 2014), 249 (8%) bought lunch from the local shop (the same 8% in 2014) and 187 (6%) said that they didn't have lunch (slightly down from 7% last year). Only 62 (2%) said that they go home for lunch (same as 2014).

## 6. Sport and Exercise

The national recommendation is that all children and young people should engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least 60 minutes per day. This *definition* was included in the survey for young people to read and understand before answering the question around sport and exercise

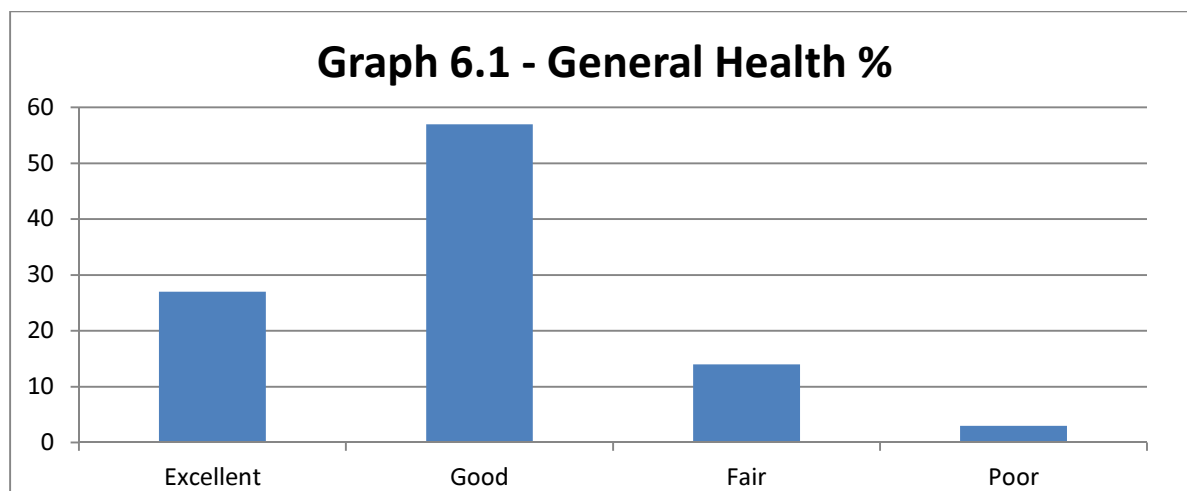
2488 (80%) of pupils said that they regularly take part in sport or exercise (up from 77% in 2014). Year 7 pupils are more likely to exercise regularly (87%) compared to year 10 pupils (76%).

Overall Boys are more likely to exercise regularly (80%) compared to girls (75%).

There is an improved increase in the frequency of times per week that pupils are exercising. Out of the 2488 number of pupils that said they participate in exercise –

- 18% exercised 6 to 7 times per week compared to 12% in 2014
- 28% exercised 4 to 5 times per week compared to 25% in 2014
- 40% exercised 1 to 3 times per week compared to 52% in 2014
- 12% exercised less than once per week
- 2% did not state how many times per week they exercised.
- Boys (23%) are more likely to exercise every day (6 to 7 times per week) than girls (13%).

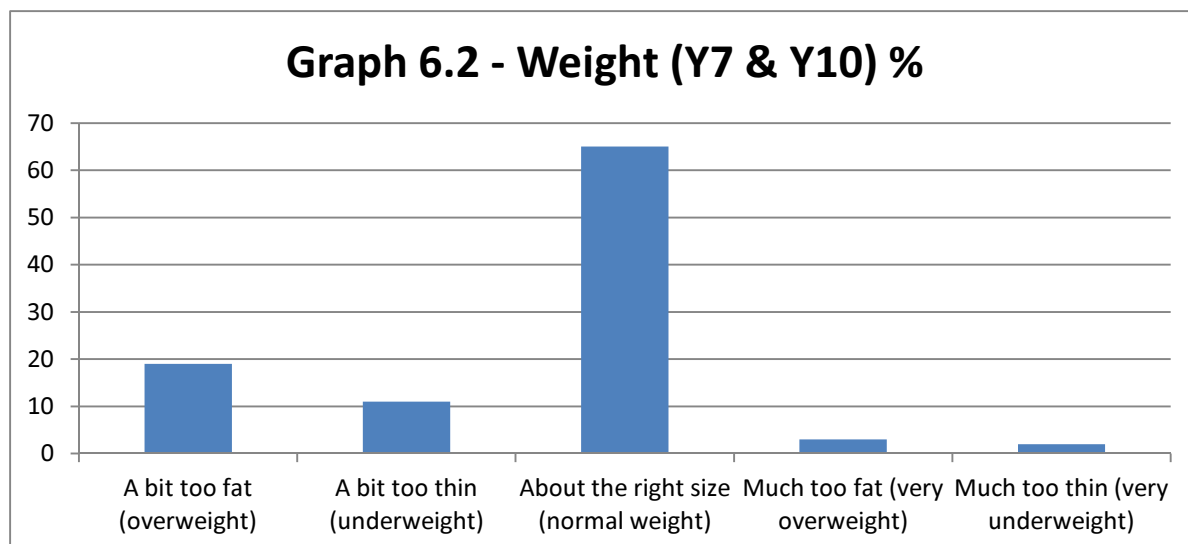
New Question added to 2015 survey to ask pupils how they feel about their general health. The graph 6.1 below shows Y7 & Y10 combined responses.



Rating their health as poor boys (3%) was slightly higher than girls (2%)

The wording to the options for the feelings about weight questions were changed in the 2015 survey to match the questions held in the national “what about youth survey.”

Pupils who said they felt their weight was about normal size was 2022 (65%), (compared to 73% who said they weight was healthy in 2014 survey. Graph 6.2 below shows the Y7 & Y10 combined responses to the question of how pupils feel about their weight



Key overall findings from Y7 & Y10 combined results:

- 93 (3%) felt that they were very overweight (up from 2% in 2014)
- 622 (20%) felt that they were overweight (up from 17% in 2014)
- 342 (11%) felt that they were underweight (up from 8% in 2014)
- 902 (29%) of pupils said they were worried about their weight (up from 28% in 2014)
- Girls (38%) are more likely than boys (19%) to be worried out about their weight.
- Boys were more likely to feel their weight was about the right size (67%) than girls (63%)
- Pupils in Y7 were more likely to feel their weight was about the right size (68%) than pupils in Y10 (61%)
- 486 pupils in Y10 (32%) are more likely to be worried about their weight, compared to 416 Y7 pupils (25%)

53% of pupils knew where to go for support or advice if they were concerned about their weight; this is an improvement of 5% from (48% in 2014). New weight management services were re-procured in April 2015. The services support young people and their families with diet, physical activity and behaviour change to maintain and reduce BMI centiles.

## 7. How Pupils Think and Feel

Pupils are asked about their feelings on a number of subjects

For 2015 these have been ranked in preference that young people mainly said they feel good about, the tables below show the ranking split by Y7, Y10 and Girls and Boys.

YEAR 7		
Ranking	Girls	Boys
1	My Friendships	My Home Life
2	My Home Life	My Friendships
3	My School Work	Myself
4	My Future	My Future
5	Myself	How I Look
6	How I Look	My School Work
7	Relationships	Relationships

YEAR 10		
Ranking	Girls	Boys
1	Myself	Myself
2	My Friendships	My Home Life
3	My Future	My Future
4	My Home Life	My Friendships
5	My School Work	How I Look
6	Relationships	My School Work
7	How I Look	Relationships

Pupils were asked a follow-up question, about whom they felt they would mainly discuss their problems with, again for the 2015 results, these have been rated in preference

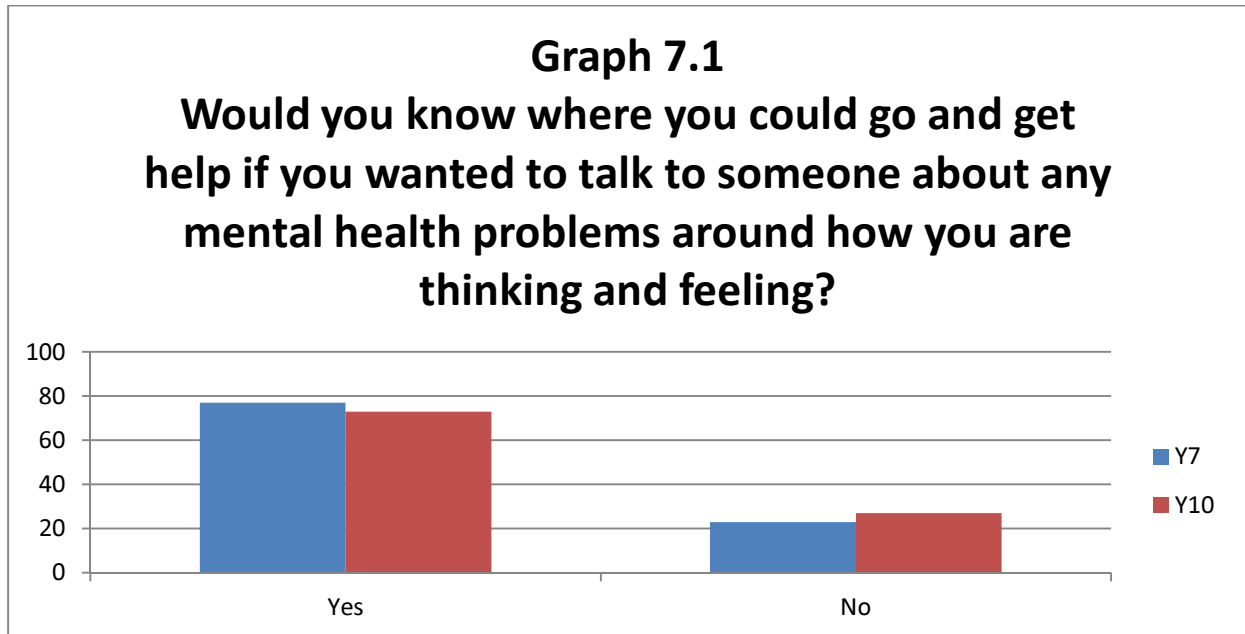
YEAR 7		
Ranking	Girls	Boys
1	A Family Member	A Family Member
2	A Friend	An Adult at Home
3	An Adult at Home	A Friend
4	My Brother or Sister	Someone Else
5	Someone Else	A Member of Staff at School
6	A Member of Staff at School	My Brother or Sister
7	A Youth Worker	A Social Worker
8	A Social Worker	

- Neither boys or girls in Y7 or Y10 said they would speak with a School Nurse
- Only girls in Y7 said they would speak with a Youth Worker

YEAR 10		
Ranking	Girls	Boys
1	A Friend	A Friend
2	A Family Member	A Family Member
3	An Adult at Home	An Adult at Home
4	Someone Else	Someone Else
5	My Brother or Sister	My Brother or Sister
6	A Member of Staff at School	A Member of Staff at School
7	A Youth Worker	A Youth Worker
8	A Social Worker	A Social Worker

- Neither boys or girls in Y7 or Y10 said they would speak with a School Nurse

To support young people with managing their feelings and finding out if they would know where to go to get professional help a new question was added to 2015 survey – this question was added at the request of a group of young people from The Youth Service, the responses to this question are showing in graph 7.1 below

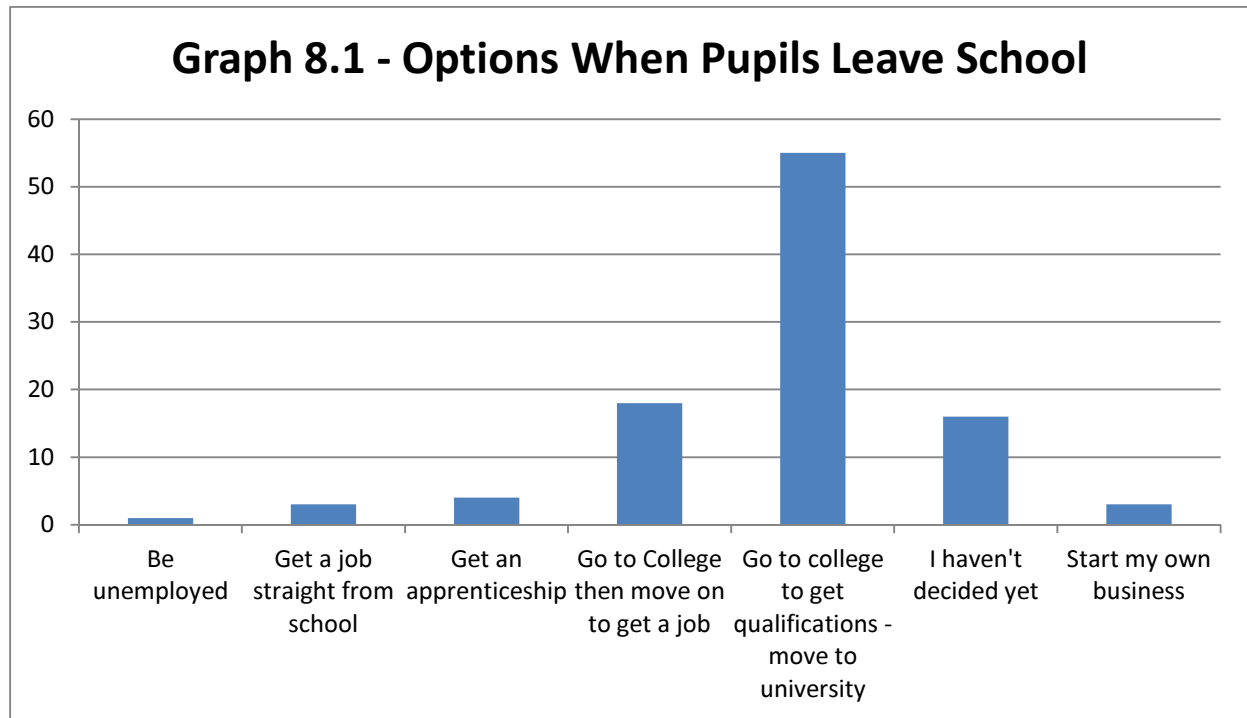


It is promising that 75% (2333) of pupils said they would know where to get help if they wanted to talk to someone, with Y7 more likely to know where to go and get help than Y10.

Young people have been involved in the development of My Mind Matters website, a unique site for young people to help young people be aware where they can go for help. This website went live in July 2015 and to-date there has been over 800 unique visitors, viewing over 2,500 pages.

## 8. In School

Graph 8.1 below shows the responses from pupils when they were asked what they hope to do when they leave school.



There has been an increase in 2015 of the number of young people who said they would like to go to university up to 1430 (46%) from 44% in 2014.

- (48%) of year 7 chose this option from 46% in 2014
- (46%) of year 10 chose this option from 42% in 2014

5% of year 7 and 4% of year 10 pupils said they want to leave school and get a job straight away (compared to 8% and 7% respectively in 2014 survey).

12% of Y10 would like to get an apprenticeship when they leave school, this has reduced by 2% from 2014 (14%), also year 7 pupils has had a slight decrease to 4% from 5% in 2014.

19% of Y10 and 17% of Y7 said they would like to study at college and then get a job when they leave college compared to 22% for both these year groups in 2014.

5% of year 7 and 2% of year 10 pupils wanted to start their own business (a new option for this year's survey).

Again only 1% said they would be unemployed when they leave school, same figure as 2014.

This figures shows that it was boys who responded to this, the figure for girls was 0%.

This shows that pupils have raised their aspirations and more are saying they are likely to carry on with education when they leave school and 99% of boys and 100% girls have said they either want a job or to continue in education, although 18% in total are still considering their options.

When asked if they felt their school council made a difference, only 529 (17%) of pupils said yes (down from 18% in 2014), 933 (30%) said that they didn't know whether their school council made a difference (same as 2014), 1182 (38%) said their school council did not make a

difference and 466 (15%) said that they didn't realise they had a school council (this has reduced from 17% in 2014)

Y7 are more likely to feel their school council makes a difference (24%) compared to Y10 at (10%).

## 9. Out of School

Pupils were asked what activities they did outside of school. 591 (19%) pupils said they were involved with volunteering or a community group (a slight decrease from 20% in 2014).

Year 7 are more likely to volunteer than Y10 and girls more likely to volunteer than boys.

### 9.1 Internet Use & Safety

Pupils were asked about internet usage and safety using the internet.

3079 (99%) of pupils said they use the internet.

The table below ranks their preferences

YEAR 7 & Y10 Using the Internet		
Ranking	Year 7	Year 10
1	Social Media (Facebook, Twitter etc.)	Social Media (Facebook, Twitter etc.)
2	Music	Music
3	Games	Shopping
4	Research/Homework	Games
5	Shopping	Research/Homework
6	Television	
7	Meeting New People	

Neither boys nor girls in Y10 said they used the internet to watch television or meet new people.

The option chosen of meeting new people was chosen by 81pupils (5%) of Y7.

These options follow the same trend as in 2014, with social media i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram being the main reason why pupils said they use the internet with over 80% choosing this as their first option.

Out of the 3079 number of pupils that said they use the internet, they were asked what are the main risks using the internet.

Overall cyber bullying was identified as the main risk by 985 young people (32%)

- 36% of Y7 said cyber bullying was the main risk (down from 38% in 2014)
- 27% of Y10 said cyber bullying was the main risk (up from 23% in 2014)

Second highest risk was someone hacking your information at 22% (same as 2014)

Security risk such as viruses and people lying about who they are on the internet were both rated as a risk by 14% of pupils in Y7 & Y10

7% of pupils in Y7 & Y10 did not feel that there are any risks when using the internet (this is an increase from 6% in 2014)

All 3110 pupils were asked about internet safety, overall 3048 (98%) of pupils had learned about internet safety (same figure as 2014). Out of these 3048 young people -

- 65% learned about internet safety at school (68% in 2014)
- 29% learned about internet safety at home (26% in 2014)
- 2% learned about internet safety on-line (same as 2014)
- 3% learned about internet safety through friends (2% in 2014)

Year 7 pupils were more likely to have learned about internet safety 99% of Y7 said they had learned about internet safety, compared to 97% of Y10



Girls were more aware of internet safety with 99% saying they had learned about internet safety, compared to 97% of boys.

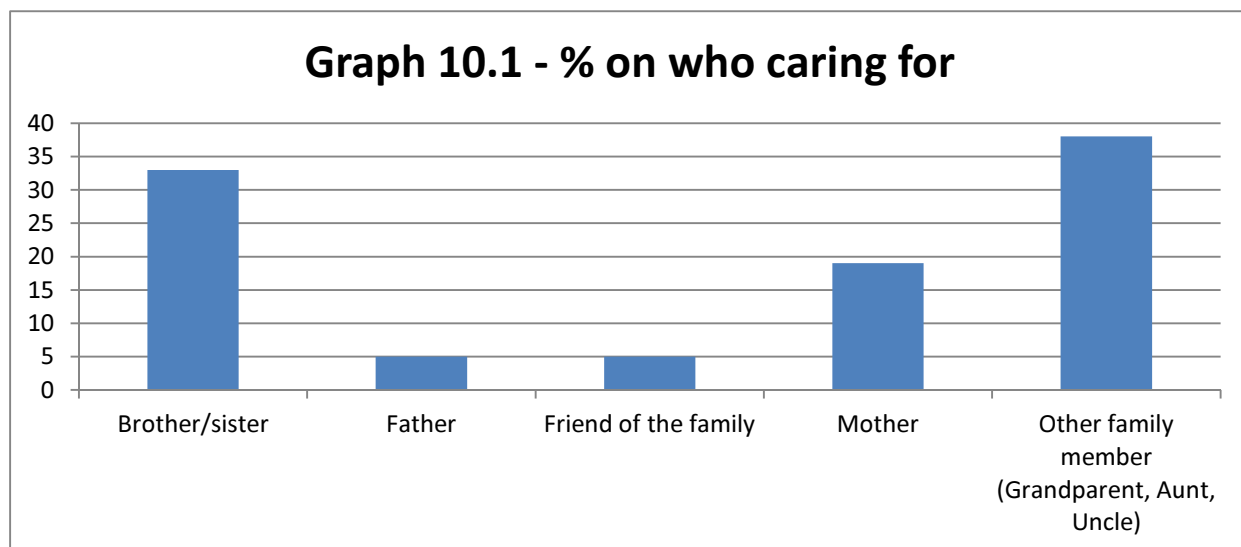
## 10. Young Carers

653 (21%) of pupils consider themselves to be young carers; this has decreased significantly by 8% from 2014 when the % was 29%. This figure is nearer to the trend from the 2011 census figure of 12% of young carers for all age groups.

This could imply that either there is a higher percentage of younger carers, a greater awareness amongst young people or that there is some misunderstanding around the question of what a young carer is. For the 2015 survey the question was reworded slightly to ask - Do you look after/care for someone in your family? Further information was also provided about being a young carer - looking after/caring for someone isn't about a one-off task. It is a person who has to support someone in their family because they are unable to do things for themselves.

As with last year's survey, a higher number of year 7 pupils said that they were young carers than year 10 pupils (25% compared to Y10 - 15%).

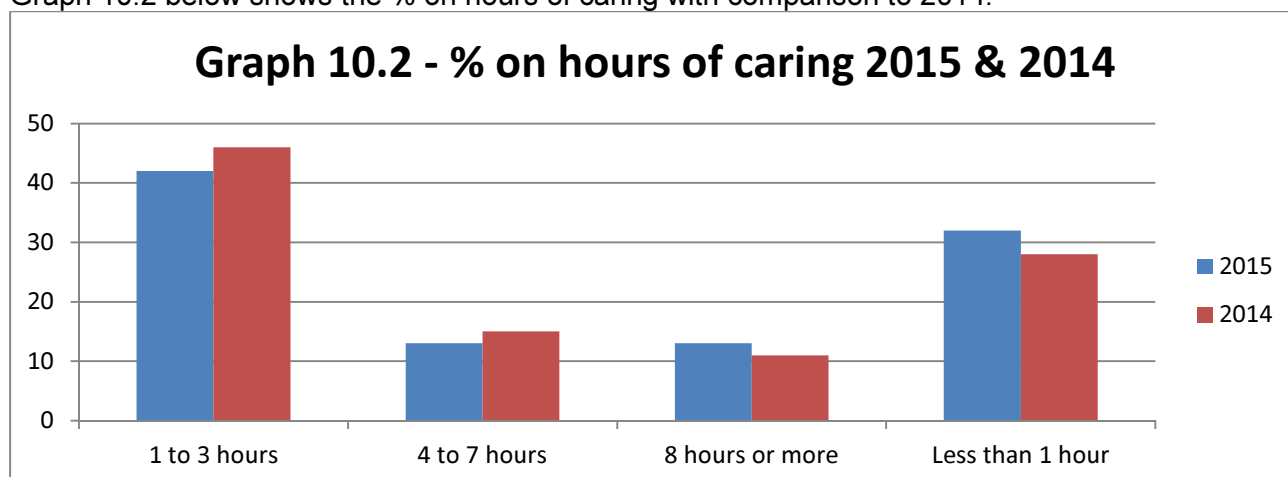
Out of the 653 young people who identified themselves as young carers we asked them who they care for. Graph 10.1 below shows the % breakdown



When asked about what are the 3 main things they do to help, the results are very similar for both year 7 and 10 and follow the same pattern as 2014. Helping around the house is the highest rated task that both Y7 & Y10 carry out, followed by helping to look after a brother or sister and for Y7 keeping someone company is third choice as a main task that pupils said they do. It is slightly different for Y10 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest choice equal with keeping someone company and helping with personal care both carried out by 16% of those saying they are carers.

Tasks such as support with personal care, help with medication are more likely to be carried out by a Y10 pupil than Y7.

Graph 10.2 below shows the % on hours of caring with comparison to 2014.



From 2015 results out of the 653 pupils who identified themselves as young carers there has been an increase in the % of pupils saying they care more than 8 hours per day. 89 pupils said they are caring more than 8 hours per day. Caring for between 1 to 3 and 4 to 7, the % has reduced from 2014.

There has been a positive increase in the number of pupils who have heard about the Young Carers Service, this has increased to 33% (from 26% in 2014). Y10 were more likely to have heard about this service and also more girls than boys had heard about the service.

The majority of pupils would prefer to speak with either a parent or a family member about being a young carer, the same as 2014, but there has been an increase overall in the number of pupils who would speak to a member of staff at a school.

The impact of the Young Carers card varies between Y7 & Y10. Out of the 5 schools who have participated in the pilot of the young carers, 2 of them did not participate in the survey; therefore analysis can only be carried out on 3 of the schools

#### **Impact Young Carers Card - Y7**

2 out of 3 schools saw an increase in the number of young people who would choose to speak with someone from the Young Carers service or a member of staff at school about their caring role.

2 out of 3 schools saw an increase in the number of young people who had heard of the Young Carers service

#### **Impact Young Carers Card - Y10**

1 out of 3 schools saw an increase in the number of young people who said they would speak to someone from Young Carers service about their caring role. There was no increase in the number of young people who would speak to a member of staff

2 out of 3 schools saw an increase in the number of young people who had heard of the Young Carers service

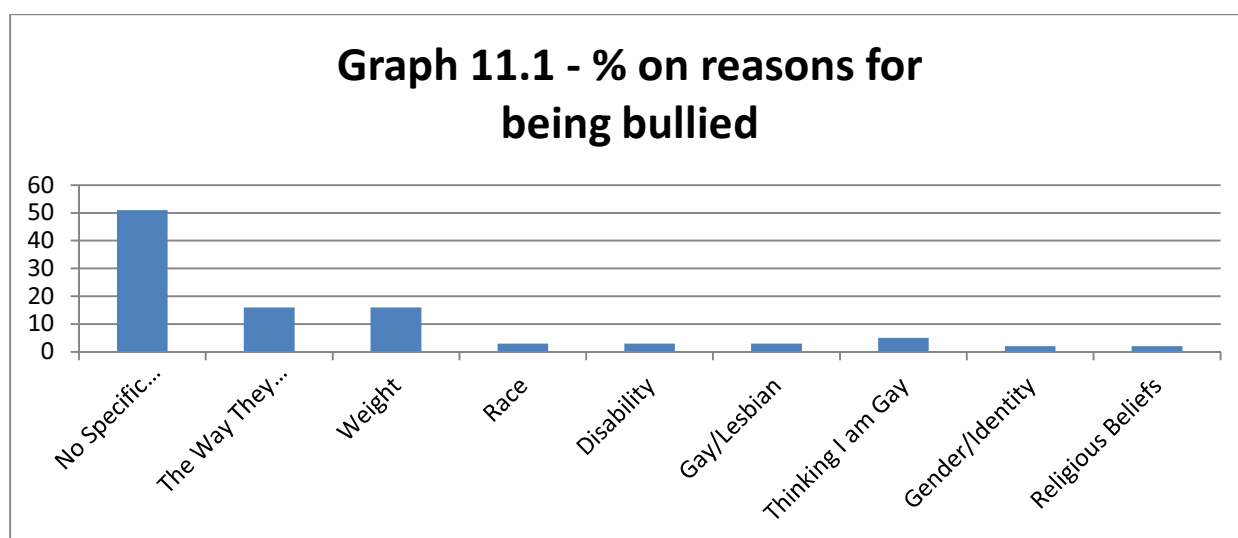
## 11. Bullying

There has been a positive decrease in the number of young people who said they have been bullied. This has decreased to 684 (22%) (From 28% in 2014). This has followed the trend over past 3 years, where bullying rates have continued to decrease.

A higher % of Y7 pupils said they were bullied 388 (24%) compared to Y10 296 (20%), this has also followed the trend of previous years. Also a higher % of girls said they were bullied (24%) compared to boys (19%).

Of those 684 pupils who said they had been bullied the most frequent form of bullying is verbal (71%), followed by physical 14% - this is a change from 2014 when being ignored was the next most frequent form of bullying, this is 3<sup>rd</sup> most frequent in 2015 at 7%. Cyber bullying is at 6% and bullying by sexually inappropriate touching/actions/comments is at 1%.

Graph 11.1 below shows the main reasons that the 684 pupils said why they had been bullied.



Out of the 684 pupils who said they had been bullied

- 53% of pupils said bullying occurred during school time (increase from 49% in 2014).
- 10% of pupils said bullying occurred out of school time (decrease from 11% in 2014)
- 37% of pupils said bullying occurred during both of these (decrease from 40% in 2014)

Pupils were asked about reporting bullying

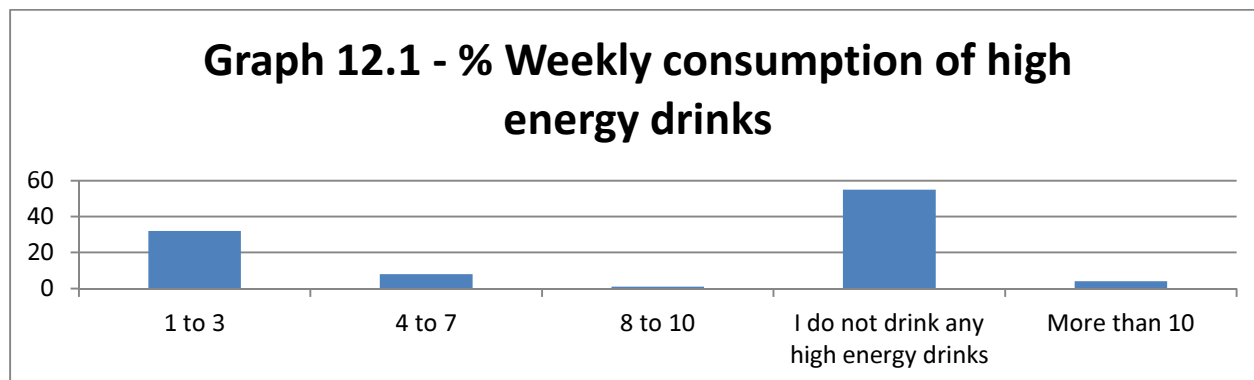
164 (24%) of pupils did not report bullying (increase of 1% from 2014 when 23% did not report bullying) 520 (76%) did report the bullying. Year 10 are more likely to not report bullying 36% compared to Y7 at 15%. Also boys are more likely not to report bullying 28% compared to 21% girls.

Out of those 520 pupils that did report the bullying 32% told a parent or family member (36% in 2014). 28% told a member of staff at school (27% in 2014). 11% told a friend (8% in 2014). Same as 2014 1% told a Youth Worker and 4% did not know who to report bullying to (3% in 2014).

Out of those 520 pupils that did report the bullying 35% did not get help (36% in 2014)

## 12. Smoking, Drinking and Drugs

The improvement on the consumption of high energy caffeinated drinks such as Red Bull and Monster has continued in 2015. Pupils saying they do not consume these drinks has increased to 1710 (55%) (from 50% in 2014). Graph 12.1 below shows the number of drinks consumed per week by the 1400 (45%) who said they do consume these drinks.



Boys are more likely to drink these drinks with 48% of boys saying they do not drink them, and 62% of girls saying they do not drink them. It was equal between Y7 & Y10 on their likelihood to drink these drinks.

### 12.1 Smoking

When asked about smoking, 2053 (66%) of pupils said that their home was smoke-free, an explanation was given for this as nobody living in their household is a smoker. (same as 2014).

To support with the campaign against the peer pressure to smoke, a question was added to the survey in 2014 whether pupils thought it was OK for young people of their age to smoke.

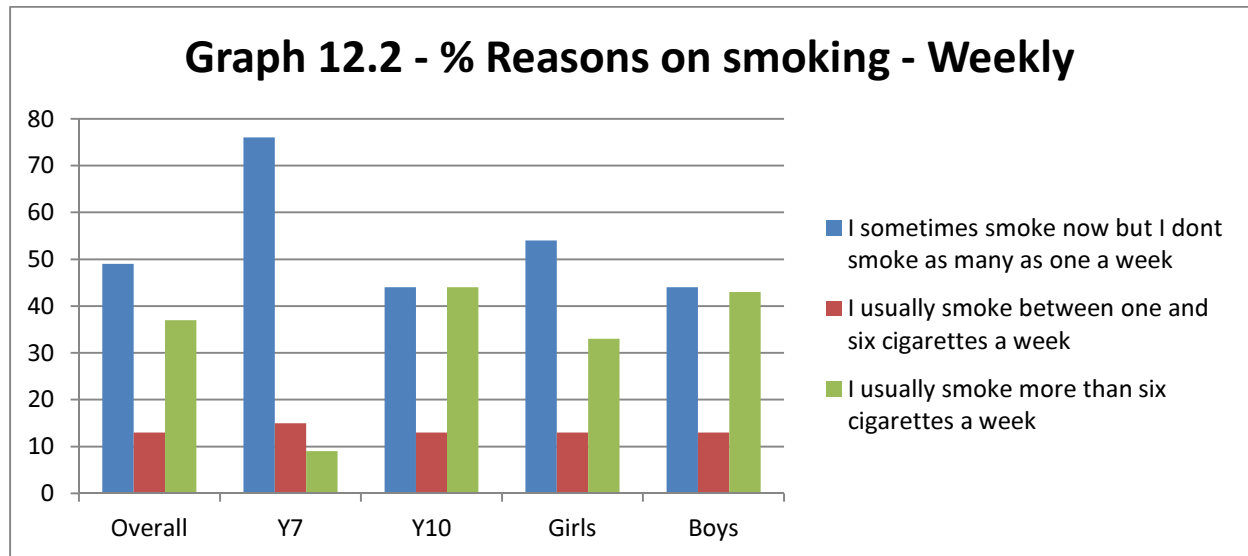
In 2015 (373) 12% of young people said it was OK to smoke, this has improved from 2014 when (14%) said it was OK to smoke

This decrease has been due to the thoughts of Y10 pupils changing. In 2015 19% of Y10 said it was OK to smoke (25% in 2014). In 2015 5% of Y7 said it was OK to smoke (3% in 2014).

Slightly more boys said it was OK to smoke in 2015, this has changed in 2014 more girls said it was OK to smoke.

Pupils are asked if they smoke cigarettes now, overall 188 (6%) of pupils said they smoked (reduced from 7% in 2014). The information from the results of the What About Youth National survey said that 8% of young people are current smokers. 33 (2%) of year 7 pupils said they smoked (same as 2014) compared to 155 (10%) of Y10 (12% in 2014). It is equal the number of boys and girls who said they smoked.

The table below shows the % of number of cigarettes smoked per week by the 188 pupils who said they smoked this is 2% of Y7 and 10% of Y10.



There has been improvement in each category on the numbers of young people who say they smoke.

To again support with the peer pressure around smoking questions were asked to those 2922 (94%) of young people who have said they do not smoke, they were asked to best describe themselves.

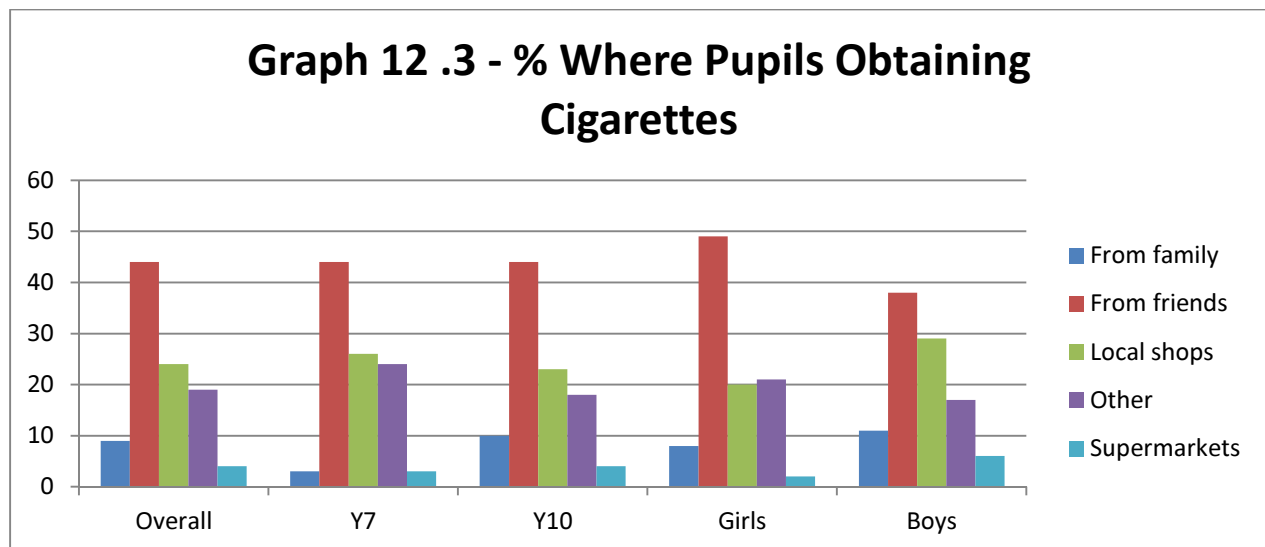
- Overall 80% said they have never smoked. 92% of Y7 (93% in 2014) and 66% Y10 (70% in 2014)
- Overall 11% said they have tried it once. 5% of Y7 (same as 2014) and 16% Y10 (20% in 2014)
- Overall 4% said they used to smoke by don't now. 1% Y7 (2% in 2014) and 7% Y10 (10% in 2014)

National information from the What About Youth results states nationally that 76% of young have either never smoked or do not smoke now,.

Information on Health & Social Care Information Centre who carried out a survey in 2014 of 6173, 11 to 15 year old and the results said that 18% said they had smoked at least once, therefore 82% are none smokers. Nationally this is the lowest level since this type of survey being in 1982. Rotherham's figure from this cohort says that 80% have never smoked.

### 12.2 Obtaining Cigarettes

The 188 who said they smoked were then asked where they mainly got their cigarettes from. Graph 12.3 shows the results below

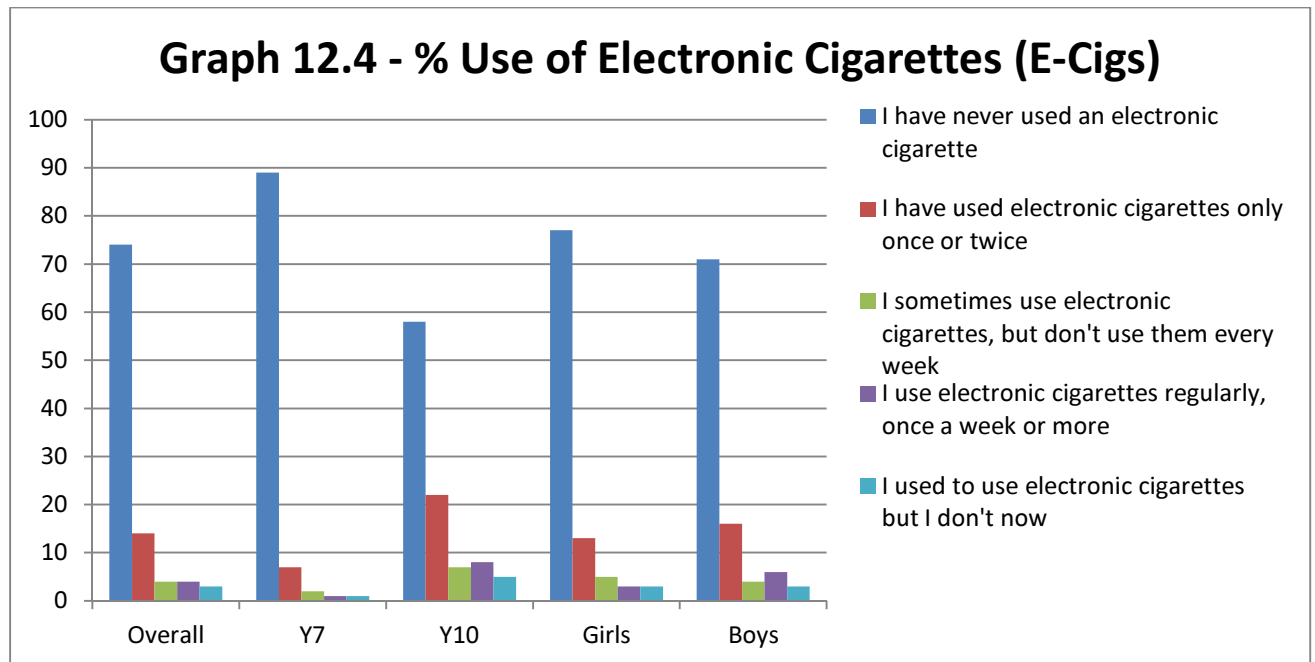


There has been a significant change from the 2015 results; overwhelmingly young people are most likely to get their cigarettes from their friends, which has replaced local shops as the most popular choice for obtaining cigarettes.

The campaign against the sale of underage cigarettes of writing out to all local shops in vicinity of secondary schools, the issue of warnings issued to shop owners and 40 educational visits made to local shops, does appear to be having an impact. The intelligence from trading standards report that the sale of cigarettes to under-age young people is diminishing. In 2014 50% of Y10 and 38% of Y7 who said they smoked, said they obtained they cigarettes from local shops. In 2015 this had reduced to Y10 23% and Y7 26%.

Although there has been a reduction in the number of pupils who have said they actually smoked, there has also been a reduction in the number of pupils who have said they would like to stop smoking; this has reduced to 21% from 23% in 2014

Information about the use of electronic cigarettes was captured again in 2015 survey  
Graph 12.4 below shows the use of electronic cigarettes



1445 (89%) of Y7 pupils said they have never used an electronic cigarette (same as 2014)  
862 (58%) of Y10 pupils said they have never used an electronic cigarette (62% in 2014)

Of the 803 pupils that said they use electronic cigarettes, 1% of Y7 and 5% of Y10 use them and smoke normal cigarettes too, similar results to 2014. 8% of Y7 (10% in 2014) and 23% (17% in 2014) use electronic cigarettes but don't smoke normal cigarettes and 4% of Y7 (6% in 2014) and 6% of Y10 (same as 2014) said they use electronic cigarettes to help them stop smoking.

The data is showing that there has been an increase in the number of young people in Y10 that are using electronic cigarettes, in particular boys are more likely to say they are using these than girls.

Information from the Health & Social Care Information Centre who carried out a survey in 2014 of 6173 11 to 15 year olds found that 22% had used an e-cigarette at least once; Rotherham is higher than this at 26%

### 12.3 Alcohol

To support with the campaign against peer pressure to drink alcohol, a question was added to the survey in 2014 whether pupils thought it was OK for young people of their age to get drunk. In 2014 28% of young people said it was OK to get drunk, this has reduced to 778 (25%) in 2015. In 2015 44% of Y10 said it was OK to get drunk (49% in 2014). In 2015 7% of Y7 said it was OK to get drunk (same in 2014). Slightly more boys said it was OK to get drunk than girls; this is the same for 2014 & 2015 results.

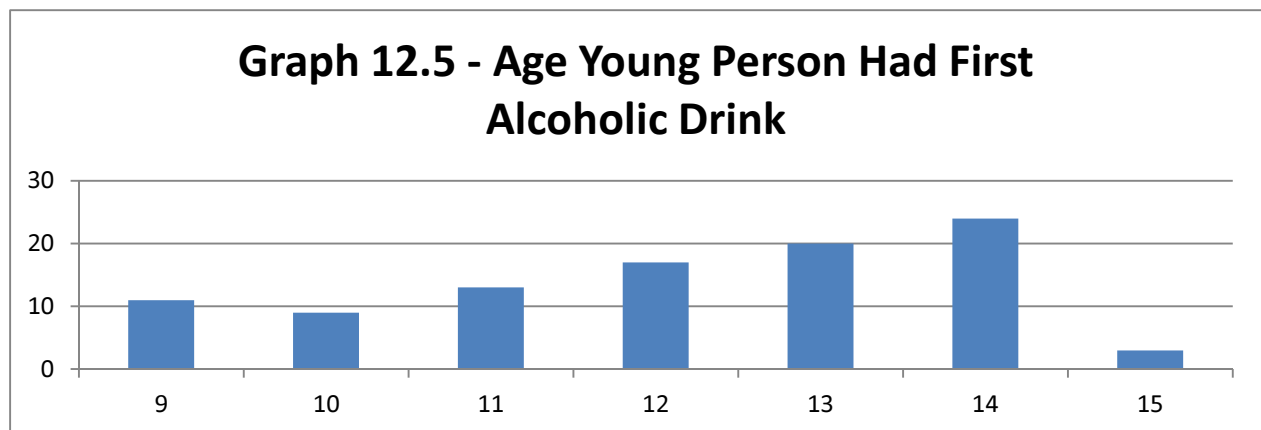
A new and a revised question was asked in 2015 to better describe the first experience of an alcoholic drink and to help to find out what age they were.

Have you ever had a proper alcoholic drink (a whole drink, not just a small sip)?

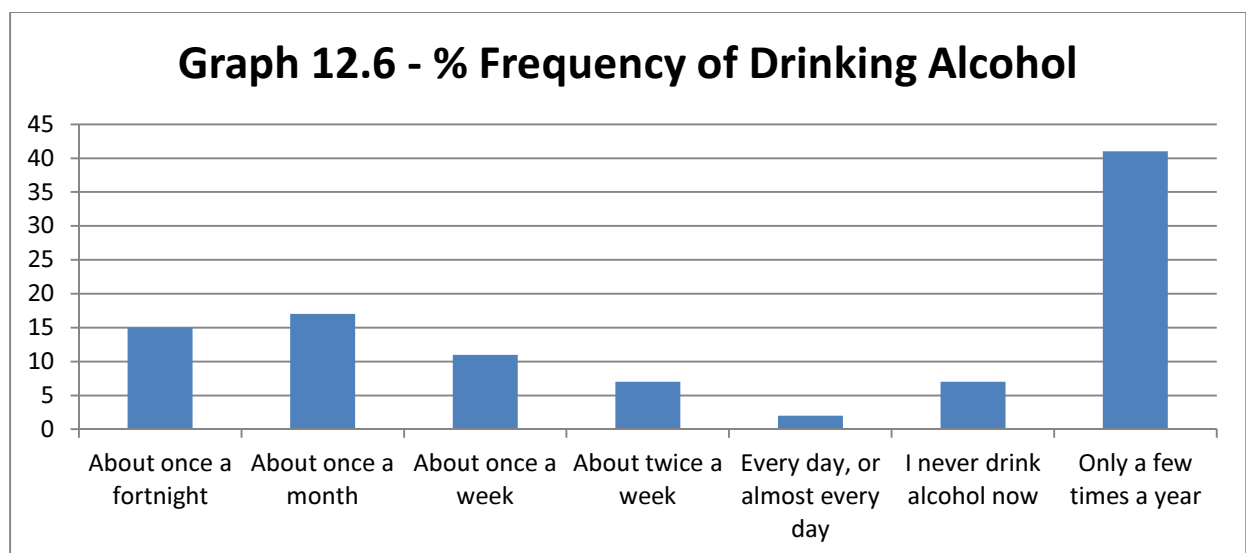
Overall 1680 (54%) of all pupils responded no they have not had a proper alcoholic drink  
 1241 (76%) Y7 responded that they had not had a proper alcoholic drink (63% in 2014)  
 439 (29%) Y10 responded that they had not had a proper alcoholic drink (24% in 2014)  
 This improvement may be due to the improved wording of this question around having a whole drink, rather than just a sip.

Information from the Health & Social Care Information Centre who carried out a survey in 2014 of 6173, 11 to 15 year olds 38% of young people had tried alcohol at least once, the lowest proportion since 1982; this is a lower % than Rotherham where 46% said they have tried alcohol at least once.

Graph 12.5 below show the responses to the new question offered to those 1430 (46%) who said they have drunk alcohol, what age did you try your first alcoholic drink



Graph 12.6 below shows the % frequency of those 1430 (46%) who said they drink alcohol. These are revised choices from the 2014 survey to match the questions in the What About Youth national survey.



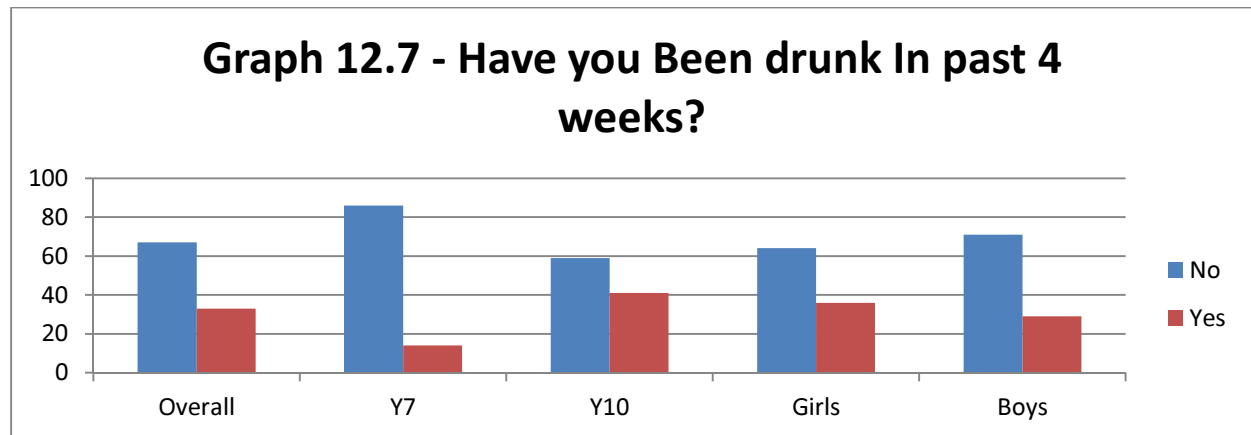
2% of Y7 said they have a drink daily/weekly (same as drinking regularly option in 2014).  
 10% of Y10 said they have a drink daily/weekly (as drinking regularly option in 2014)  
 The same % of male/female said they drank daily/weekly.

41% of combined Y7 & Y10 recorded their drinking as only a few times per year  
 In 2014 31% of combined Y7 & Y10 classed their drinking as social/infrequent.



Again similar % of male/female split classing their drinking as only a few times per year

New questions were added to the 2015 survey to match questions in the What About Youth national survey. This question was asked to those 1430 (46%) who said they drink alcohol, responses detailed below in graph 12.7

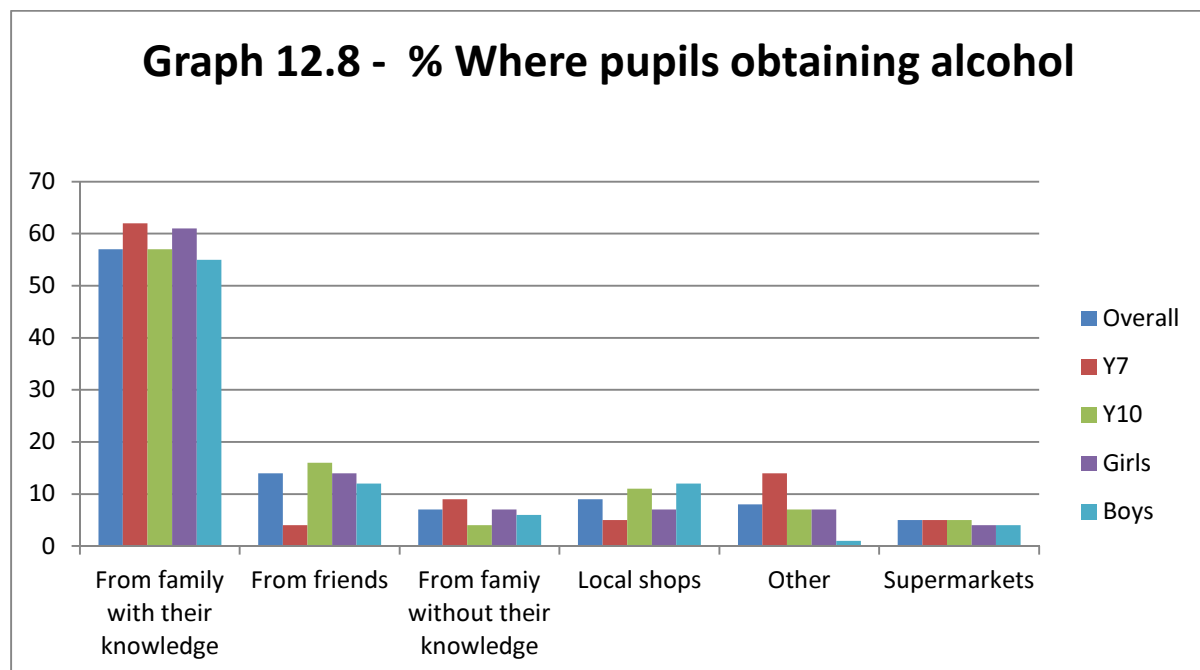


For the pupils that responded yes to the question that they had got drunk in the past 4 weeks, they were then asked if this had caused any problems.

- 2% of Y10 females said they had got into trouble from their parents/carers
- 2% of Y10 females said they were unable to go out
- 1% of Y10 males said they were unable to play sport
- Less than 1% overall were unable to attend school
- No pupils had to seek medical attention from doctor or hospital

#### 12.4 Obtaining Alcohol

The 1430 pupils who said they drank alcohol were then asked where they obtained their alcohol from. Graph 12.8 below details their responses



As in the previous year, the majority of both year 7 and 10 pupils get their alcohol from family members, followed by friends for Y10 but for Y7 this is from family without their knowledge.

The results for pupils being able to obtain alcohol from local shops is similar to 2014 and more boys seem to be able to obtain alcohol from local shops rather than girls.

Again in 2015 supermarkets were the lowest location where pupils can obtain alcohol from which suggest that supermarkets are continuing with their strict enforcement for ID and enforcing the law on underage purchasing of alcohol.

Of the pupils that said they drink alcohol 10% of Y7 said they would like help to stop drinking (18% in 2014) and 3% of Y10 said they would like help to stop drinking (4% in 2014)

### 12.5 Drugs

To support with the campaign against peer pressure to try drugs, a question was added to the survey in 2014 whether pupils thought it was OK for young people of their age to use drugs.

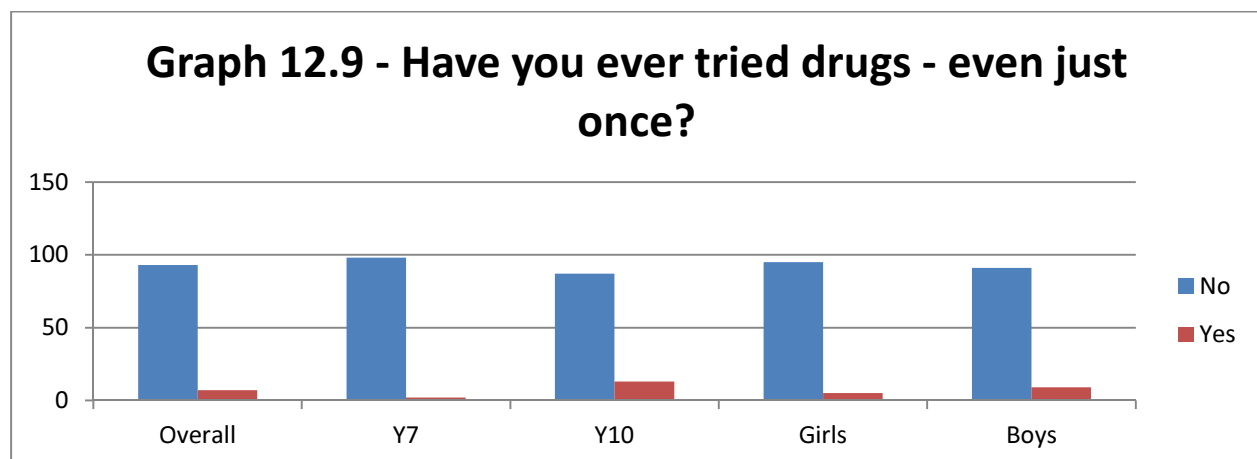
In 2014 3% of Y7 said it was OK to use drugs, this has reduced to 32 (2%) in 2015

In 2014 12% of Y10 said it was OK to use drugs, this has reduced to 119 (8%) in 2015

7% of boys said it was OK to use drugs, compared to 3% of girls

This has changed since 2014 when there was less than 1% difference in the opinions of boys and girls.

Graph 12.9 below shows the responses to a new question which was added for 2015 survey 32 (2%) Year 7 have tried some type of drug and 193 (13%) of Y10 said they have tried some type of drug



Information from the Health & Social Care Information Centre who carried out a survey in 2014 of 6173, 11 to 15 year old and the results said 15% of pupils said they had tried some drug. This is an higher average than Rotherham

The pupils were asked if and how often they had taken various types of drugs. The results are shown below and are split into separate graphs for year 7 and year 10 responses:

### 12.6 Highlights on Y7 and use of drugs

From previous survey results solvents has been the most popular drug tried by Y7.

The 2015 results show this has changed, out of the 32 (2%) of Y7 who said they had tried drugs

- 0% girls and 20% of boys have tried solvents
- 20% girls and 20% of boys have tried cannabis
- 20% girls and 20% of boys have tried legal highs

### 12.7 Highlights from Y10 use of drugs

From the 2014 survey results cannabis was the most popular drug tried by Y10

The 2015 results show this is still the same, out of the 193 (13%) of Y10 who said they had tried drugs

- 3% of girls and 6% of boys have tried solvents
- 2% of girls and 3% of boys have tried magic mushrooms
- 15% of girls and 24% of boys have tried cannabis
- 3% of girls and 3% of boys have tried ecstasy
- 2% of girls and 3% of boys have tried LSD
- 2% of girls and 3% of boys have tried Amphetamines
- 2% of girls and 6% of boys have tried cocaine
- 2% of girls and 2% of boys have tried heroin
- 2% of girls and 3% of boys have tried mephedrone
- 0% of girls and 3% of boys have tried ketamine
- 3% of girls and 8% of boys have tried legal highs

The use of solvents has almost disappeared from Year 7 with only 6 boys in Y7 saying they have tried solvents. The use of solvents in Y10 shows that 6 girls and 12 boys say they have tried them.

Cannabis is the highest tried drug with 29 girls and 46 boys in Y10 trying this drug. Whilst in Y7 6 girls and 6 boys said they have tried cannabis.

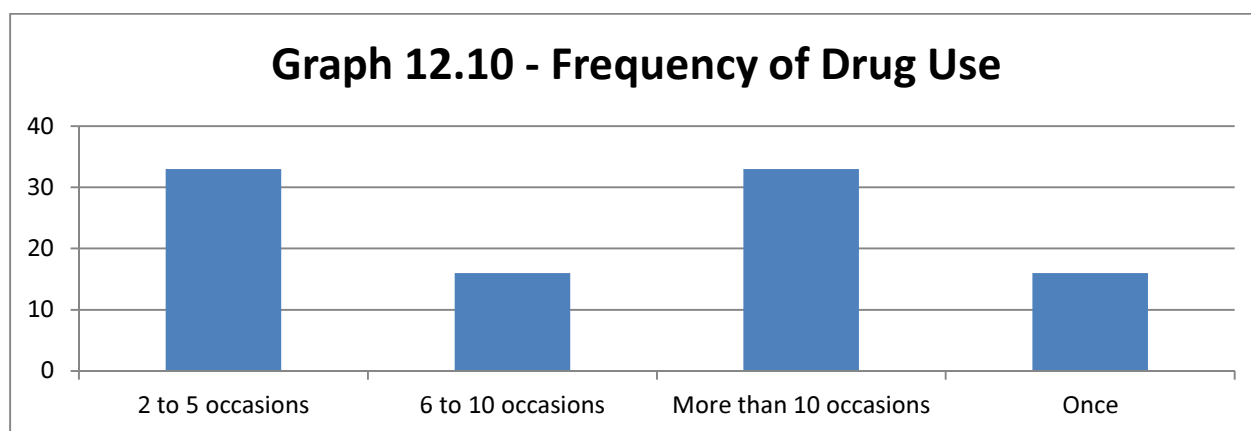
Legal Highs has increased in young people saying they have tried this drug

- Y10 -15 boys and 6 girls have tried this type of drug
- Y7 - 6 girls and 6 boys have tried this type of drug

Out of the overall 225 pupils that said they have tried some type of drug

- 51% have tried this in the last month (between May to July 2015)
- 33% have tried this in the last year (between July 2014 to June 2015)
- 16% have tried this over 1 year ago (before June 2014)

Out of the overall 225 pupils that said they have tried some type of drug, they were asked how frequent this use drugs. Graph 12.10 below show their responses

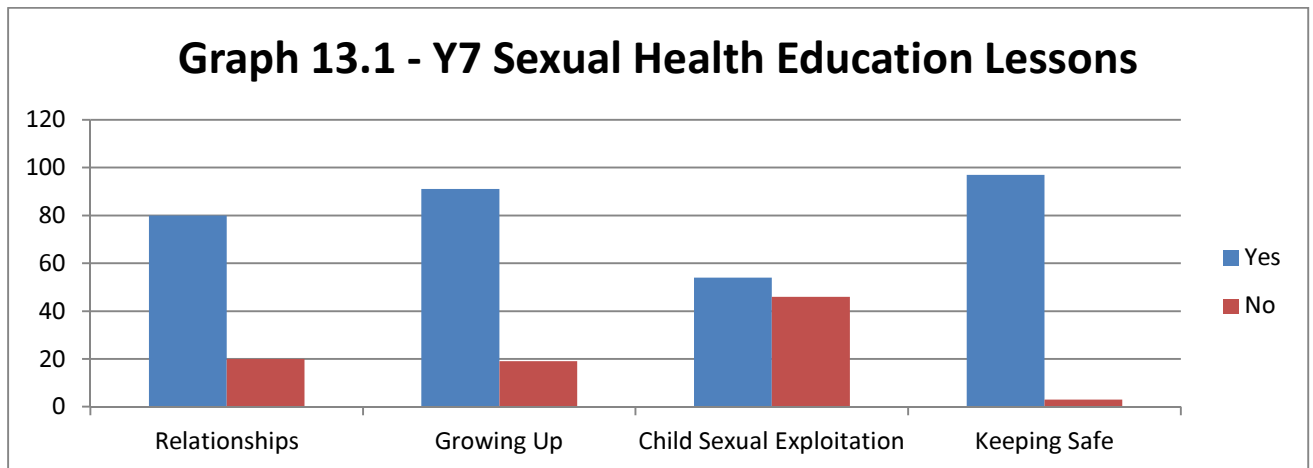


Overall out of 225 pupils that said they have tried some type of drug 11% would like help to stop taking drugs, this has reduced slightly from 12% in 2014.

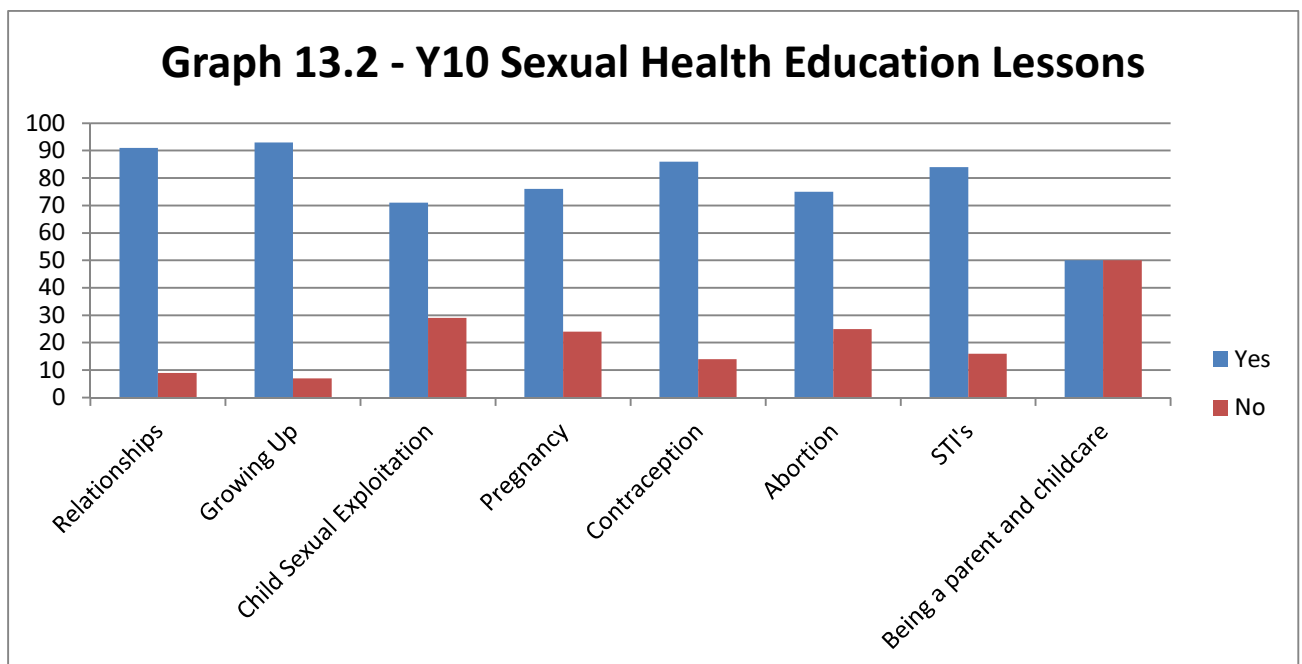
### 13. Sexual Health

In this section pupils were asked about what they have been taught at school in sexual health lessons. The survey looked at various individual sexual health topics, but different questions were asked of Y7 to Y10. Pupils were asked if they had been taught about the subject at school or not

Y7- Graph 13.1 below shows the responses from 1624 pupils in Y7



Y10 – Graph 13.2 below shows the response from 1486 pupils in Y10



The questions in relation to the teaching of child sexual exploitation was not asked for Y7 in 2014, but it was for Y10 and the response in 2014 was 60% of Y10 had been taught about this subject, therefore there has been an 11% increase in the number of young people in Y10 saying they have been taught about this subject. There is however 46% of Y7 and 29% of Y10 who said they have not been taught about child sexual exploitation.

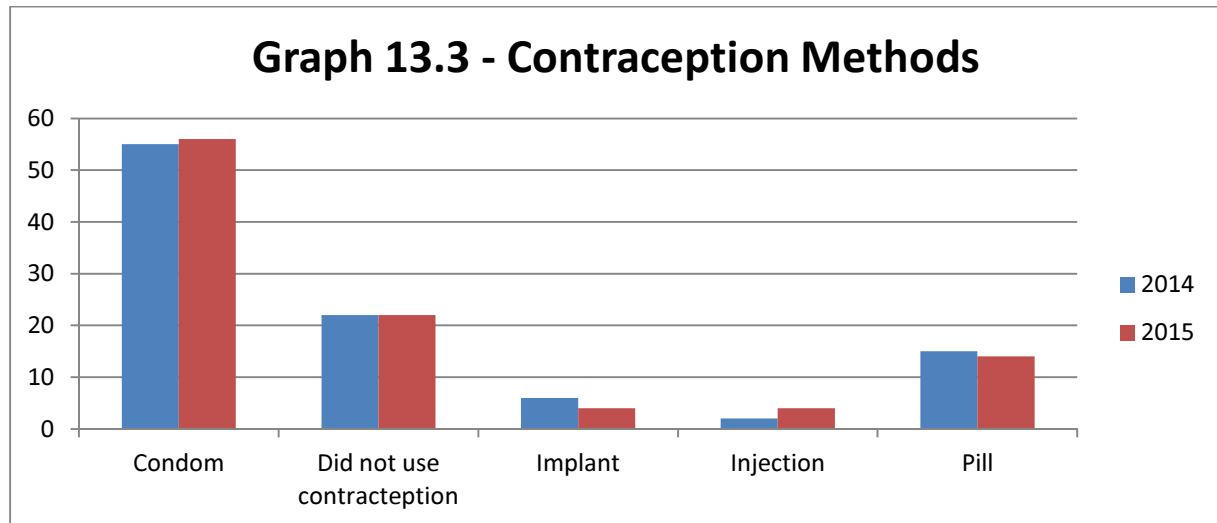
New questions were developed for 2014 survey around sexual activity. In 2014 25% of Y10 said they have had sex, in 2015 this has reduced to (431) 23%.

Slightly more boys said they have had sex, than girls.

Of these 431 pupils who said they have had sex 30 pupils (7%) said they have had sex after drinking alcohol this is a reduction from the 11% in 2014.

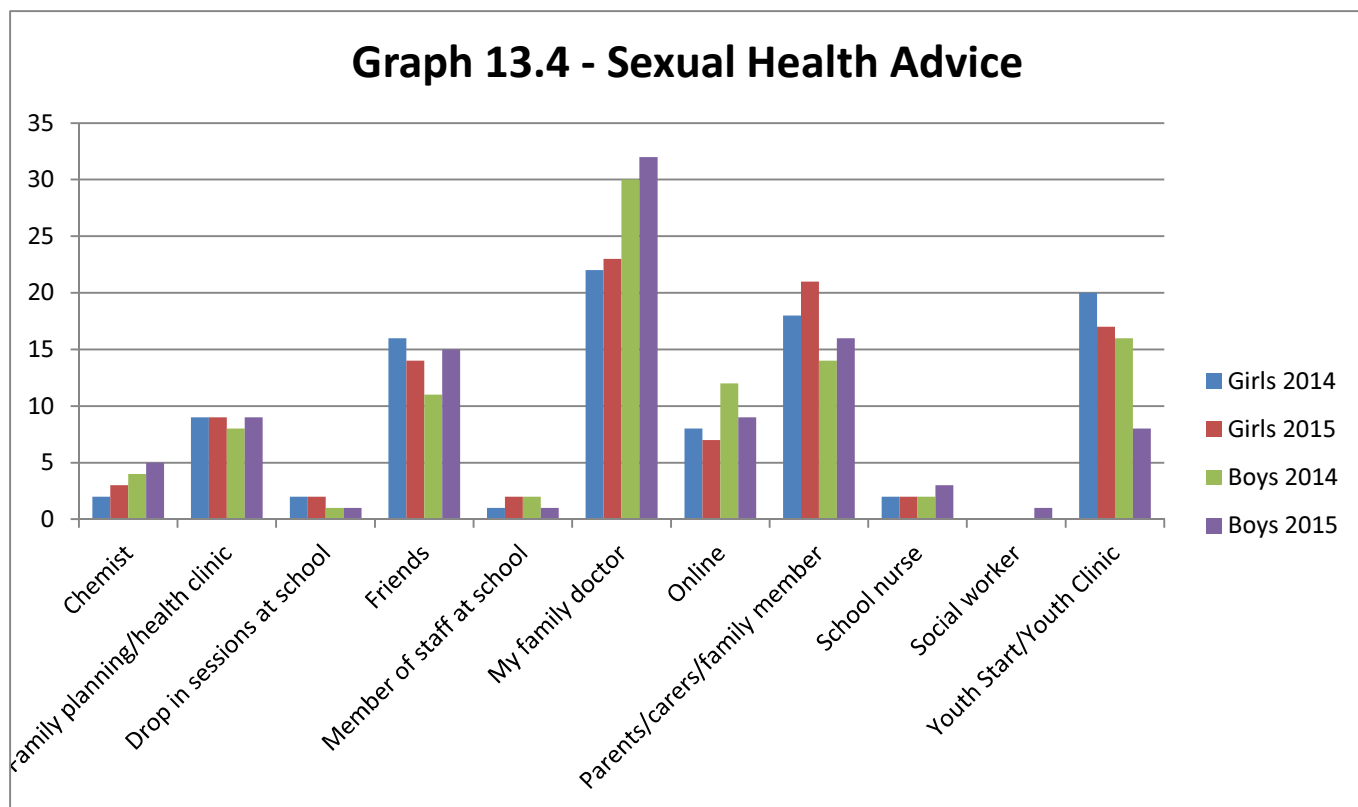
Questions were then asked to the 431 pupils who said they have had sex, about what type of contraception they used.

Graph 13.3 below shows information about the types of contraception they used 2014 & 2015.



The results for methods of contraception used is similar for both 2014 and 2015. Pupils saying they did not used contraception remains the same at 22%.

Year 10 pupils were then all asked where they would go for sexual health advice, information and services (split into male and female responses 2014/2015), detailed in graph 13.4 below



From the results in 2015 there has been an increase in the number of young people who said they would discuss or access sexual health service with their family doctor or discuss with their parents/carers. Boys are more likely to visit their family doctor rather than girls and girls are more likely to discuss this with parents/carers. There has been an increase in the number of pupils accessing information on-line, but a reduction in the number of pupils visiting a Youth Start/Youth Clinic for advice.

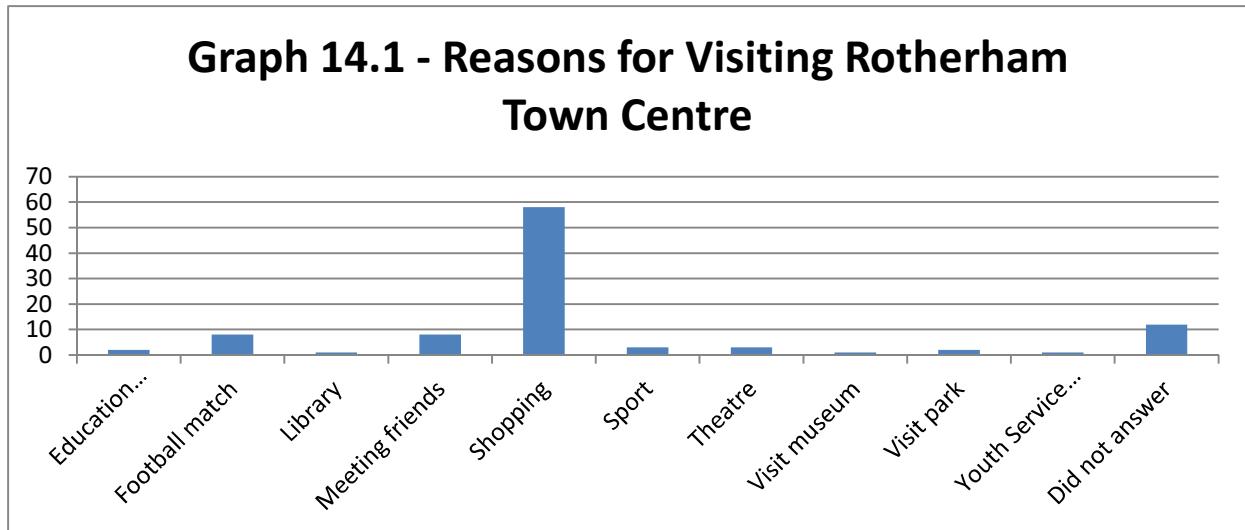
Both Y7 & Y10 were asked if they knew who their school nurse was, 45% said yes, this has increased from (40%) in 2014. More Y7 knew you their school nurse was (48%) compared to (41%) of Y10, this is change from 2014 results when more Y10 knew who their school nurse was.

To capture information about the use of Youth Start/Youth Clinic, pupils in Y7 & Y10 were asked if they had ever visited one of these, overall 13% said they had (same % as 2014). More Y10 have attended 14% compared to 11% Y7.

## 14. Your Local Town and Community

### 14.1 Town Centre

To capture information about whether young people visit the Rotherham town centre, a series of questions are asked. Do you regularly go into Rotherham town centre (at least once a week). 965 (31%) of pupils said yes, this is down from 40% in 2014. For those 965 who said they visit the town centre further question is asked about the main reasons they visit they town centre, responses detailed in graph 14.1 below



Overwhelmingly the main reason that young people go into the town centre is for shopping (same as 2014).

Young People were then asked about how safe they feel when they are in their local town or community. There has been a positive increase in all locations for pupils feeling safe.

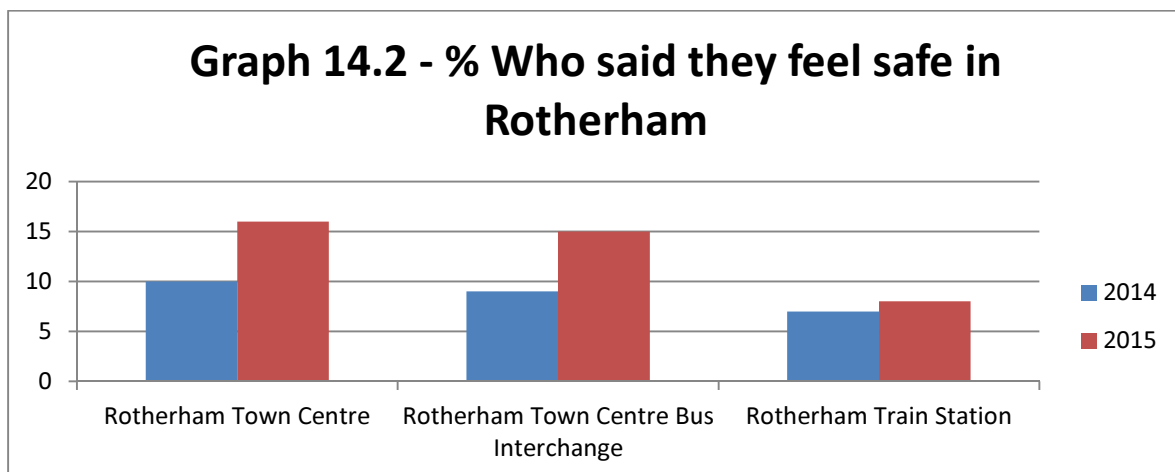
Overall 2923 (94%) of pupils said they feel safe at home (increase from 91% in 2014)  
 There was also an increase in pupils feel safe at school up to 1742 (56%) from (54% in 2014)  
 Feeling safe in their local community has also increased 1151 (37%) from (33% in 2014). Far more Y10 said they felt safe in their local community (43%) compared to (31%) Y7.

Pupils on the way to or from school who feel safe has increased from (27% in 2014) to 1337 (43%) in 2015. Again far more Y10 said they feeling safe when travel to and from school than Y7. Travelling on local buses or trains the number of pupils saying they feel safe has increased from (15% in 2014) to 622 (20%) in 2015

In 2014 for the first time, pupils were specifically asked about feeling safe in

- Rotherham Town Centre
- Rotherham Town Centre Bus Interchange
- Rotherham Train Station

Graph 14.2 below shows 2014 & 2015 responses, which show the improvements from the results in 2015.



There has been a positive increase in the number of pupils saying they feel safe in Rotherham Town centre locations. Again Y10 are more likely to feel safe in these locations.

Those 2612 who said they did not feel safe in town centre locations were asked to say why they didn't feel safe. The 3 main reasons are being approached by strangers (24%), gang fear (16%) and lack of visible security in these locations (11%)

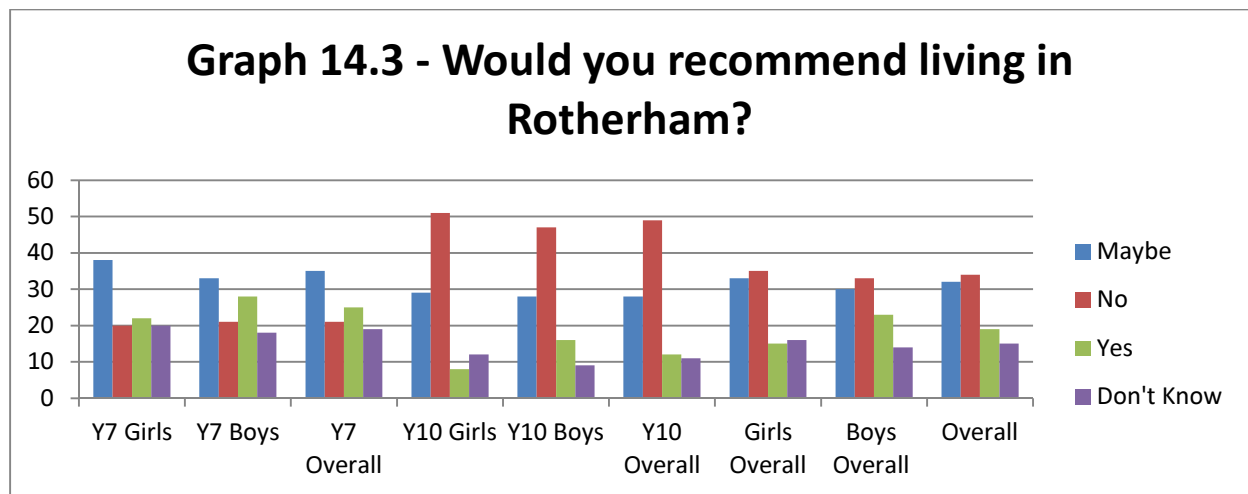
### 14.2 Your Local Community

Out of the young people who completed the survey, in relation to the facilities that pupils use the most in their local areas are shops (84%); Skate Parks (47%); Sports & Leisure facilities (43%); Country Parks (27%); Libraries (20%) and Museums/Theatre (12%)

Pupils were asked which statements best described the way in which people from different backgrounds get on with each other. The results show:

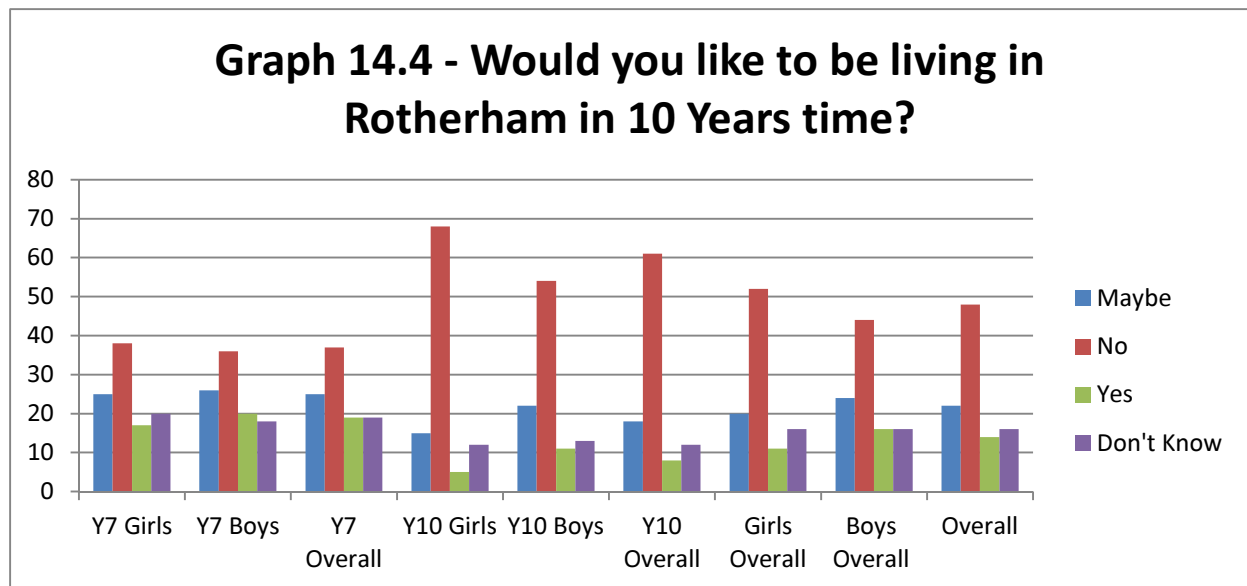
The majority of pupils felt that people from different backgrounds mixed well together in their area but there were a few problems (41% compared to 44% in 2014). The number saying that people from different groups do not get on well together has gone down from 9% last year to 6% this year.

New questions were asked for the 2015 survey to capture the views of young people around their thoughts about living in Rotherham. This will set a baseline on the views of young people, as Rotherham moves to become a child-centred borough, the graphs 14.3 and 14.4 below give the detailed responses to two specific questions the 3110 young people responding.



Overall 1057 (34%) gave the response that 'no' they would not recommend Rotherham to their family or friends as a good place to live. More Y10 gave a negative response to this question and more girls than boys gave a negative response.

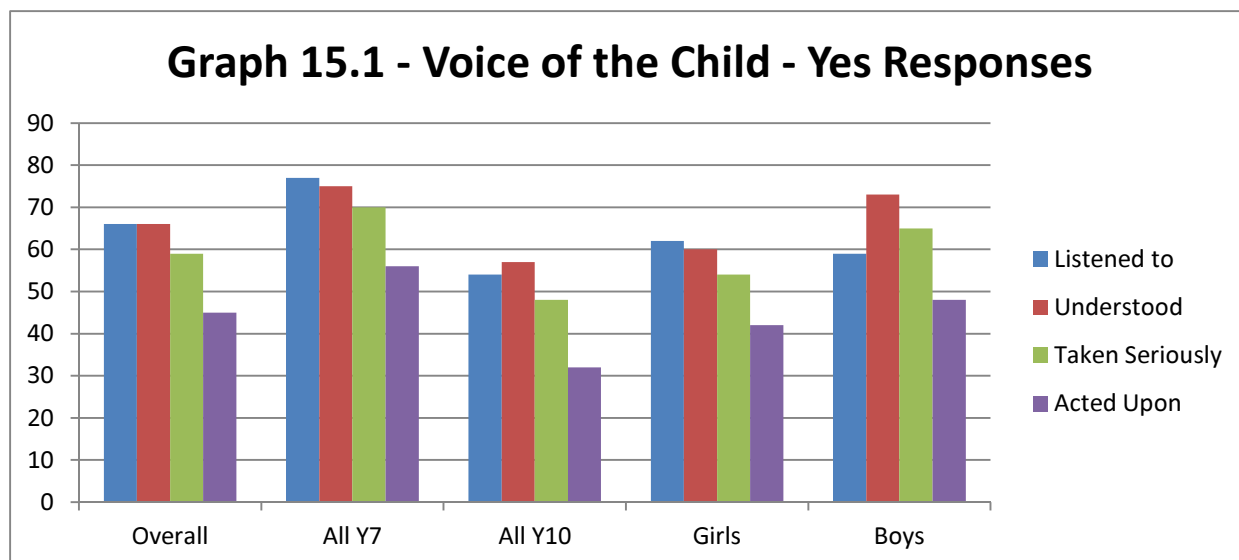




Overall 1493 (48%) gave the response that 'no' they would not like to be living in Rotherham in 10 years' time. Significantly a higher % of Y10 gave a negative response to this question, than Y7. Out of 1486 Y10 pupils 906 (61%) said they would not like to be living in Rotherham in 10 years' time compared to 1624 Y7 pupils 600 (37%).  
More girls than boys said they would not like to be living in Rotherham in 10 years' time.

## 15. Your Views & Experiences

New questions were added to the 2015 survey, to capture from young people whether they feel their views and experiences are listened to, understood, taken seriously and then acted upon. The number of pupils who responded yes to these questions, is detailed in the graph 15.1 below



There were positive responses regarding pupils being listened to, understood and taken seriously, but there is then a decrease, going as low as 475 pupils (32%) of Y10 saying what they have had to say is acted upon.

Further work needs to be done to understand their reasons for this and how this can be addressed moving forward.

Rotherham  
Voice of the Child  
Education Lifestyle Survey  
2015

Trends Analysis  
Year 7 and Year 10  
2013 - 2015

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## 1. Food and Drink

Are you worried about your weight: –  
Year 7

	2013		2014		2015	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Yes	17%	34%	19%	32%	20%	31%
No	83%	66%	81%	68%	80%	69%

Are you worried about your weight: –  
Year 10

	2013		2014		2015	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Yes	16%	57%	15%	42%	12%	38%
No	84%	43%	85%	58%	88%	62%

How many high energy drinks would you usually drink in one week (e.g. Red Bull/Monster) –  
Year 7

	2013	2014	2015
I do not drink energy drinks	59%	52%	56%
1-3	28%	33%	32%
4-7	8%	9%	7%
8-10	2%	2%	1%
10+	4%	5%	4%

How many high energy drinks would you usually drink in one week (e.g. Red Bull/Monster) –  
Year 10

	2013	2014	2015
I do not drink energy drinks	41%	42%	55%
1-3	39%	36%	29%
4-7	11%	12%	9%
8-10	3%	3%	2%
10+	7%	6%	6%

## 2. Feeling Safe

I usually feel safe when I am –  
Year 7

	2013	2014	2015
In my local community	26.9%	28%	31%
At home	89.7%	92%	94%
At school	51.3%	49%	51%
on the way to or from school	27.7%	20%	24%
On local buses or trains	17.5%	10%	14%
*In Rotherham town centre	11.8%	8%	10%
*At Rotherham Town Centre Bus Interchange	Not Asked	6%	13%
*At Rotherham Train Station		5%	2%
None of these		4%	-

If you have answered that you do not feel safe in \*Rotherham Town Centre, \*Rotherham Town Centre Bus Interchange or \*Train Station what is the main reason you do not feel safe in these locations –

Year 7

	2013	2014	2015
Lack of visible security i.e. police, warden	Not Asked	9%	10%
People standing outside pubs		11%	4%
Being approached by strangers		21%	24%
Being approached by drunks		5%	10%
Football match days		3%	3%
Being alone		12%	8%
Dark Nights		9%	4%
Poor lighting		6%	0%
Gang Fear		1%	13%

I usually feel safe when I am –  
**Year 10**

	2013	2014	2015
In my local community	30%	47%	40%
At home	90%	92%	94%
At school	53%	59%	67%
on the way to or from school	32%	38%	67%
On local buses or trains	21%	23%	32%
*In Rotherham town centre	13%	9%	18%
*At Rotherham Town Centre Bus Interchange	Not Asked	19%	20%
*At Rotherham Train Station		4%	18%

If you have answered that you do not feel safe in \*Rotherham Town Centre, \*Rotherham Town Centre Bus Interchange or \*Train Station what is the main reason you do not feel safe in these locations

**Year 10**

	2013	2014	2015
Lack of visible security i.e. police, warden	Not Asked	13%	11%
People standing outside pubs		2%	3%
Being approached by strangers		19%	20%
Being approached by drunks		12%	7%
Football match days		1%	4%
Being alone		11%	11%
Dark Nights		3%	7%
Poor lighting		1%	2%
Gang Fear		16%	17%

### 3. Smoking

In your opinion do you think it is OK for young people of your age to smoke? –  
**Year 7**

	2013		2014		2015	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Yes	Not Asked		3%	4%	6%	4%
No			97%	96%	94%	96%

Do you smoke cigarettes at all –  
**Year 7**

	2013		2014		2015	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Yes	Not Asked		2%	1%	3%	2%
No			98%	99%	97%	98%

In your opinion do you think it is OK for young people of your age to smoke? –  
**Year 10**

	2013		2014		2015	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Yes	Not Asked		28%	32%	23%	15%
No			72%	68%	77%	85%

Do you smoke cigarettes at all – **Year 10**

	2013		2014		2015	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Yes	Not Asked		12%	12%	8%	10%
No			88%	88%	92%	90%



#### 4. Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness

In School I have been taught about these topics:

##### Child Sexual Exploitation – Year 7

	2013	2014	2015
Yes	Not asked	Not asked	54%
No			46%

##### Child Sexual Exploitation – Year 10

	2013	2014	2015
Yes	Not asked	50%	53%
No		50%	47%

## 5. Leaving School

What do you hope to do when you leave school?

**Year 10**

	2013	2014	2015
Go to college to get qualifications then move to university	50%	43%	47%
Go to college then move to get a job	18%	21%	19%
Get a job straight from school	6%	6%	5%
Get an apprenticeship	12%	12%	9%
Start my own business	-	2%	1%
I haven't decided yet	13%	15%	18%
Be unemployed	1%	0%	1%

## Summary Sheet

### Cabinet/Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting Report – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016

#### Title

Consultation on the proposal for a planned closure of Silverwood and Cherry Tree House children's homes and the agreement to the relocation of Nelson Street Leaving Care Service to Hollowgate.

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

Yes

#### Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director of Children's and Young People's Services

#### Report Author(s)

Brent Lumley, Interim Responsible Individual - Children's Residential Service  
Linda Harper, Interim Strategic Lead for Commissioning, Children and Young People's Service

#### Ward(s) Affected

All

## Summary

- 1.1 Rotherham Council, as a developing 'Child Centred Borough', has a strong resounding ambition to move away from the legacy of poorly performing 'inadequate' services to a position of strength and confidence, which is reflected in the intention of the Children and Young People's Services Directorate to be rated 'outstanding' by 2018.
- 1.2 As part of this ambition Rotherham Council has reviewed the care offered across the whole of its residential care services for young people in order to ensure all those looked after by the authority, who are in need of residential care, receive the best possible care now and in the future.
- 1.3 Rotherham Council's 'Looked After Children and Care Leavers Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2015-2018' identified that too many Rotherham looked after children live in residential care and that more children need to be placed in a family based setting.
- 1.4 Following the approval of the Sufficiency Strategy, a comprehensive review of residential care was instigated which involved: children and young people, including young inspectors and the Looked After Children (LAC) Council; parents and carers; and a range of professionals who work with children who have complex needs. The findings from the review (Appendix 1) inform proposals within this report.

- 1.5 In order to provide additional assurance regarding safeguarding and quality of service, Rotherham Council has employed additional interim specialist management to provide support and direction to enable existing residential services staff to deliver improvements.
- 1.6 Rotherham Council has ensured that relevant stakeholders, which include: children, young people, parents, social workers, education and health partners and elected members have all contributed to informing the recommendations within this report.
- 1.7 The Council currently has three children's homes. Silverwood is the one remaining home that provides long-term care for male and female young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Cherry Tree House and Liberty House provide long term care and short breaks, respectively, for children with disabilities and their families. In addition, Rotherham Council has three leaving care accommodation and support services in a property adjacent to Silverwood (formerly known as the Annexe); Hollowgate; and Nelson Street, which provide care to young people transitioning from residential care to semi-independent living.
- 1.8 The key issues for each of the establishments are covered within the main body of the report and have informed the recommendations below.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Commissioner:

- 2.1 Agrees to commence consultation on the proposed closure of Silverwood Children's Home and Cherry Tree House.
- 2.2 Agrees that a further report on the outcome of the consultation in relation to Silverwood Children's Home and Cherry Tree House and be submitted for Commissioners and Cabinet decision at the first available Cabinet Meeting following the conclusion of the consultation.
- 2.3 Agrees to retain Hollowgate Leaving Care Accommodation.
- 2.4 Agrees to the re-location of the Nelson Street Leaving Care Service to Hollowgate, that the building is decommissioned, remains closed and is returned to the Corporate Property Unit.
- 2.5 Agrees to continue the short breaks provision at Liberty House.
- 2.6 Agrees to retain the adjacent property to Silverwood Children's Home, whilst the current residents' care needs are reviewed.

**List of Appendices Included**

- Appendix 1 - Strategic commissioning review of residential care, leaving care services, residential, respite services for children with a disability and homeless provision for young people (redacted version for personal information)
- Appendix 2 - Silverwood and Cherry Tree Ofsted Inspection History

**Background Papers**

- Children's and Young People's Service Improvement Plan, 2015
- RMBC Looked After Children and Care Leavers Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2015-2018

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

No

**Council Approval Required**

Commissioner decision required

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

**Title: Consultation on the proposal for a planned closure of Silverwood and Cherry Tree House children's homes and the agreement to the relocation of Nelson Street Leaving Care Service to Hollowgate.**

**1. Recommendations**

**It is recommended the Commissioner:**

- 1.1 Agrees to commence consultation on the proposed closure of Silverwood Children's Home and Cherry Tree House.
- 1.2 Agrees that a further report on the outcome of the consultation in relation to Silverwood Children's Home and Cherry Tree House and be submitted for Commissioners and Cabinet decision at the first available Cabinet Meeting following the conclusion of the consultation.
- 1.3 Agrees to retain Hollowgate Leaving Care Accommodation.
- 1.4 Agrees to the re-location of the Nelson Street Leaving Care Service to Hollowgate, that the building is decommissioned, remains closed and is returned to the Corporate Property Unit.
- 1.5 Agrees to continue the short breaks provision at Liberty House.
- 1.6 Agrees to retain the adjacent property to Silverwood Children's Home, whilst the current residents' care needs are reviewed.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Rotherham Council has laid out a clear vision and determination to help the council secure a safe environment for young people and ensure good, sustainable services and regulation to restore healthy democratic leadership and accountability.
- 2.2 The vision is for Rotherham Children's Services to be rated outstanding by 2018 based on a robust service improvement approach, working with families and partners. A key action is to ensure that there are enough local placements of good quality suitable to meet the needs of looked after children.
- 2.3 Rotherham Council's 'Looked After Children and Care Leavers Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2015-2018' identified that too many Rotherham looked after children live in residential care and there is a need to have more children accommodated in family based placements. This will include children with disabilities and complex health needs. A small number of disabled children are more likely, however, to require residential care in the longer term in order to meet their complex needs. A recent strategic review of residential provision in Rotherham suggests that in-house residential provision in its current form is not the solution (see Appendix 1).
- 2.4 There is a need to ensure that the ambition of this authority to be outstanding

is the over-arching objective and this means better provision for children in care, with more local family based options. Rotherham Council has accepted the challenge and is working hard to increase the number of foster carers, as well as specialist carers who can support young people, with more complex needs. There are too many young people placed in residential care for too long. It is vital that the needs of children are continually appraised to facilitate the safe transfer of young people from residential care into family based placements. This will enable the authority to realise its ambitions to be an excellent 'Corporate Parent' and achieve the high aspirations it has to become a 'Child Centred Borough'. Increasing the cohort of foster carers, and developing their ability to meet complex needs will enable the council to reduce reliance on residential care and support the commissioning of secure placements for Rotherham children within their own community, wherever possible.

- 2.5 The strategic review of residential services was undertaken and completed in February 2016. This incorporated the views of: children and young people, including young inspectors and the Looked After Children (LAC) Council; parents and carers; feedback from elected members and a range of professionals who work with children who have complex needs.
- 2.6 The Council currently has three children's homes: Silverwood, a home for up to five young people with emotional and behavioural challenges; Cherry Tree House, which is registered to provide long term accommodation for up to five disabled young people; and Liberty House, a facility that provides short breaks for disabled children, young people and their families, who are their main carers. The review also included leaving care provision within its scope, which comprise: a three bedded home formerly referred to as the Silverwood Annex; Hollowgate and Nelson Street, which were established to provide semi-independent living to help care leavers prepare for adulthood.
- 2.7 Silverwood is currently Ofsted graded 'good', however, a recent interim inspection found it was 'declining in effectiveness'. Notably, there were only two young residents at the time of the inspection. The recent inspection history is attached at appendix 2, which is indicative of inconsistency of quality and service delivered over a number of years.
- 2.8 As part of the review process, the care needs of the two young people currently resident in Cherry Tree House was comprehensively appraised. It was clear from this work, that the young peoples' complex needs could be better met both now and in the longer term within alternative high quality specialised provision.
- 2.9 The inspection history at appendix 2 shows that the home has consistently failed to operate at a level that is good.
- 2.10 The review also found inconsistencies in the quality of care and support with care leavers' accommodation, which are described in more detail below.

### 3. Key Issues

- 3.1 Nationally, it is generally accepted that children's residential care should be used for only a very small proportion of looked after children. These would most usually be aged over twelve years and are likely to have been placed in residential care as a result of very complex emotional or mental health needs. These needs often lead to high levels of challenging or self-harming behaviours. The correlation between the type of need (emotional/behavioural) and placement choice i.e. a children's home, can in itself be stigmatising for young people, increasing social isolation and making social integration more difficult. This can only be countered if there is very sensitive and highly skilled support and care available for the young people as an integral part of the placement offer.
- 3.2 It is well documented that unless the residential provision is of extremely high quality the very risks from which Local Authorities are seeking to protect their children can be exacerbated and increased. This is particularly true of provision for disabled children because once they have been admitted into residential care, they are far more likely than non-disabled children to remain there for the duration of their childhoods and for some, well into young adulthood and beyond.
- 3.3 Prior to October 2015 the council had five children's homes, however there have been significant and long standing concerns about the quality of care provided to the homes' young residents. These concerns, combined with an assessment of the financial viability of the homes in the short, medium and long term, have already resulted in the closure of Woodview and St. Edmund's Children's Homes.
- 3.4 The pattern of Ofsted inspections awards four ratings at a full inspection (Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement, and Inadequate). For an interim inspection, the home is measured by different grades of effectiveness (Improved Effectiveness, Sustained Effectiveness, and Declined Effectiveness).
- 3.5 The appointment of an interim Head of Service for residential homes resulted in an intense period of focus from mid-October 2015 across all the homes operating at the time. The management arrangements within all the children's homes were strengthened and a range of other professionals were engaged to support the ongoing improvement strategy.
- 3.6 In order to strengthen, sustain and deliver an outstanding level of care, the Council would need to invest yet further additional resources to recruit permanently to improve the management arrangements and thus be able to quality assure service delivery in the longer term.
- 3.7 Staffing difficulties and absences have added further budgetary pressures, as posts have had to be covered using agency staff. Practical and practice challenges associated with the use of agency staff are that they often will not know the young people or the systems and processes in use, which can further compromise the quality of care being provided. All children and young people



need to develop positive relationships with their main care givers who are trusted individuals and are a consistent feature in their lives.

3.8 Given the Council's need to deliver the best possible placement and care choices for these young people, this conclusion leads to a duty to identify and consider other ways to best provide services for these children and young people.

3.9 The key issues for each of the establishments are covered below and have informed the recommendations.

3.10 Silverwood Children's Home

3.10.1 Extensive and intensive improvement activity ensured that the immediate welfare needs of the young people resident in all the homes were better met, following the interim Ofsted inspection. However, despite the engagement of an interim Head of Service, a change of management, additional resources, specialist training and increased capacity, concerns have remained. While some progress was made it became clear that the required changes could not be fully achieved or sustained in a manner commensurate with the Council's ambition to provide its looked after children with the standard of care they both need and should expect. This position was crystallised in relation to Silverwood when despite the effort and investment, performance at the home declined.

3.10.2 In-house provision is only financially viable if unit costs are within a reasonable range of that offered by the best local external providers. Unit costs can only be kept down by sustaining high occupancy levels and due to the declining quality of care the occupancy at the home was very low towards the end of last financial year at 40%. This resulted in a very high unit cost when compared to similar provision elsewhere.

3.10.3 The dilemma for local authorities with in-house residential provision is that there is a risk that in order to keep occupancy rates high, young people may be placed too readily in residential care without other non-residential alternatives firstly being robustly explored. Alternatively, young people may be placed within in-house provision when in reality a more specialist external provider would be better suited to meet that young person's very individual needs.

3.10.4 The current living environment at Silverwood requires extensive improvement and refurbishment to bring it to the standards the Council would want for children in care. Reference to the need for improvements were made following visits to by Elected Members and Regulation 44 reviews.

3.10.5 Following the interim inspection remedial action taken included:

- Developing capacity of staff and managers to support young people with complex needs;

- Improving the rigour of care plan and risk assessments for young people;
- Escalating areas of concern to senior management effectively;
- Working collaboratively with other professionals in safeguarding young people.

3.10.6 Despite the above activity, performance declined as explained above at paragraph 2.7. The last remaining resident moved at the beginning of May to a foster placement that will better meet their needs. Due to the Council's strategy of reducing placements in residential care, coupled with the authority's aspirations for high quality support for the most vulnerable children, Silverwood Children's Home is now empty.

### 3.11 Cherry Tree House:

3.11.1 Cherry Tree House offers long term care to children with a range of complex disabilities. The home is currently rated by Ofsted as 'requires improvement' with a finding of 'improved effectiveness' following an interim inspection in March 2016. Following this inspection an action plan was developed to include:

- Strengthened management arrangements;
- Improving the quality of record keeping;
- Providing better training for the staff;
- Enhancing the voice and influence of the young people.

3.11.2 Despite the interim judgment that improvements have been made, the findings of the review of residential care in Rotherham is that in spite of intense intervention, it is a constant challenge to sustain improvements in the home. This, combined with low bed usage and increased staffing levels required to provide adequate care to the residents, renders continuation of the provision financially unviable, when compared with other similar provision elsewhere.

3.11.3 The continued low occupancy of Cherry Tree House does not provide value to the Council. Alternative placements have been sought for the two young people. One of the homes, who it is understood will be offering placements, has an Ofsted judgment of 'outstanding' and the other 'good'. One is in Doncaster and the other in Lincolnshire. The latter is the furthest distance at 30 miles from the centre of Rotherham. The decision to move the two young people currently resident has been informed entirely by what is in their best interests and has not been influenced by the proposal to consult on closure. The new provision which has been identified for them has been selected because of the increased life chances and opportunities that will be provided for these young people to meet their full potential as they near adulthood.

3.11.4 Cherry Tree House and Liberty House share the same building. The closure of Cherry Tree House will not adversely affect the services

from Liberty House. In the longer term this has the potential opportunity to further develop the site. It should also be noted that the Disability Family Support Service operates out of offices within this shared building.

### 3.12 Liberty House

3.12.1 Liberty House provides planned short breaks and overnight care seven days a week, for up to eight children aged between eight and eighteen years, who have physical or sensory disabilities, complex health needs and challenging behaviour as a result of their disability. The full inspection by Ofsted in September 2014 awarded the judgment 'good'. A more recent inspection under the new Ofsted Framework evidenced that Liberty House had maintained the 'good' judgement. The feedback from parents is that the service is outstanding.

### 3.13 Hollowgate

3.13.1 Hollowgate offers purpose built accommodation for young people preparing to leave care, comprising seven self-contained flats. Five are single occupancy and two are two bedroomed with one flat being adapted for disability. Young people can stay in Hollowgate for up to two years although this doesn't happen often.

3.13.2 The review described the facility as being neglected and it was clear that young people were not receiving the level of service they deserved from the council as the 'Corporate Parent'.

3.13.3 However, the review found that the resource had capacity to dramatically improve in a relatively short space of time. Young people involved in the review found that the building was more conducive to the council's aspiration for provision of good accommodation, and the staff team receptive to the need for dramatic improvement. There are now experienced managers in place and an action plan which is yielding significant improvements.

### 3.14 Former Silverwood Annexe

3.14.1 There are two young people aged over sixteen who are currently being supported to live semi-independently in what was known as the Silverwood Annexe. This is in fact an entirely separate three bedroomed facility adjacent to Silverwood that functions as independent leaving care accommodation and does not meet the criteria for Ofsted regulation as a care home. These young people will be supported by leaving care accommodation staff in the same manner as those employed at the Hollowgate facility who support young people to live semi-independently.

3.14.2 The young people will have access to the same 24-hour support they are currently receiving, so in practical terms will be unaffected by the proposed changes at Silverwood. Bringing this accommodation under

the remit of the Leaving Care Accommodation Team is felt to be a better arrangement for them, as the staff team have specific skills and experience in supporting young people in these circumstances. This arrangement will be kept under review to meet the changing needs of the care leaving cohort.

### 3.15 Nelson Street

3.15.1 Nelson Street offers semi-independent living for young people leaving care aged sixteen upwards. The property is owned by the Council and the support is provided by Council staff. The building is old, uninviting, in a poor state of repair and described by service users as 'depressing'.

3.15.2 The review determined that Nelson Street presented as a poor service and was castigated by one member of staff who stated; "*the unacceptable has become acceptable*". The young people accessing the service were not receiving the standard of support that would be expected from a 'Corporate Parent'. In light of the concerns in relation to the quality of support from Nelson Street, service users were relocated to Hollowgate, and the building is currently empty.

3.16 If approved, the proposed consultations will commence for 42 days from 7 June 2016 and are consistent with Rotherham Council's intention to ensure that more of the children in the care of the Council are looked after in family settings, such as foster care and where this is not possible, to be placed in consistently good or outstanding residential care.

## **4 Options considered and recommended proposals**

### **4.1 To continue with existing arrangements, with new improvement action plans for Silverwood, Cherry Tree House and Nelson Street.**

4.1.1 This would be inconsistent with Rotherham Council's strategy of reducing numbers of children in residential care and to ensure that when such provision is required, that it is of the highest quality.

4.1.2 As outlined above there have been considerable and costly efforts to ensure Silverwood Children's Home meets the exacting standards required. The 'declined effectiveness' judgement delivered in February 2016 for Silverwood demonstrates that these efforts have not been successful. The building at Silverwood is unsuitable as it requires extensive improvement and renovation and the training and development needs of the staff group are considerable.

4.1.3 The 'improved effectiveness' judgment delivered in March 2016 demonstrates that efforts have been successful, to a point, for the staff at Cherry Tree House. However, the training and development needs of the staff group remain considerable particularly in the context of the need to increase occupancy rates.

4.1.4 The level of investment required and the cost of keeping both

provisions empty while the required improvements are secured makes this option unviable and therefore not recommended.

- 4.1.5 The residential care review found that the provision of care at Nelson Street was inadequate and the building costly to modify. Young People in particular felt that there was little prospect of improvement in the immediate term and therefore retaining the provision is also not recommended.

**4.2 To begin a period of consultation on the proposal for a planned closure of Silverwood and Cherry Tree House children's home and relocate Nelson Street Leaving Care Service to Hollowgate. Further, to retain existing provision at Liberty House, Hollowgate and the property formerly known as 'Silverwood Annex'.**

- 4.2.1 The ambition of the authority as set out in paragraph 2.2 is to develop a children's service regarded as outstanding by 2018. In order to achieve this, the council will be seeking to develop the market so that more appropriate homes for children are available locally. As stated in paragraph 2.3, there are too many children placed in residential care and therefore a reduction in council run residential places is consistent with the wider strategy to ensure that more of the children in the care of the authority are looked after in family settings such as foster care.

- 4.2.2 The above is compounded by the findings of the residential care review and the history of performance for both Silverwood and Cherry Tree House, as measured by Ofsted ratings over the years, which can be seen at appendix 2.

- 4.2.3 Given the issues identified at 3.15 it is proposed that the re-location of the Nelson Street Leaving Care Service to Hollowgate be pursued. Further, given the improvements recently secured at Hollowgate and the consistency of good performance at Liberty House breaks facility, it is considered that these provisions would help the council to achieve its ambitions for children in care and care leavers.

- 4.2.4 There are two young people who reside at the property formerly known as the 'Silverwood Annex'. Given that the needs of these young people are being met, it is considered in their best interests for the provision to be retained and reviewed once the young people move on.

- 4.2.5 As the above accords with the council's high aspirations for vulnerable children and young people this is the option recommended.**

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 As a matter of public law, any proposal to close a facility will require a reasonable period of engagement and consultation with those affected by such a proposal. Officers will undertake consultation with the following stakeholders and interested persons:

- Children and young people who are resident at the home (assisted by an independent advocate, if required); In this case the consultation will be with the young people who are resident in adjacent accommodation, who while not directly affected in terms of any change of placement, may nonetheless experience some change in their support arrangements;
- Parents, carers and connected persons of the above;
- Independent Reviewing Officers;
- Children's Rights Officer;
- Key partners such as Health, Education and in particular Special Schools with regard to Cherry Tree House;
- Police;
- Ward Councillors.

5.2 In addition, there are 33 members of staff across both children's homes who may be affected by the proposal and officers will engage with HR business partners in relation to the potential impact of the proposal on staff groups.

5.3 The purpose of the consultation is to garner the views and preferences of those consulted on the proposal and its implementation and to understand whether there are any possible unintended consequences of the proposal.

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

6.1 A period of 42 days consultation is proposed as proportionate and reasonable in this matter. Subject to Commissioners agreement the timetable of consultation to be undertaken is outlined below:

- Consultation will extend for six weeks from 7 June subject to approval of the recommendations;
- A range of methods will be used for consultation;
- Consultation on the proposal to close will end on 19 July 2016.

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

7.1 In 2015/16 the unit cost for a place at Silverwood peaked at £5,800 per week, per child. This amounts to £302k per annum, per child. The current unit cost for the young people residing at Cherry Tree House is £7,300 per week, per child, amounting to £380k per year, per child. These costs are considered prohibitive, when compared with other similar placements elsewhere. If, following consultation these homes were to close, the estimated net revenue saving would be approximately £815k in a full year. In addition, the relocation of the care leaving service from Nelson Street to Hollowgate, would accrue savings of approximately £187k in a full year. Therefore, the total value of the savings if, following consultation, the proposed recommendations within this report are implemented, would total approximately £1m in a full year, which would contribute to the council's demand pressures within the children's social care budget.

- 7.2 There are potential estimated one off costs relative to the above recommendations of approximately £225k in relation to voluntary severance. This cost would be met from the corporate voluntary severance budget.

## 8. Legal Implications

8.1 In addition to the legal requirements for robust consultation, as set out in Section 5, Rotherham Council has to ensure it complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Under section one of that Act the Council must, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage. In addition under section 149 of the Equality Act the Council must comply with the public sector equality duty which requires it to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 In dealing with this duty, the Council must have due regard in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- Take steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different to the needs of persons who do not share it
- Encourage persons who share a relevant characteristic to participate in public life or any other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

8.3 Protected characteristics include disability, age, race, sex, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity and sexual orientation.

8.4 Children's Homes are registered with Ofsted, and therefore their activities are regulated. Regulation 49 of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 requires the responsible individual and/or the registered person, i.e. the children's home registered manager, to give notice in writing to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Ofsted as soon as it is practicable to do so if a registered provider proposes to cease to carry on or manage the Home.

## **9. Human Resources Implications**

- 9.1 There are 33 members of staff which equates to 29.6 full time equivalent staff members at Silverwood and Cherry Tree House who may be affected by the proposals to close those homes.
- 9.2 The Council's usual policies and consultations apply i.e seeking to avoid redundancy through redeployment where possible, if a decision to close the homes takes place after the consultation process.

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

- 10.1 There are no young people resident in Silverwood home. There are two young people aged seventeen currently accommodated in the adjacent independent accommodation. These young people will be consulted as part of this proposal.
- 10.2 At the time of writing, there are two young people resident within Cherry Tree House. It is predicted that these young people will move to placements better able to meet their needs within the next four weeks of this report reaching Cabinet. However if they are still in residence they will be consulted as part of this proposal.
- 10.3 The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), for the young person will be involved in any planned moves of young people. The IRO has a statutory duty to ensure that the young person's needs are taken into account.

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

- 11.1 The council must comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010, as set out in section 8 above. In addition, the council has a duty to fully consider the human rights implications for residents, staff and future looked after children.
- 11.2 The proposed consultation exercise and the production of an equality impact assessment will be undertaken to ensure the necessary information is available for the Commissioner when a final decision is made on the proposal.
- 11.3 The proposed consultation exercise and the production of an equality impact assessment will be undertaken to ensure the necessary information is available for the Commissioner when a final decision is made on the proposal.

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

- 12.1 Partners will be consulted as part of this proposal and other directorates who contribute to supporting the home will be informed.
- 12.2 Property services have been made aware of the proposal and that the property will need to be secured and may be surplus to requirements should this proposal proceed.



### 13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The areas for concern are fully outlined in section 3 above. Continuation of the current provision presents the following risks:
- 13.1.1 Inadequate care being provided to any future children in care who might be placed in either Silverwood or Cherry Tree House children's home.
  - 13.1.2 That in the event of a further inadequate inspection there could be a forced closure resulting in young people having to move from the home in distressing circumstances.
  - 13.1.3 The financial burden that would be incurred during the period required to bring the provision up to the necessary standard would risk the investments required to support other key elements of the Sufficiency Strategy such as developing 'Edge of Care' provision and enhancing the therapeutic services needed to support permanent alternatives to care for Rotherham's looked after children, such as Adoption and Special Guardianship
- 13.2 The risks associated with the closure of the last Council's mainstream residential provision are as follows:
- 13.2.1 There is a risk that there will be insufficient placement choice for the Borough's children. This risk is mitigated by the other elements set out in the Sufficiency Strategy, including growing the in-house fostering provision, growing and developing the independent fostering market locally to better meet local needs by enhanced commissioning arrangements and similarly maximising the potential to work with local and nearby providers of specialist residential care so that bespoke arrangements can be commissioned to meet individual needs.
  - 13.2.2 It is of note that despite the loss, in effect, of fifteen in-house residential beds that have resulted from the closure of Woodview and St. Edmund's and the freeze on admissions in Silverwood only four new residential placements have been made since December 2015. Of those that have been made in recent months none would have been considered suitable for admission to Silverwood in terms of the current 'Statement of Purpose'.
- 13.3 It has been evidenced that Cherry Tree House Children's Home is not able to provide the high quality of care to the young people with complex needs identified as requiring residential care. This is evidenced by the fact that the home has not been able to meet the needs of young people with complex disabilities who have had to be placed outside the borough. Despite a robust management response and low occupancy rates the home has not been able to make sufficient improvements nor demonstrate the ability to sustain improvements within a reasonable time frame and it is estimated that considerable additional investment would be required which cannot be justified.

13.4 Officers of the council are required to maximise resources and ensure that we get best value for money. The continued low occupancy and under-utilisation of the home means that it is not value for money. The proposed closure upon which consultation is based mitigates these risks.

**14. Accountable Officer(s)**

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director Children and Young People's Services

**Approvals Obtained from:**

Joanne Robertson, Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services

Simon Cooper, HR Manager

Neil Concannon, Service Manager – Litigation and Social Care, Legal Services

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

**Appendix 1** : Strategic commissioning review of residential care, leaving care services, residential respite services for children with a disability and homeless provision for young people (redacted version)



**Appendix 2** : Silverwood Ofsted Inspection History

<b>Recent Ofsted Inspection History Silverwood Children's Home</b>		
<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Inspection Type</b>	<b>Inspection Judgement</b>
12/09/2013	Full	Good
03/03/2014	Interim	Good Progress
24/09/2014	Full	Inadequate
12/11/2014	Full	Good
30/06/2015	Full	Good
15/02/2016	Interim	Declined Effectiveness

<b>Recent Ofsted Inspection History Cherry Tree Children's Home</b>		
<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Inspection Type</b>	<b>Inspection Judgement</b>
31/07/2013	Full	Adequate
25/02/2014	Interim	Good Progress
05/11/2014	Full	Inadequate
05/01/2015	Full	Adequate
18/08/2015	Full	Requires Improvement
23/03/2016	Interim	Improved Effectiveness

**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES**

**STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING REVIEW OF  
RESIDENTIAL CARE, LEAVING CARE SERVICES,  
RESIDENTIAL, RESPITE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH  
A DISABILITY AND HOMELESS PROVISION FOR YOUNG  
PEOPLE**

*(Redacted version for personal information)*

Author : Linda Harper, Interim Strategic Lead, Children and Young People Services

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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## 1 NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

### 1.1 National Context

1.1.1 The review of Residential Care for Children and Young People, Leaving Care Services, Residential and Respite for children with a disability and homeless provision in Rotherham was completed against a backdrop of significant national and local strategic change, including:

- Significant reductions in funding to Local Authorities as outlined in the last Comprehensive Spending Review.
- An increase in demand for services, evidenced by DFE statistics which show that over the past three years referrals to Children's Services have steadily increased, particularly in relation to the support of complex needs.
- Publication of the Ofsted Framework for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers which demands high quality care and support.

1.1.2 Subsequently, there is an immediate tension at a national level between the ambition to deliver high quality services within a shrinking financial envelope which is further exacerbated by an increase in demand.

### 1.2 Local Context

The Council have laid out a clear vision and determination to help secure a safe environment for children and ensure good sustainable services and regulation to restore healthy, democratic leadership and accountability. The 'Fresh Start' Corporate Improvement Plan, 2015, captures the vision and collective determination of the Council which is further reinforced by the Children and Young People's Service Improvement Plan, 2015, and the five year Medium Term Financial Strategy which reflects the commitment of the Council in spite of the national context in relation to shrinking resources to the drive for improvement and excellence in service provision by a financial investment of £12.1 million.

1.2.1 The commitment of Rotherham Council to children and young people as Corporate Parents is emphatically clear and is evidenced by the intention to be a child centred borough and in the promise to Looked After Children which is reflected in Appendix 1 of this report and was agreed by the Corporate Parenting Board.

1.2.2 The Commissioner for Children's Social Care clearly outlined in his report to the Secretary of State for Education in July 2015 a further

seven improvement priorities of the Council and its partners, of which two are particularly pertinent to the review:

- Strengthen the commissioning infrastructure, ensuring that services commissioned both in-house and externally offer the best outcomes and are cost effective and there is in place a sufficient range of care and placement services.
- Accelerate the progress of improvements and services for Looked After Children

1.2.3 The history of failure in Children's Services in Rotherham is well documented but in spite of and because of this there is a passionate determination to be judged as providing outstanding care and support by 2018. To achieve this the Children's Strategy is based on a range of key drivers of effectiveness and efficiencies and the intention to align the improvement journey to robust resource management and the delivery of sustainable savings over the lifetime of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

1.2.4 The key service priorities related specifically to the Strategic Commissioning Review are:

- The continued improvement of the Children's Social Care Service
- The continued reform and re-design of the workforce
- The strengthening of commissioning, challenging in-house services and developing the market to increase value for money and to shape service models which capture our ambition for a child centred borough and delivery of sustainable savings.

1.2.5 The increasing demand seen nationally is reflected if not polarised in Rotherham, particularly in relation to the support of victims and survivors of Child Sexual Exploitation. The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan continued to rise from March 2015 up to September 2015 when they reached a high of 78.0 per 10,000 of the population. The numbers have started to fall more recently but remain high compared to statistical neighbour and national data at 65.4 per 10,000 of the population. The three year Sufficiency Strategy which was approved by the Commissioner for Children's Social Care aims to do this by clearly setting out a number of intentions:

- Increase the provision of local placements
- Improve the outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers

- Reduce spending overall on care placements

1.2.6 This Strategy is supported and strengthened by the Children and Young People's Service Improvement Plan, the Early Help Strategy and the Rotherham promise to Looked After Children and Care Leavers. The Strategy moving forward over the next three years is made up of the following key strands:

- Outstanding commissioning, supporting children to stay at home with their birth parents or extended family wherever possible
- Challenging the composition of placements used to care for Looked After Children so that the vast majority are not placed in Residential Care and that those who are remain within the Borough
- Robust management of the care population to ensure that children are moved to permanent placements in a timely fashion, both in and out of care
- Increasing local provision through the growth of local in house and independent sector fostering support so less children are placed at a distance
- Boosting in house wrap around placement support services to facilitate the placement of young people with multiple complex needs locally

1.2.7 The key challenges identified by the Sufficiency Strategy require the Directorate to respond proactively to the re-design of services which reflects our resounding ambition to respond to the strategic challenges and the historical failings of poor provision.

1.2.8 The services also need to represent value for money and to help forecast and manage spend overall the Council joined the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Children Looked After Benchmarking club to assess our performance in comparison to other authorities. The CIPFA information confirms that compared to other authorities:

- We place too many children in residential care
- We are paying £67 per child per week more for external placements

1.2.9 This means that we have to:



- Encourage the independent sector to develop resources in Rotherham
- Create local specialist provision
- Change the composition of placements by increasing the % of children cared for in foster care and reduce the numbers in residential care
- Deliver high quality residential care based on different models of care and support

1.2.10 In addition to providing different local placement accommodation for Looked After Children the Sufficiency Strategy is also aimed at securing best value by reducing spend by one million in 2017/18 and a further million by 2018/19. It has been recognised and agreed by the Council that to achieve the aims and to realise the strong ambition to deliver only the best services capital investment is required to fund excellent value for money models of residential care and as such is reflected in the Council's Capital Programme for 2016/17 to a total of nine hundred thousand.

1.2.11 The Ofsted Report into Rotherham's Children's and Young Peoples Services published in November 2014 rated services as 'inadequate' with recommendations made in relation to sufficiency, choice, quality of service, up to date risk assessments, plans and reviews, voice and experience, clear profile of needs and clear understanding.

1.2.12 The Joint Commissioning Strategy with Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group 2015-18 reflects our joint commissioning intention in relation to Looked After Children which is reflected in Appendix 2 of this report. The Strategy sets out how Rotherham Council and NHS Clinical Commissioning Group intend to develop joint commissioning arrangements as a means of achieving the delivery of strategic priorities and plans to transform the life choices for children, young people and their families in Rotherham.

1.2.13 In response to the wide range of factors in relation to the national and local context a review of the Looked After Children's provision in Rotherham has been undertaken with partners and young people who currently use the services. This report reflects the findings and recommendations of the review which presents an opportunity for the ambitious re-shaping and transformation of accommodation, care and support services for children and young people in Rotherham.

## 2. METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

2.1 The review started at the end of October 2015 and was completed at the end of January 2016. The scope of the review was:

- In house Residential Care
- Leaving Care Services
- In house Residential Care and short breaks for children with a disability
- Accommodation and Support for Homeless young people, 16 to 25 years of age

2.1.1 The externally commissioned residential care services, short breaks provision and the in-house Leaving Care Team were out of scope of the review.

2.2 A Project Team was established to oversee the progress of the review and to ensure that it remained on track, dealing collectively with any issues or barriers and escalating any major concerns to the Children and Young People's Services Directorate Leadership Team. The Terms of Reference is reflected in Appendix 3 of this report.

2.3 The methodology included:

- The assessment of all previous inspections and monitoring visits linked to contractual arrangements and Regulation 44
- The completion of an 'as is' desktop exercise which looked at current budgets, staffing structure, training, engagement with partners, voice and experience, innovation.
- The completion of Quality Assessment visits by lead officers and a team of multi -disciplinary officers which included commissioning, safeguarding, Barnardo's. A Quality Assessment Tool was developed which is reflected in Appendix 4 of this report.
- A range of Challenge Events were held with young people and parents and other key stakeholders from education, health, and the voluntary and community sector. The purpose was to encourage interactive dialogue and conversation which focussed on three key questions, why do we provide the service? how well do we provide the service? how should we provide the service in the future?
- A Dragon's Den was held which was facilitated by the Young Inspector. The panel consisted of young people who

challenged the individual service managers, staff and current children and young people accessing the service. There was an award of virtual money to the services which were judged by the panel to be the most consistent and committed to service improvement and change.

- A comprehensive benchmarking exercise was completed to inform the improvement and transformation recommendations in relation to current and future models of accommodation, support and care.
- Meetings were held with the LAC Committee and the Youth Cabinet
- A staff survey was completed
- A Voluntary and Community Sector Reference Group was established to gain the views of communities
- An analysis of performance information was completed which included complaints and compliments

### **3. REVIEW FINDINGS**

#### **3.1 Residential Care**

Rotherham Council had five mainstream children's homes until the recent closure of St Edmunds and Woodview which was due to poor practice and provision of substandard care and support. Woodview closed before the review whilst St Edmunds was closed during the review which further informed the evidence in relation to the degree of historical embedded culture in service provision which has been fostered by poor leadership, staff apathy and a passive acceptance of poor is 'good enough' which continued in spite of intense service improvement intervention. This review cuts through the past failings and the inability of services to sustain improvements and paves the way for future opportunities based on a resounding commitment to provide excellent services which are fitting of the aspirations the Council now has for Looked After Children in Rotherham. Silverwood is the one remaining long term residential care home for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, with Cherry Tree House and Liberty House providing residential care and short break provision for children and young people with a disability.

- SILVERWOOD Children's Home is a mainstream five bed home offering accommodation and support for young people aged from twelve to seventeen. Silverwood's current Ofsted inspection grade is 'good' which means that Ofsted have assessed that it provides effective services. This grade was awarded following the most recent full inspection in December

2014. The home accommodates young people who are experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties resulting from trauma and attachment disorders. The home has an extension which has been developed recently as a semi-independent supported accommodation for up to two young people aged sixteen years plus. This 'staying put' provision aims to meet the specific needs of those young people whose progress is assessed as being ready for a level of independence outside of the home but not for total independent living.

- 3.1.1 Silverwood is a traditional brick built 1960's property with a single storey extension. The out building at the back of the house has been converted to provide an entertainment space. The internal décor is in need of attention, furniture is of a poor standard and general upkeep is not to an acceptable standard, in spite of some recent re-decoration. The current estimate in relation to capital investment required is £298,618 with a basic refurbishment costed at £76,905.
- 3.1.2 The revenue budget for 2015/16 is £559,000 with a current projected overspend of £24,000. The current premises budget for 2015/16 is £27,000 with a current projected overspend of £2,000. There is agency spend of £47,000. The current unit cost of the service based on the full occupancy is £4,348 per child per week.
- 3.1.3 The staffing structure consists of one Manager, two Deputy Managers, six Senior Care Workers and five Residential Care Workers with two Residential Care Worker vacancies at the time of the review. The average length of service across the staffing team is ten years.
- 3.1.4 In spite of Ofsted's rating of 'good' the review found similar concerns in relation to poor practice as evidenced previously with Woodview and St Edmunds. As a result, Silverwood is subject to a Service Improvement Plan which is reflected in Appendix 5 of this report. The Plan is now monitored and challenged by a Senior Management Meeting on a weekly basis which has been underpinned by intense improvement activity and additional management expertise. However, in light of the embedded culture of poor practice and the inability to sustain improvement there is a lack of assurance in relation to the ability of the service to reach the standards now expected for children and young people in Rotherham and maintain them into the future without further significant investment.
- CHERRY TREE HOUSE is a long term five bed children's home for children with disabilities. Cherry Tree's current Ofsted inspection grade is 'inadequate' which means that it is a service that only meets the minimum requirements. This

grade was awarded following a full inspection in January 2015. The full inspection was a follow up to a full inspection in November 2014 when Ofsted assessed the home as 'inadequate'.

- 3.1.5 Cherry Tree can provide care and accommodation for children and young people from the age of 8 to 17 at any one time; the number of young people is dictated by their needs and the ability of the staff to maintain a safe environment and high quality care. The home can accommodate children and young people with learning disabilities, physical or sensory or autism and associated communication or moderate behavioural challenges. This is only provided that the mix of young people can be managed effectively and safely. Cherry Tree will consider an extension of care arrangements beyond a young person's eighteenth birthday if a full risk assessment has taken place and it is part of a clear transitional plan with a specific end date. There are currently only two children living at Cherry Tree who do continue to attend education regularly at Hilltop School and Fullerton. There is a psychologist assigned to Cherry Tree.
- 3.1.6 The staffing budget is £517,000 with a current projected underspend of £55,000. There are 21 staff employed at Cherry Tree and 17 have the appropriate qualifications to meet the needs of the young people. There has been 14 staff off sick over the past 12 months, totally 418 days of absence. The current agency spend is £47,000 for this financial year. The revenue budget of £622,000 is made up of £746,000 expenditure and £120k Clinical Commissioning Group income. The current forecast is a projected overspend of £113,000 which is mainly due to management arrangements and agency use and a shortfall in CCG income.
- 3.1.7 In spite of initial improvement following an intense period of intervention Cherry Tree has failed to sustain the improvements made and as with Silverwood is currently subject to a Service Improvement Plan as a result of some recent disciplinary action linked to staff practice and safeguarding concerns. The pattern of poor embedded practice seen across services is also evident in relation to Cherry Tree. The current Service Improvement Plan is reflected in Appendix 6 of this report.
- 3.1.8 There are only 2 children resident at the home due to a lack of confidence and assurance in relation to the service and as a result the current unit cost is high at £5,848 per child per week. This combined with the high staffing costs does not represent value for money.
- 3.1.9 The review site visit in December 2015 highlighted the following:

- Care Plans are not specialist and are being adapted to meet the children's needs. The updated care plans ensure the young person's needs are central to the plan
- The 2 young people have different ways of communicating and there has been a significant effort by staff to meet each child's needs
- Each young person has their own room, which is well decorated and personalised in accordance with their wishes
- A lack of evidence of contact with a range of professionals
- Safeguarding issues over recent months but no reference to how this was being managed and concern in relation to the lack of Social Worker and IRO involvement
- The children's files were comprehensive and up to date, however there was significant elements that were not evidenced and the manager was unable to provide LAC review and IRO report
- The current manager is employed on an interim basis. The interim manager reported that there were a number of complex issues in relation to the culture of the team and in particular in relation to individual roles/shifts and a general attitude which appears to have been going on for some time. There was evidence that staff continue to be resistant to a shift in culture and working pattern, an example of this was the changing of rotas to offer flexibility to meet the needs of the young people and the service had been met with opposition
- There has been little evidence of Children's Rights working with young people historically, however there has been recent contact with the Right to Right's team who are now engaging with the home
- The staff attend school reviews and have regular contact. There has been some improved relationships with the specialist school over the past six months
- A number of links with health were evident and well established, including CAMH's and GP's. Staff are involved in health care reviews and work closely with psychologists and specialist nurses
- The kitchen was well equipped but not used for all meals. There is a serving hatch where meals are delivered by the

education service to both Cherry Tree and Liberty House which is adjoined but with a separate entrance.

- A sensory room is available and well resourced

3.1.10 As with Silverwood there was some evidence of improvement in relation to Cherry Tree but again a lack of assurance around long term sustainability and the ability to shift the embedded culture across the staff team to meet the expectations for the future of a service which has a real ambition and passion to deliver services which reflect the vision of excellence by 2018.

### 3.2 Short Breaks Service- Liberty House

Liberty House provides planned short breaks overnight respite care seven days a week for up to 8 children, aged between 8 to 18 years, who have physical or sensory disabilities, complex health needs and challenging behaviour as a result of their disability. Liberty House also offers an emergency bed for a child with disabilities for a maximum period of 12 weeks who is already known to the service.

3.2.1 Liberty House was opened in 1994 and received extensive refurbishment which cost 1.2 million in 2012. Liberty House is an ex older person's home and in spite of the refurbishment it is easy to see that this was the case and leads to a clinical and traditional environment. The full inspection by Ofsted in September 2014 awarded the grade 'good' which means that Ofsted assessed that it is a service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements. It has had a recent inspection under the new Ofsted Framework and has maintained the 'good' assessment which is an excellent achievement. Access to the service is via the short break panel. Liberty House offers an opportunity for children to take part in a range of activities with the fundamental aim that children will be safeguarded in a fun and enjoyable setting supported by skilled, trained staff. Parents are supported by the provision as it allows them to gain vital respite whilst their children are under the close supervision of Liberty House.

3.2.2 The feedback from parents is that the service is outstanding. A request for short breaks has increased over the last 12 months with a total of 42 children supported which is an increase of 12 children. The 2015/16 Net Revenue Budget is £761,000 which is made up of £874,000 expenditure and £113,000 health income. There is a current projected underspend of £92,000. The current unit cost is £2,403 per week.

3.2.3 The local community is accessed by children by the use of local parks and recreational facilities. Children also as part of social inclusion access local shops, restaurants and cafes with staff and peers. There is a use of a vehicle for trips. There was no evidence

of travel training. Partnership working is predominantly evident with health, education, parent/carers and social care but this appears to be on an ad hoc basis with no formal partnership arrangements in place.

3.2.4 A Challenge Event was held with parent/carers and partners as part of the review process which was extremely productive and is to be introduced as part of an ongoing dialogue to inform future service developments. There is no doubt that Liberty House is valued highly by parents providing a much needed break which parents trust. It was clear that families see the break provision as very important and that it allows families to spend quality time together and give quality time to other siblings of the child with a disability. It is seen as a service which keeps families out of crisis and that for the children themselves it provides social interaction particularly for those who struggle to socialise in a mainstream school.

3.2.5 The main points made in relation to how the service should be provided in the future were:

- We need to get better at using the resources that we have, if we were able to think in different ways we would be able to use the hydrotherapy pool at Kelford. We need to think about flexible use of transport, tailoring the services we have to young people's needs rather than being regimented as to what is available and when.
- Person centred thinking is really powerful- work with parents to reach the right solution. An example was given of a parent with children at 2 schools, the disabled child was miles away and transport was needed. The mother stated that it would be preferable to her and her family if she could take her disabled child to school and someone else did her mainstream school drop off which was a few minutes from home. This would save the council money and time in transport, whilst helping the family but that conversation never happened.
- More day support in the holidays
- There is a gap in service provision from early school age {4} to 8 years
- The transition process should start earlier and should include all relevant partners, health, education, children's services and adult social care
- The relationship with CAMHS requires improvement
- There needs to be clear pathways to access early help. The Parents Forum see families in desperate need who have tried



for years to get access to services. Thresholds and criteria need to change. Marketing of services needs to improve.

- Remove the stigma, more clarity is needed in relation to what a disability social worker does, it's not about taking children away, it's about giving families support and access to services.
- Joint support is needed, children go to Hilltop or Kelford but there should be consistent involvement from other agencies otherwise we are not supporting those families fully. More joined up thinking is needed and earlier.
- Work with parents as partners and build a relationship of trust, information sharing is critical, don't surprise parents in a meeting.
- Clarity about personal budgets, they need to be about giving families a choice.
- Ambition to be 'outstanding'

### 3.3 Leaving Care Services

The Leaving Care Service has two elements:

- Leaving Care Service
- Leaving Care Accommodation Service

3.3.1 The review focussed on the Leaving Care Accommodation Service which provides support for care leavers aged 16 to 25 years. The Ofsted report into Rotherham's Children and Young People's Services published in November 2014 rates services as 'inadequate' with the following recommendations;

- Improve the quality of services for care leavers, including prompt access to emotional well-being and mental health services and effective support to improve their engagement in education, training or employment
- Develop a clear profile of the needs of current and future care leavers to inform the commissioning of provision, taking full account of care leavers' views, Ensure that the service is supported by an effective performance management and information system
- Ensure that all looked after children and young people and care leavers have a clear understanding of their rights and entitlements to services

- Ensure that care leavers have up to date risk assessments, detailed and meaningful pathway plans and regular reviews

3.3.2 The Leaving Care Accommodation Service covers a range of accommodation options together with floating support:

- Provision of semi-independent residential accommodation at Hollowgate comprising ten flats for young people aged 16 to 21 years of age. It is a requirement that this accommodation is staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days a week
- Provision of semi-independent residential accommodation at Nelson Street comprising 6 bedsits for young people aged 16 to 18 years of age with capacity for the emergency placement of one young, homeless person. It is a requirement that it is staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. The staff and support are provided by the Council. The service is commissioned by the Supporting People Team in the Council, Adult Social Care.

3.3.3 HOLLOWGATE offers purpose built accommodation comprising 7 self-contained flats, 5 are single occupancy and 2 are 2 bed roomed with 1 flat being adapted for disability. Young people can stay in Hollowgate for up to 2 years although this does not often happen. The site visit as part of the review was made in December and found the following:

- Young people are referred into the service by Personal Assistants usually from foster care or settled placements in residential care. There is no formal allocation into the service and beds are allocated according to availability.
- Young people may be placed against their wishes and they sign a tenancy agreement
- Young people may move into Hollowgate from Nelson Street which is managed by the same staff team.
- Move on from this service may be into dispersed accommodation with floating support from the same team. Young people who are ready for independence attend 'move on panel' and move into their own tenancies
- Young people are not involved in active consultation about key events such as Christmas
- Assessment is carried out by PAs and young people accessing the service have a Pathway Plan which is reviewed every six months. The support plans are not developed with the young person as staff are unable to engage them

- There are no up to date risk assessments and dynamic risk is not accounted for
- The young person does not appear central to support and staff appear to react to what is presenting at any given time
- Young people under 18 are reported missing after 24 hours if they have made no contact and emergency contact do not know their whereabouts
- The complaints process is explained on sign up to the service, complaints are logged, passed on to management and escalated if unresolved. The most common complaint is around visitors and the rules applying to this.
- The location is good, situated in a residential area with excellent access to buses, schools, colleges, health care and the town centre
- Hollowgate is purpose built but has a major design flaw in relation to the floor to ceiling windows, retainers have been fitted but they still present a major risk. There is no space to facilitate 1 to 1 meetings or group work, the office is small and there is nowhere to hold staff meetings or supervision.
- The manager is responsible for both Hollowgate and Nelson Street and previously operated with the support of a Deputy but this post has remained vacant since the previous post holder left. The manager described not feeling listened to by Senior Management previously and that both Nelson Street and Hollowgate had been neglected for some time but did say this had improved over recent weeks. Staffing can be an issue with the service currently being understaffed and using agency and casual workers. Night staff contact Senior Managers in case of an incident but the process for this is very unclear. The manager was unable to articulate any innovative work being undertaken or aspired to due to the current pressures of running the service.
- The same staff team work across both Hollowgate and Nelson Street and comprise of 11 staff with 3 vacancies. There are 27 young people accommodated at any given time which can lead to a caseload of up to 9 for level 3 workers. Staff attend mandatory training including child protection and CSE but were unable to produce records. The proportion of agency staff, casual and the turnover of staff means that continuity is compromised

- The service was at capacity at the time of the review, there is no unit cost information
- Staff described advocating for young people in a variety of settings such as benefits, health care, education, utilities
- Staff have knowledge of educational provision and work closely with Lifeskills. There are links to Looked After and Adopted Children's Therapeutic Team, GP, Dentists, CAMHS, Sexual Health
- Young people accessing this service do not appear to be engaged in their plans or in any structured activity within the setting which would prepare them for independence

3.3.4 Hollowgate presented as a service with little direction and was described as being neglected. Young people accessing this service are not receiving the level of support that would be expected from a corporate parent. As with Nelson Street it appears that practice has been eroded over time to such an extent that it is now far from acceptable. As with Silverwood and Cherry Tree the review evidenced embedded cultural issues and immediately put in place a Service Improvement Plan which is monitored and challenged by Senior Management on a weekly basis. The current Plan is reflected in Appendix 7 of this report.

3.3.5 NELSON STREET offers semi-independent living for young people leaving care aged 16 plus. Nelson Street is a large terraced house converted into 6 bedsit type accommodation. The rooms share bathroom facilities and 2 rooms share a kitchen with the remaining 4 rooms having kitchen facilities built in. There is a communal dining area which is also used for meetings. The property is owned by the Council and the support is provided by Council staff. The building is old, depressing, uninviting and in a poor state of repair. The forecast running cost for 2015/16 is £13,500 with an estimated refurbishment cost of £160,000 to bring it up to a basic standard.

3.3.6 As with Hollowgate young people are referred into the service by Personal Advisors usually from foster care or settled placements in residential care. There is no differentiation made on where in their journey the young person may be, previously Nelson Street was usually for those with higher support needs but this is no longer the case. There is no 'matching' of young people so often high risk young people are placed with those who are highly vulnerable which staff find difficult to manage. Staff gave examples of exploitation of vulnerability by other residents. Beds are often not used. Staff described their manager as not being in Nelson Street on a regular basis but felt that this may be a capacity issue. Rotas are not well managed and staff described an agency staff member having been left to lone work without meeting other staff or tenants.

3.3.7 The same staff team work across Hollowgate and Nelson Street. There is lone working at night although both buildings should be covered. Staff stated that there was no regular management time in either building and that they could not always access a manager. Staff and management described feeling under pressure due to the capacity issues of backfill not being addressed. The staff that were spoken to felt neglected and let down in terms of support and direction. In light of such concerns a follow up site visit was undertaken the next morning and this evidenced that there had been no staff cover the previous night, leaving the building without staff cover from 2am until 8am. There were two young people in the house overnight unattended. This was not reported to EDT or a Senior Manager.

3.3.8 Nelson Street presented as a service with little direction and was described by a member of staff who stated; “the unacceptable has become acceptable”. The staff are demoralised, lacking in confidence and spoke of being unsupported and forgotten. The young people accessing the service were not receiving the standard of support that would be expected from a corporate parent. It appears yet again that practice has been eroded over time to such an extent that is now far from acceptable at any level.

#### 3.4 Homeless Accommodation

There are a number of supported accommodation services available for young people {16 plus} commissioned through the Supporting People Programme. They range in type of service provided from 24 hour staffed accommodation units to dispersed properties in the community. In total there are 127 units specifically for young people, aged 16 to 25, young mothers and care leavers, 70 of which are staffed. The programme also commissions a number of supported accommodation services that would potentially accommodate young people aged 16 to 17 or above for client groups such as people with mental health issues, single homeless people, offenders, families and those experiencing domestic abuse. The total capacity of these services is 163. Again some of these services are staffed or are dispersed properties which are supported. The length of stay within these services is dependent on the young person’s needs and abilities although it is ideally between 6 and 12 months. There are 3 main providers of supported accommodation services for young people who are homeless, inappropriately housed or at risk of becoming homeless:

- RUSH HOUSE is a local charity commissioned to provide 3 emergency beds for young people and 9 bedsits both of which are in a property staffed 24hours. The remaining 37 units of accommodation are within the community and clients have an intensive package of support provided with access to the main

building on a 24 hour basis with an on call system in place. The bed usage is very good with referrals taken from a wide range of sources such as housing, probation, children's services and the voluntary and community sector. The initiatives contribute to a wider programme of tenancy support to vulnerable young people and came from evidence that young people particularly those 16 to 18 year olds were more likely to fail in their tenancy within the first 3 months.

3.4.1 A site visit as part of the review of Rush House was completed and led by the Young Inspector. The service offers 4 separate but integrated services offering increasing levels of independence for young people aged 16 to 25. The core facility is 3 Victorian terraced houses. There are 3 emergency beds with direct access, 9 bedsits and 11 single occupancy flats which has access to support on a 24 hour basis if and when needed. In addition there are 13 shared houses which are 2 bedroomed properties of supported accommodation with floating support for up to 50 young people across the borough. The key findings of the site visit were:

- The location is good, situated in a residential area with excellent access to schools, education, health care and the town centre. The accommodation is of a poor standard with no disabled access and the décor and furnishings are in need of attention
- Rush House is a charity and has a Board of Trustees. The staff team is currently 34, keyworkers in core services carry a caseload of 13 and 25 in floating support.
- Examples were found of using different models of engagement to support young people to achieve their goals including Chaotic Cookery using crisis fareshare food deliveries, graffiti art sessions and Crisis Skylight, including drama, music, fimo modelling and creative writing
- Young people are referred to Rush House through Key Choices via a centralised referral system with Action Housing from which an initial assessment is undertaken on sign up. At this point a decision is taken as to where is most suitable for the young person according to need. The young person works with their allocated key worker on a support plan and full risk assessment. Support Plans and Risk Assessments are reviewed every 8 weeks but change in accordance with evolving need where necessary
- The young person is central to the support planning process. Bullying and hate crime are met with zero tolerance and young people, regardless of age are reported missing after 24 hours if they have not informed staff of their whereabouts and

emergency contacts have been exhausted. RUSH works to Every Child Matters outcomes

- Strong links with education and well established relationships with staff in schools and colleges to support attendance. On sign up to the service all young people are supported to register with a GP and Dentist. Other links are CAMHS, Sexual Health, Eric Manns, Lifeline Drug and Alcohol Services. Rush House holds the Talent Match contract for Rotherham and works closely with Morthyng and Apprenticeships
- The Young Person's voice is strong with resident meetings held every 2 weeks, young people work with staff to review and develop policy, are involved in recruitment and regular group sessions take place
- Staff presented very much as a team and appeared to support each other regularly and willingly

3.4.2 Rush House is young person focussed and there is evidence that staff care about their work.

3.4.3 ACTION HOUSING, ELIOTT COURT, similarly provides accommodation with onsite staff for a capacity of 15 and a dispersed accommodation element of 17. This service requires a pre-arranged assessment through a referral process, referrals come from housing, probation, children's services and the voluntary and community sector. The service is currently being reconfigured to bring it up to required standards both externally and internally. There is also some dispersed accommodation linked to the main unit which provides intensive support packages to meet individual needs. The site visit highlighted the following key findings:

- The location is good, situated in a residential area with good transport links, excellent access to schools, colleges, health care and the town centre. However, Elliott Court is a very basic block of flats with office space in the centre. The environment is not welcoming or homely with bars at the windows and in a general state of disrepair
- Action Housing is a charity and has a Board of Trustees. The management team is new and they are well supported by senior management and the interim Chief Executive. There is a staff team of 8.
- Young people are referred through Key Choices and have a central referral point shared with Rush House. A key worker is allocated within 2 days and an initial assessment is undertaken on sign up which involves the young person. Support plans are reviewed every 8 weeks but more frequently if required. A

young person will work with staff to develop independent living skills appropriate to their needs which may be through 1 to 1 or group work activity.

- Staff have extensive knowledge of educational provision in the area and have links with CAMHS , Sexual Health, Eric Manns, Lifeline drug and alcohol services. ACTION have a Service Level Agreement with Rotherham and Barnsley MIND and young people can be referred into this service

3.4.4 Elliott Court is run by a team who are relatively new but who appear to have the best interests of the residents at the heart of what they do. There are currently efforts being made to upgrade the standard of accommodation. In terms of support it appears to function well and young people are involved in decisions affecting them. There is still room for improvement and this was acknowledged by the staff. A cause for concern is the fact that the building is shared with an Adult Service which makes risk management challenging, especially in view of the fact that there is no support available at night.

3.4.5 YWCA- YOUNG MOTHERS/YOUNG EXPECTANT MOTHERS, FLEMING GARDEN'S is a specific service for young mothers and expectant mothers. There are 10 units of supported accommodation with staff onsite and on call and a further 14 dispersed supported properties which also provides support to young fathers and couple who struggle with parenting and maintaining their independence. The site visit identified the following key findings:

- The location is good, situated in a residential area with excellent access to transport links, schools, colleges, health care and the town centre. The properties at Fleming Garden are 2 bedroomed semi-detached houses in a quiet cul-de-sac, they are residential properties with one house used as the office site. The properties are of a high standard
- YWCA is a charity and has a Board of Trustees
- Young people are referred through Key Choices, Social Care and self- referral, there is a waiting list currently which applies a priority needs approach. An initial assessment is undertaken on sign up and support plans are reviewed every 12 weeks but change in accordance with need. A young person will work with staff to develop independent living skills appropriate to their needs.
- Fleming did evidence innovation, they have accessed a community centre and are running a toddler group and cookery sessions. They are currently developing volunteer/apprenticeship and peer support models and they



have a training arm which provides training to other agencies. They have a charity shop and are accredited to deliver Lifestyles programmes

- 3.4.6 Fleming Gardens is run by a staff team who appear to have the best interests of the residents at the heart of what they do. In terms of support it appears to function well and young people are involved in decisions affecting them. Staff are constantly trying to find new ways to involve young people. There are currently new ideas being introduced and the service continues to develop and improve.
- 3.4.7 HOUSING RELATED FLOATING SUPPORT, all floating support services are commissioned by Supporting People to work with young people aged 16 plus. Rush House are contracted to provide a 40 place floating support service specifically for young people at risk of eviction. This service also links into the young person's housing panel to ensure continued support for those moving on from supported temporary accommodation services. The service operates a waiting list and staff work with up to 50 young people at any time, demand consistently exceeds capacity in floating support.

#### **4 VOICE AND EXPERIENCE**

- 4.1 As part of the review a Dragon's Den was held facilitated by the Young Inspector and involved the LAC Council and Youth Cabinet. The event was a huge success, young people formed the dragon's panel and challenged managers, staff and children and young people from the services within the scope of the review with a number of questions. The panel then awarded virtual money to the services most committed in their view to improving services for children and young people in Rotherham.
- 4.2 The detail of the approach and the outcomes is reflected in Appendix 8 of this report.
- 4.3 The Youth Cabinet and the Looked After Children Council were both consulted as part of the review and this will be ongoing through to implementation.
- 4.4 The Challenge Events included children and young people and parent/carers. The feedback and engagement will be embedded in mainstream practice as a result to enduring the dialogue and participation is not just a one off exercise

#### **5 BENCHMARKING**

- 5.1 The detail of the comprehensive benchmarking is reflected in Appendix 9

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Residential Care

It is clear based on historical failings and an inability of current services to sustain improvement that a radical re-think of residential care models for Looked After Children is required. This comprehensive review is further evidence of this position. As a result the recommendations for consideration are:-

- Move to consultation for a planned closure of Silverwood
- Move to a planned closure of Cherry Tree in its current format
- Complete a feasibility study in relation to the development of an integrated health and social care provision for children with complex disabilities and challenging behaviours.

### 6.2 Short Breaks Provision

It is clear from the review that Liberty House has an excellent reputation and has worked hard to retain the Ofsted assessment of 'Good'. It is therefore recommended that:

- The current Service Improvement Plan should incorporate the issues raised by parent/carers during the review
- Personalisation and social pedagogy should be promoted as an approach, training provided and personal budgets developed to promote choice and control supported by the current work which is underway with 'In Control'
- Transition to Adult Social Care should begin at the age of 16 and there should be clear transition planning with full engagement of parent/carers. Transition should incorporate a full assessment which is person centred
- A Transition Assessment Facility should be considered at Grafton House in partnership with Adult Social Care, Education and Health
- Assistive Technology should be incorporated into any assessment and support process as a matter of course
- Transport and the approach should be reviewed with parent/carers as a matter of urgency based on a personalised approach and not 'one size fits all'.

- Challenge Events should be held with partners on a quarterly basis to inform co-production
- The review of Liberty House should be repeated in 12 months' time
- A Performance Framework should be developed which captures the activity and spend at Liberty House to increase value for money

### 6.3 Leaving Care

It is clear, based on the historical failings of these services and an inability to sustain improvement that there has to be a radical re-think of the current model. It is therefore recommended that:-

- Nelson Street- remains closed and the building is returned to asset management for sale on the open market which will bring a capital receipt back to the Council
- Hollowgate is supported to further improve as recognised by the Dragon's Den and continues to be monitored against a formal Service Improvement Plan which should be integrated with Adult Social Care and not managed in isolation by Children's Services. There should be an integrated approach with Adult Social Care in relation to the commissioning and monitoring of the service and an agreement reached that the service should be re-designed jointly and associated savings and efficiencies shared .

### 6.4 Edge Of Care- Recommendation

- The Association of Directors of Children's Services published a position statement and research paper in 2013 which made a strong case for rethinking how we respond to the complex needs of young people. Too often the initial safe containment can drift into long term static provision. The Government' Staying Put reforms which will enable young people to stay with their foster carers up to the age of 21 will help increase stability at a critical stage but a remaining challenge is to look at how the system can build stability into support when young people first enter care
- The main opportunity to improve outcomes is realigning the work of different partners with a clear approach to supporting young people on the edge of care. The development of an innovative edge of care service in Rotherham will reinforce the overall aim of the Sufficiency Strategy which is to safely reduce the numbers of children and young people in care by effective early intervention and would break down the silo

working which results in an overall service from care to leaving care which is disjointed and dysfunctional. The service would have a number of components:

- No Wrong Door- This would see a consistent team working with young people in or on the edge of care, those involved in offending, substance misuse etc. This would involve better information sharing about risks and needs, a reduction in bureaucracy and management costs. Crucially it would provide continuous, trusted relationships with a staff team irrespective of the type of placement or setting
- The introduction of a 'transition regime' which can include short term or weekend access to their former care home if they need it.
- The development of outreach support to young people after they have moved on from the home, providing support to them and to provide a hub for the young person to access health, education and other specialist services
- Develop a more effective use of residential placements for assessment of need and for preparing and matching young people or a successful return home.
- Develop a Residential, Leaving Care and Homeless Consortium which will deal with the current silo working and could see the development of a virtual hub of specialist staff who could continue to provide support to young people across a range of settings. There should be flexibility for young people to access residential support in a crisis or as a form of respite
- A fixed budget should be considered which could be delegated to providers for an agreed period of care leading to a stable long term outcome
- New Partnership arrangements with Education which would have a focus on the practical behavioural and emotional barriers that often prevent young people from making the most of education. They could include joint work between an Academy chain and/or a cluster of schools and/or a residential setting to increase support for carers involvement in schools. They could also include respite packages for young people on the edge of care.

#### 6.5 Homeless Provision- Recommendations

The review evidenced a generally good service which is provided by the voluntary and community sector in partnership with a number of Housing Associations. The issue appears to be a lack of partnership working across

all sectors, services with no connection to each other and no sense of a consolidated offer in Rotherham. Subsequently, the recommendations are:

- Develop a Homeless Partnership Forum which focuses on the improvement of pathways, including Residential and Leaving Care Services
- Develop a market improvement plan which focuses on effective communication, sharing of information and good practice

## **7. SUMMARY**

The approach and scope of the review is unprecedented in Rotherham in relation to children and young people's services and subsequently offers the opportunity to not only improve current provision but to transform models of accommodation and support for the future. The key is thinking differently and creatively, listening to the voice of young people, partners and families and building on their experience to deliver long awaited change.



**LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND LEAVING CARE PROMISE 2015**



**AS YOUR CORPORATE PARENT WE PROMISE -**

- **We will help you to live in a safe place where you are protected from harm.**
- **We will listen to what you have to say and make sure it makes a difference.**
- **We will help you to learn and do your best at school and college.**
- **We will help you to be happy and healthy.**
- **We will help you to learn new skills as you grow up and become an adult.**
- **We will fully involve you in plans and decisions about you and your future.**
- **We will help you take part in activities that you enjoy or that you are interested in.**
- **We will help you to explore and be ready for the world of work**
- **We will help you to be proud of yourself and celebrate your individual beliefs**



**ROTHERHAM JOINT COMMISSIONING STRATEGY  
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE - OUR JOURNEY TO  
EXCELLENCE**

**AUGUST 2015 - AUGUST 2018**

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Date: August 2015

## Foreword

Rotherham is passionately committed to working together to support children, young people, their carer's and families. This Strategy sets out how NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council intend to develop joint commissioning arrangements as a means of achieving the delivery of our strategic priorities and plans to transform the life choices for children, young people, their carer's and families in Rotherham.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership and the Local Children's Safeguarding Board will be the key drivers in relation to working in an integrated and joined up way to improve the quality and performance of jointly commissioned services, but more importantly to transform outcomes and life chances for local children and young people.

This Joint Commissioning Strategy sets out the agreed joint and integrated approach for the commissioning of services for children and young people between the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Council. It is intended to inform children, young people, families, partners, stakeholders and communities about children's commissioning and to set out our intentions for 2015-17 based on demographics, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and what service users have told us.

This Strategy will describe the way we will work with all key partners to co-produce joint commissioning approaches as a means of delivering the strategic vision of the Children and Young People's Partnership in Rotherham. We are passionate about improving our services and strongly believe that we can only do this in partnership, working collaboratively and creatively, sharing expertise, knowledge and resources.

We are committed to working together to challenge the status quo, champion innovation and to break down barriers to change, which will ensure that the child's voice is heard and is at the heart of what we do. This will enable us to develop a universal whole system approach to the commissioning of services in Rotherham, as we develop a truly child-friendly borough.

We will work with our partners, the voluntary and community sector and local communities to build community resilience, commissioning services collaboratively to develop family or community resource through working together and increasing the ability of individuals and communities to bounce back without intervention based on a sound and innovative early help offer.

As Commissioners, we will influence and enable, drawing in more community and family resource into all of our service commissioning. We will strive to optimise our total resources, improve our data so we can target services at those that need them most and be proactive in engaging families, the voluntary and community sector, practitioners and service providers to deliver the services our children and young people deserve in Rotherham

IAN THOMAS  
Strategic Director  
Children and Young People's Services  
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

CHRIS EDWARDS  
Chief Officer  
NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group



## 1. INTRODUCTION - OUR SCOPE, VISION AND PRINCIPLES

1.1 This Strategy will set out how we intend to maximise joint commissioning to ensure that children, young people and families are empowered to improve their life chances and are recognised for the skills and talents they have rather than the needs they present. This asset based approach to commissioning will build communities and reduce dependency on services. It will support the delivery of priorities reflected in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and in the Children and Young People's Plan and will enhance the early help offer for children and young people.

1.2 The Scope of the strategy includes all Children and Young People from Pre-birth to 25 years old, recognising:

- That some children will transition between Children & Young People's services within that timeline and
- That some children will transition from childhood to adulthood earlier.

1.3 The table below gives examples of services that will or will not be included within this strategy:-

In/out ✓ / x	Service	Commissioner	e.g. provider	Budget £
✓	Child Sexual Exploitation post abuse support services	RMBC/CCG	RMBC/RDASH/Vol Sector	
✓	Early Help e.g. Children Services, Youth services	RMBC	Universal Services	
✓	Special Educational needs and disabilities	RMBC/CCG	RMBC/RFT/RDASH	
✓	Looked after Children e.g. residential care and fostering placements	RMBC	RMBC/RFT RDASH	
✓	CAMHs	CCG	RDASH / Vol Sector	
✓	< 0-5 years including Best Start, health visiting etc.	Public health/RMBC	RFT/RMBC/Vol Sector	
✓	Public health services including Obesity, Smoking, breast Feeding	Public Health	RFT, Primary Care, Private Sector, Schools, Vol sector and RMBC	
X	Primary Care Services	CCG NHS England	GP's, Dentists, Opticians and Pharmacists	
X	Accident and Emergency	CCG	RFT/Care UK	
X	Paediatric Services	CCG	RFT/Sheffield Children's Hospital	
X	Specialist Paediatric Surgery/services e.g.	NHS England	Specialist provider (Leeds, Great	

	Heart, Cancer, epilepsy, neonates, chronic pain.		Ormond St, Sheffield etc.)	
X	Complex Needs Community Services	CCG	RFT	
X	Tier 4 CAMHS services	NHS England	Specialist providers	
X	Specialist Equipment	NHS England	Specialist providers	
✓	Bereavement, Drugs, Alcohol and Substance	RMBC & Rotherham CCG	External & Internal Service Providers	

This table is not exhaustive but gives a good indication of what services are included in the strategy. In Paragraph 6.3 we have identified service priorities where we intend to provide initial focus to utilise joint commissioning as an enabler for improving outcomes for children, young people, their families and carers. This will allow us to test out and learn from the many elements of a joint commissioning approach which we will then use to further scope and inform our joint commissioning in the future.

1.4 Our Vision on which our joint commissioning strategy is based is that children are safe, happy, healthy, confident and successful, contributing to a thriving, inclusive community that is welcoming to all.

1.5 The Strategy will cover a three year period from 2015 to 2018. We have agreed a set of principles which will underpin our joint commissioning approach:-

- We will commission services based on co-production with all key stakeholders and communities
- We will work collaboratively and in partnership at all stages of the commissioning cycle to influence the shaping of services within local communities
- We will commission services based on clear decision making and rationale for improving shared outcomes
- We will work in partnership to remove barriers and duplication, supporting the local market to grow and to build on strengths and social capital
- We will consult, engage and respond to all key stakeholders as part of the commissioning process and ensure that decisions are made based on a robust needs analysis and evidence base
- We will prioritise our efforts and resources to reduce inequalities and to ensure that those with the highest needs are effectively supported to live a fulfilling life within their local community
- We will ensure that commissioning will always focus on value for money and sustainable outcomes, making sure that every pound in Rotherham is a pound well spent.
- We will abide by the NHS constitution and promotes its awareness among Partners, patients, staff and the public
- We will ensure that our commissioning process, including tendering and procurement, is transparent and in line with good practice and legal requirements, whilst at the same time recognising the value of local market shaping when working with diverse communities in Rotherham

- We will rigorously monitor, evaluate and review the services we jointly commission together, reducing the burden of duplicated performance reporting on service providers by the development and implementation of a shared outcome based framework
- We will ensure that our commissioning decisions are justifiable and stand up to scrutiny

1.6 In Rotherham, we are adopting a four staged approach to commissioning which informs our commissioning cycle:-

- **STAGE 1: - JOINT UNDERSTANDING OF NEEDS**, it is important to jointly gain an understanding of the needs, resources and priorities which will have a positive impact on outcomes and what children, young people and families think about local services. We also need to understand national and local priorities, policy and drivers which will inform our decision making and our understanding of the total available resource. At a Strategic level this information is collated in the Borough's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- **STAGE 2: - JOINT PLANNING**, in relation to joint planning we need to focus on what we want to be and how we will get there. At a strategic level the Health and Wellbeing Board have published a Health and Well Being Strategy and the new Children and Young People's Partnership will develop a new Children and Young People's Plan. This Joint Commissioning Strategy will underpin the planning of the delivery of shared core priorities
- **STAGE 3: - JOINT DOING**, at this stage we will be implementing and delivering the actions and priorities we have agreed at the planning stage
- **STAGE 4: - JOINT REVIEW**, this stage is focused on ensuring that all plans and the services we commission are delivering the intended outcomes. It will include robust performance management processes and robust accountability of all partners and stakeholders in the delivery of agreed outcomes. We will develop a Children and Young People's Outcome based Framework which reflects the principles and key features of Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) to monitor and measure performance and the impact on the lives of children and families in Rotherham.

Together we will create a culture of high performing services and high challenge across the Borough.

## 2. NATIONAL AND LOCAL DRIVERS

In this section we briefly outline the key recent policy and legislative changes and local drivers that are most relevant to our planning in relation to joint commissioning.

## **2.1 ROTHERHAM Clinical Commissioning Group:**

- Maternity matters
- Healthy Child Programme (2009)
- Facing the future - Standards for acute paediatric Services (2015)
- Facing the future - Together for child health Standards (2015)
- Commissioning a good child health service (RCGPs)(2013)
- Giving all children a healthy start in life (2014)
- Implementing a new 0 - 25 special needs system LA's and partners (2014)
- NHS outcome framework 2015/16
- Public Health Outcome Framework 2013-16
- CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Tier 4 Report (2015) and Transformation Plan 2015
- NICE Guidance
- NHS Standard Contract
- Health and Well-Being Strategy

## **2.2 ROTHERHAM Council- National Drivers:**

- Children Act 1989
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2006
- Academies Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
- Keeping Children safe in Education 2015

## **2.3 LOCAL DRIVERS:**

- Children and Young Peoples Vision and Priorities - working with children, families and our partners for Rotherham Children's Services to be rated outstanding by 2018
- Children and Young People Services Improvement Plan based on the recommendations from the Jay Inquiry, the Casey Report and the inspection by Ofsted in October 2014
- Corporate Fresh Start Strategy - Developing a 'Child Friendly' Borough
- Post abuse support for victims and survivors of CSE
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Child Health Needs Analysis
- Sexual Health
- CSE Delivery Plan

This Joint Commissioning Strategy reflects our joint national and local priorities as we strive for excellence.

### **3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF JOINT COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS**

3.1 There is a strong commitment to develop joint commissioning arrangements but in spite of this there is minimal joint commissioning of services currently taking place across the Council and with the Clinical Commissioning Group, the voluntary and community sector, education, housing and the police. However, the recent joint funding agreement in relation to the post of Assistant Director of Commissioning, Performance and Quality Assurance marks an important stage of our partnership journey and our commitment in real terms to joint working across the Clinical Commissioning Group and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. This Joint Commissioning Strategy aspires to act as the catalyst for change, fostering an incremental approach across all partner organisations in relation to the commissioning of services and support for Children and Young People in Rotherham over the next three years.

3.2 We recognise that joint commissioning and planning are pivotal to the improvement and transformation of services to support a shift in culture, which empowers rather than creates dependency and an approach which recognises talent, mobilises assets and develops resilient communities. As a result, we intend to:

- ✓ Align our resources in relation to our joint priorities to increase efficiencies, reduce duplication, and to ensure value for money, reducing the reporting burden on providers to multiple commissioners
- ✓ State our shared commitment to providing timely financial information in an open and transparent way with clearly identified financial leads from the Council and the CCG
- ✓ Develop and implement a streamlined Commissioning Framework which is measurable against mutually agreed outcomes with all of our key stakeholders
- ✓ Develop a Joint Investment Plan aligned to our key priorities which will inform aligned budgets and the exploration of the feasibility of formal Section 75 Partnership Agreements
- ✓ Develop and implement a robust market management model which will allow us to systematically review, plan and shape commissioned services jointly, avoiding duplication of time and resources.
- ✓ Develop and implement an incremental aligned and integrated approach to commissioning which will ensure synergy across the whole commissioning system, working with NHS England, Public Health and Adult Social Care
- ✓ Further map services against our agreed priorities within local communities, including schools, colleges, and universal services to further understand our resources and how they are currently deployed and at what price and quality. This will inform how we jointly shape services at

local level to build community resilience and target resources and need more effectively in the future

- ✓ Co-produce a commissioning model which embraces personal budgets, social prescribing, community assets and self-directed support, building on the early help offer in Rotherham to reduce demand and enhance life choices for children and young people
- ✓ Use quantitative and qualitative needs analysis and data to identify current and future needs and where there are gaps in services to ensure we commission services which children and young people believe are important to them
- ✓ Develop a whole market approach which works out the real costs and value of in-house and externally commissioned services, applying a standardised market management model
- ✓ Review and inform how different procurement techniques might be used to improve effectiveness, ensuring user involvement to improve outcomes
- ✓ Plan the timings of procurement activity across partners and ensure effective risk identification and risk management systems are developed and embedded in future service planning
- ✓ Lead and shape a Service and Market Improvement approach, encouraging providers to work collaboratively and not in direct competition
- ✓ Work with children, young people and their families to enable them to review services with commissioners, capturing learning from existing work and experiences to inform the development of a Rotherham Quality Kite Mark informed by the experience of children and young people
- ✓ Ensure that our respective IT systems talk to each other
- ✓ Ensure that workforce development needs across providers are effectively embedded in the market improvement plans, encouraging shared learning and development activities to drive up the quality of the workforce across the board. This should be underpinned by the development of an overarching Workforce Strategy led by the establishment of a Learning and Development Partnership hosted by an independent Provider, which will enable access to partnership funding to support future training and access to qualifications
- ✓ Develop an Equalities Charter which embraces the commitment from commissioners and providers to working in partnership with diverse communities
- ✓ Develop an information sharing protocol to strengthen our joint governance arrangements in relation to the priorities reflected in the Joint Commissioning Strategy

#### **4 OUR THREE YEAR PLAN**

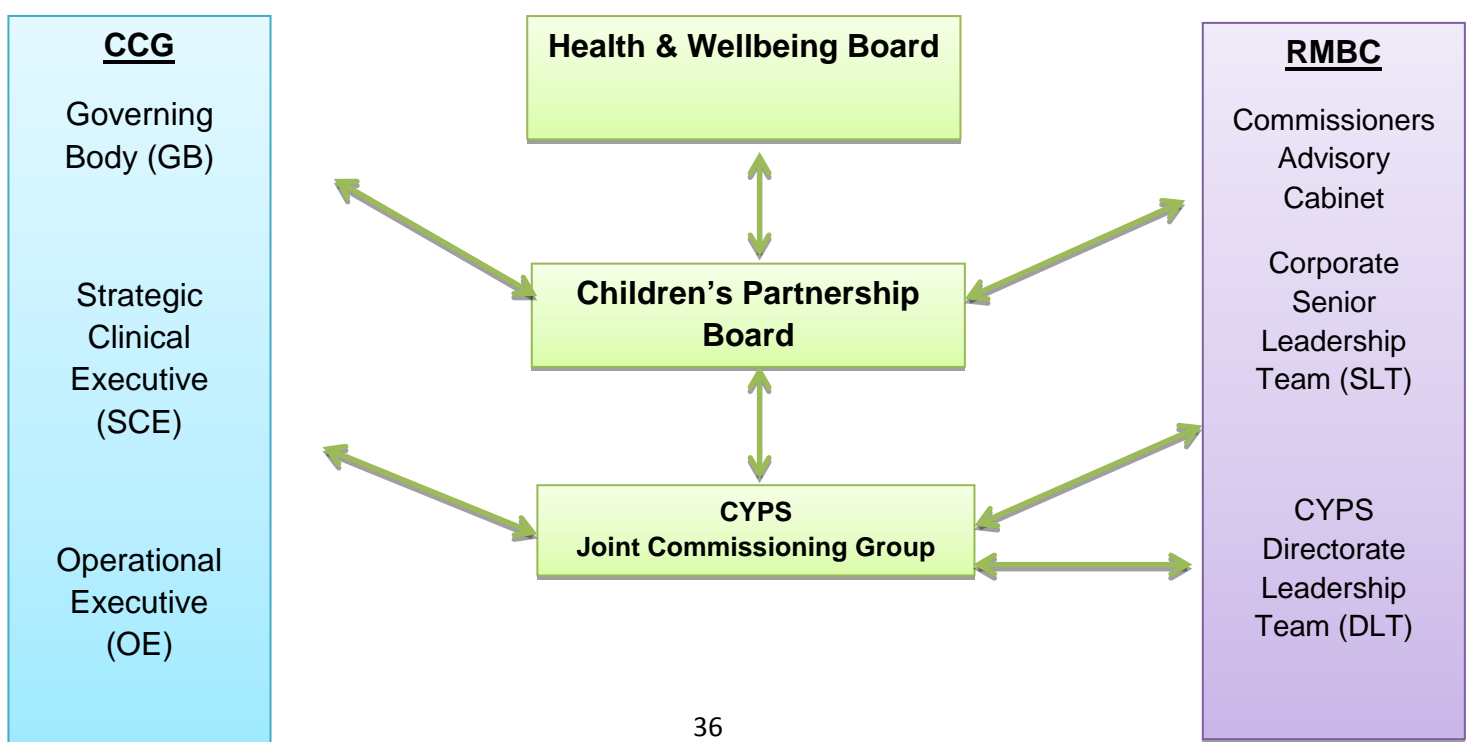
4.1 We have set ourselves an ambitious target of three years in which to deliver the transformational change we want to see in our joint commissioning arrangements. The initial focus will be on the development of joint commissioning arrangements between the Children's and Young Peoples Directorate in the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group. However, we recognise that there is a significant potential opportunity to exceed this and in particular to work with

schools, public health and adult social care to understand further their potential role, appetite and contributions to the further development of joint commissioning arrangements in Rotherham.

- 4.2 We will adopt and apply a programme management approach to support the delivery of our joint commissioning intentions, which, as well as providing transparent project plans this will ensure a robust approach to performance management, governance and risk management across partners.
- 4.3 We will develop an Implementation Plan aligned to our key priorities which will be co-produced and monitored by and with our key partners and stakeholders. The Implementation Plan will be directly monitored by the Joint Strategic Commissioning Group and will have clear milestones and metrics to strengthen collaborative accountability for delivery and action. There will be 7 work streams linked to our priorities, each of which will have a joint lead and will be responsible for the development of detailed commissioning strategies linked to the priorities outlined in this Strategy

## 5 GOVERNANCE

- 5.1 We recognise that the development of joint agreements across different organisations can be complex and challenging and that many issues such as financial sovereignty, politics, culture and control are potential barriers to the achievement of our joint commissioning ambitions.
- 5.2 To mitigate these risks we intend to establish a robust governance arrangement that is largely built on the current reporting mechanisms for both the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Council. This will help reduce increased bureaucracy and the potential time delay in relation to our decision making process. This is outlined below:



- 5.3 The diagram shows that in addition to the current and established governance we only intend to create one new forum which is the Joint Strategic Commissioning Group. This Group will be responsible for the development and monitoring of the Implementation Plan and will ensure that all joint commissioning arrangements outlined in our Joint Commissioning Strategy actually happen and are reported through our established governance arrangements in a timely manner for joint decision.
- 5.4 The 3 locality plans (North, Central and South) will feed and influence the strategy based the provision of local intelligence and information from the communities and from our partners. The information will be fed through to the commissioning priority work streams to ensure that our future commissioning is responsive, flexible and informed.
- 5.5 The Joint Strategic Commissioning Group will be initially chaired by the jointly funded Assistant Director of Commissioning, Performance and Quality Assurance, and will initially meet on a monthly basis, which will be subject to review following a 6 month period of operation.
- 5.6 The Joint Strategic Commissioning Group will consist of decision makers and individuals who are committed to aligned and integrated commissioning. The proposed membership will be as follows;-Associate Director of Commissioning - Clinical Commissioning Group, Director of Public Health, Director of Adult Social Care, Assistant Director of Strategic Housing, Chief Executive of the Voluntary and Community Sector, Director of Education, GP Lead, Head of Safeguarding, Performance and Workforce Development A legal representative, procurement and finance will be co-opted as and when is needed
- 5.7 This initial proposal in relation to membership presents as top heavy but is important initially to ensure that buy in is from the top to enable the challenging conversations to be had in a constructive and professional manner.

## **6 OUR JOINT COMMISSIONING PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 We will take a whole system, intergenerational approach based on a life journey to ensure synergy and integration of development initially focusing on children and young people, their families and carers using our commissioning cycle to ensure that we apply a consistent approach to all decision making processes in relation to market management and shaping, improvement, efficiency programmes and investment plans.
- 6.2 Transforming the way that we currently commission services is a complex task and will not be achieved overnight. We are looking at transformational change in the way that services are currently delivered and recognise that we need to take a timely and incremental approach. We have jointly identified service priorities where we intend to provide initial focus to utilise joint commissioning as an enabler for improving outcomes for children, young people and their families and



carers. This will allow us to test out and learn from the many elements of a joint commissioning approach, which we will then use to further scope and inform our joint commissioning in the future.

6.3 The Service priority areas are-

- ✓ Child Sexual Exploitation post abuse support services
- ✓ Early Help
- ✓ SEND
- ✓ Transition
- ✓ Looked After Children- our Sufficiency Strategy in relation to Residential Care and Fostering Placements
- ✓ CAMHS
- ✓ 0-5 YEARS, including best start

6.4 We will build on the current work to date and develop detailed joint commissioning strategies for each service priority area which will sit beneath our overarching Joint Commissioning Strategy. Each Service Priority will be led by a Project Group and will report into the Joint Strategic Commissioning Group to ensure oversight and successful delivery.

## **7 COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT**

7.1 We will co-produce a Commissioning Communication Plan to ensure that the developing approach and priorities outlined in our Joint Commissioning Strategy are communicated effectively to all stakeholders. This will require a mixed approach:

- ✓ Creative use of technology, media and community events to engage with children, families and local communities
- ✓ Information and engagement with stakeholders across the Children and Young People's Partnership, Rotherham Youth Cabinet, Looked After Children, the Local Children's Safeguarding Board and the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategic Leads Forum.
- ✓ The development of commissioner and provider partnership forums, ensuring inclusion of the community and voluntary sector as well as statutory services, both in-house and external.

## **8 IN CONCLUSION**

- ✓ The transformational benefits of joint and aligned commissioning are unlimited as are the uncertainties and challenges. However, in working collaboratively we believe that the outcomes for children and young people in Rotherham will be enhanced and will have a major positive impact on their lives and those of their families
- ✓ We can no longer work in silos as separate organisations and neither should we choose to. By joining up our resources and expertise we will be in a position not only to improve our commissioning of services but to

transform, focusing our resources in the right time, in the right place and in the right way.

- ✓ We are committed to working jointly to harness community assets and to co-produce services with local people to inform the development and shaping of markets which the people of Rotherham deserve. This will enable us to develop a child-friendly borough where children grow and develop well, in a safe environment.

### Glossary of Terms

Co-produce	To work together to design and deliver services.
Asset Based Approach	To recognise potential all people have and to build on their strengths to increase independence and develop strong communities.
CAMH's	Child Adolescent Mental Health Services
RMBC	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
RFT	Rotherham Foundation Trust
Rotherham CCG	Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group
Social Capital	The natural assets within communities e.g. spirit of volunteering.
Market Shaping	To work with the voluntary and community sector, service providers and local community groups to develop a strong menu of services for local children and young people.
Self-directed support	The support for children and young people is led by them.
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.



**RMBC Working In Partnership  
Children & Young People's Service**

**Looked After Children Service Provision Review**

**Terms of Reference**

**1. Introduction**

The priorities set out by Commissioner Newsam in his report to the Secretary of State for Education in July 2015 extended the improvement work of the Council and its partners. A total of six priorities were outlined, of which one was: 'Strengthening the commissioning infrastructure ensuring that services commissioned both in-house and externally offer the best outcomes and are cost effective and there is in place a sufficient range of care and placement services'.

The key challenges identified by the Sufficiency Strategy require commissioning to respond in a proactive way to shape local services to reflect the ambition we have for the children and young people of Rotherham.

Also, the Ofsted Report into Rotherham's Children and Young People's Services published in November 2014 rated services as inadequate with recommendations around: sufficiency; choice; quality of service; up to date risk assessments, plans and reviews; voice and experience; clear profile of needs and clear understanding.

In response to these priorities, legislative requirements and recommendations a review of the looked after children's service provision is being undertaken looking at:

- In-House Residential Care - St Ed's and Silverwood
- Leaving Care – Nelson Street and Hollowgate
- In-House Respite - Liberty House and Cherry Tree Manor
- Homelessness Provision - Rush House

**2. Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the project team is to oversee the progress of the review and ensure it remains on track. They will collectively deal with any issues or barriers and escalate any major concerns to DLT.

Lead Officers have been agreed and allocated to each service area and are

undertaking a desk top exercise with an objective of producing a service description to ensure that we have a clear picture of the 'as is' service provision.

### **3. Scope and role of the project team**

The project team will review the 'as is' service and liaise with stakeholders, partners, service users, young people, workers and colleagues to gather their views and ideas for how our services work currently and how we should provide those services in the future.

At the end of the review period, a report of findings will be produced and presented to DLT.

The main scope of activity of the project group will include:

- To complete a desktop exercise of the 'as is service'
- To complete a series of quality assessment site visits with small multi-disciplinary teams
- To complete a 'Dragons Den' exercise utilising our young inspectors and young people
- To complete a series of challenge events to bring together a wide range of partners focusing on what we currently provide and what we should provide in future
- To gather views of community groups via a voluntary and community sector CYPS reference group
- To meet with the Youth Cabinet and LAC Committee, and sub-regional commissioning colleagues to ensure involvement and views are captured
- To benchmark against other authorities where possible

### **4. Membership**

The project team is made up of the following roles:

- Interim Director, CYPS – Project Lead
- Homeless Provision Representative – Rush House, Target Housing, Action Housing
- LAC and Residential Head of Service
- Children's Disability Services Service Manager
- Interim LAC advisor
- CYPS Commissioning Representative
- Barnardos Representative
- Rotherham Parents Forum Representative
- CYPS Performance and Planning Representative – Project Support

- Young Inspector Coordinator
- Finance Representative
- Public Health Representative
- Housing, Asset Management and Neighbourhood Services Representative
- Service Manager for Care Leavers
- Voluntary and Community Sector Representative

## **5. Governance Arrangements**

The project is led by the CYPS Interim Director. The final report will be presented to DLT and Commissioner Newsam.

All information and documentation is gathered at one central point by the Performance and Planning team representative.

# **Children and Young People's Services**

## **Review of Residential Care, Leaving Care, Short Breaks, Homelessness Provision**

# Quality Assurance Assessment Template

The Quality Assurance Assessment Template is designed to capture information from the sites visited by the multidisciplinary review team. The template refers to 5 core research questions which is further developed within the template in relation to specific practical service questions. The Core questions are:

- **Why:** Why something is being done in a particular way and thought to bring about intended outcomes
- **How** – Knowing what should or has been done is not the same as doing it well
- **Who** – to invite and when each service will involve different partners and stakeholders
- **What works** – What specific actions bring about the desired outcomes with few unwanted consequences and how outcomes are measured
- **How much** – Even when an intervention has been proven to work, we need to know whether it represents good value for money and is cost effective and therefore likely to be sustainable over time.

The Department for Education's 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards September 2014 provides useful information to support the approach to the quality assessment site visits. The 2015 regulations include Quality

Standards which set out aspirational positive outcomes that homes are expected to be achieving for each child in their care and the underpinning requirements that homes must meet in order to achieve the overarching outcomes.

The principles for residential care are built upon important elements which underpin the regulations and the DFE guide and should be at the heart of the review for all services within scope and not just residential care.

The principles of residential care are:

- Children in Residential Care should be loved, happy, healthy, safe from harm and able to develop, thrive and fulfil their potential
- Residential Care should value and nurture each child and young person as an individual with talents, strengths and capabilities that can develop over time
- Residential Care should build positive relationships, establishing strong bonds with children and young people on the basis of jointly undertaking activities, shared daily life, domestic and non-domestic routines and establish boundaries of acceptable behaviour
- Residential Care should be ambitious, nurturing young people's school learning and out of school learning and ambitious for their future.
- Residential care should be attentive to need, attending to young people's emotional, mental and physical health needs, such as repairing earlier damage to self-esteem and supporting friendships.
- Residential care should be outward facing working with the wider system of professionals for each child, and with children and young people's families and communities of origin to sustain links and understand past problems.
- Residential care homes should have high expectations of staff as members of a team, as decision makers, as activity leaders and engaged in on-going learning about their role and the children, young people and families they work with.



- Residential care should provide a safe and accommodating environment in high quality building spaces that support nurture and privacy as well as common spaces to be active.

These principles should underpin all the values within the scope of the review and must drive your ambition levels when completing the on site visits.

Area of Assessment	What are you looking for? (Examples)	What did you find? (Examples)	Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i>
1. The Child's/Young Person's Journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The child's/young person's wishes and feelings have been recognised and championed.</li> <li>- Outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active consultation about key events</li> <li>- Conversations about key events</li> <li>- Conversations about their experience of family life</li> <li>- Engaging in a way that is appropriate to age and understanding</li> <li>- Views are taken into account and responded to</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Outstanding</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Good</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Requires Improvement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Inadequate</p> <p><i>Outstanding – Strong consistent evidence in all elements</i>  <i>Good – Evidence of all elements</i>  <i>Requires Improvement – Evidence of most areas but there are some gaps</i>  <i>Inadequate – No evidence</i></p>

**Comments:**

Area of Assessment	What are you looking for?	What did you find?	Judgement:
2. Quality of Assessment/ Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Person is central</li> <li>- Privacy and confidentiality</li> <li>- Wellbeing</li> <li>- Complaints</li> <li>- Child protection procedures and training</li> <li>- Countering bullying and hate crimes</li> <li>- Missing procedures/actions</li> </ul>		<p style="text-align: center;">Outstanding</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Good</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Requires Improvement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Inadequate</p>

**Comments:**

Area of Assessment	What are you looking for? (Examples)	What did you find? (Examples)	Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i>
3. Assessment of Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Close to local bus route</li> <li>- Close to local college etc</li> <li>- Established community</li> </ul>		<p style="text-align: center;">Outstanding</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Good</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Requires Improvement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Inadequate</p>

**Comments:**

Area of Assessment	What are you looking for? (Examples)	What did you find? (Examples)	Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i>
4. Leadership and Management			Outstanding Good Requires Improvement Inadequate

**Comments:**

Area of Assessment	What are you looking for? (Examples)	What did you find? (Examples)	Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i>
5. Innovations			Outstanding Good Requires Improvement Inadequate

**Comments:**

Area of Assessment	What are you looking for? (Examples)	What did you find? (Examples)	Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i>
6. Advocacy/Information			Outstanding Good Requires Improvement Inadequate

**Comments:**

Area of Assessment	What are you looking for? (Examples)	What did you find? (Examples)	Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i>
7. Links with Education			Outstanding Good Requires Improvement Inadequate

**Comments:**



Area of Assessment	What are you looking for? (Examples)	What did you find? (Examples)	Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i>
8. Links with Health			Outstanding Good Requires Improvement Inadequate

**Comments:**

Area of Assessment	What are you looking for? (Examples)	What did you find? (Examples)	Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i>
9. Links with Training Opportunities			Outstanding Good Requires Improvement Inadequate

**Comments:**

Area of Assessment	What are you looking for? (Examples)	What did you find? (Examples)	Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i>
10. Child's/Young Person's Voice			Outstanding Good Requires Improvement Inadequate

**Comments:**

Area of Assessment	What are you looking for? (Examples)	What did you find? (Examples)	Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i>
11. Environment, Location/Design and Size of Home – Bathroom and Working Facilities, Health and Safety (Risk Assessment), Security, office location			<p style="text-align: center;">Outstanding</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Good</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Requires Improvement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Inadequate</p>

**Comments:**

<b>Area of Assessment</b>	<b>What are you looking for? (Examples)</b>	<b>What did you find? (Examples)</b>	<b>Judgement: <i>Please circle one</i></b>
12. Staffing – Support, Teamwork, Training, Supervision, Staffing levels, use of waking nights, turnover			Outstanding  Good  Requires Improvement  Inadequate

**Comments:**

**Silverwood Service Improvement Plan**



2016-02-02 Service  
Improvement Action

**Cherrytree Service Improvement Plan**



2016-02-03 redacted  
Service Improvement

## Hollowgate Service Improvement Plan

Interim Service Manager – Janet Simon

Maxwell Muchenje

Christian Palfrey

Visits were undertaken to Nelson Street and Hollowgate as part of the review of Leaving Care Accommodation in December 2015. The Leaving Care Accommodation Service presented as a service with little direction and was described by a member staff who stated; “the unacceptable has become acceptable”. Staff group appears demoralised and lacking in confidence or motivation. Young people accessing this service are not receiving the standard of support that would be expected from a corporate parent. It appears that practice has been eroded over time to such an extent that it is now unacceptable. Young people do not appear to be engaged in their plans or in any structured activity within the setting which would prepare them for independence. Staff spoken to couldn’t articulate what the outcomes were that they were aiming for or who the service was aimed at and the level of need. A decision was made to close Nelson Street whilst the service is reviewed.

This plan describes and identifies key priorities for young people supported by the leaving care accommodation service and sets out how we intend to support young people in making the transition into living independently.

The Plan aims to:

### **Ensure all young people are in suitable and supported accommodation.**

- Ensure that the leaving care accommodation provision is of high quality and supportive enabling care leavers to acquire the full range of life skills.
- Care leavers have the time and support they need to acquire the life skills that will enable them to live independently.
- Reinforce good practice, and ensure that any practice concerns are addressed
- Provide an outstanding service to young people that will prepare them for independence
- Establish rigorous and robust assessment approaches to ensure we are getting it right for every Young Person
- Improve achievements and outcomes of our Young People
- Improve the physical health, emotional wellbeing and development of Young People
- Maximise opportunities for Young People

REQUIREMENT	ACTION [S]	Owner	Due by	Rag	Status
<p><b>1. Policies and procedures</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>File opened with a set of up to date key policies and guidance</li> <li>Staff to go through with support from management</li> <li>Signature sheet to be completed by each staff member as confirmation of awareness and understanding of the key documents (to be retained on supervision file)</li> </ul>	<p>██████</p>	<p>11/03/16</p>	<p style="background-color: green;"></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy and Procedure files located in the office.</li> <li>This file contains the current RMBC Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults procedure</li> <li>System in place to evidence that all staff have read and understood the procedures.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Health and safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff team to take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a young person's welfare.</li> <li>Staff to report any concerns about a young person.</li> <li>Staff to familiarise themselves with and follow safeguarding procedures</li> <li>Assessment to be undertaken with the responsible team for each young person to identify if they are at risk of harm, taking into account</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Lone working guidance</b> - Local guidance updated</li> <li><b>Drugs &amp; substance misuse</b> - Handling issues of drugs and substance misuse by service user guidance introduced</li> <li><b>Vetting of visitors</b> - Business/professional Visitors log Book introduced – requires staff to confirm visitor ID</li> <li>Improvements to vetting of Tenants visitors being explored – main focus is to ensure all visitors are appropriately registered with photo ID copy and contact details provided.</li> <li><b>Missing from Home</b> – Incident management protocol being improved – first change was introduction of Tenants</li> </ul>	<p>██████</p>	<p>31/04/16</p>	<p style="background-color: yellow;"></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff up to date and aware of need to complete Accident Reporting forms and Body Maps (where relevant)</li> <li>Staff reminded that they should not go off duty without recording and reporting incidents, disclosure allegations that would have occurred during their shift.</li> <li>Team message book introduced</li> <li>File audits completed – actions outstanding being progressed</li> <li>Service User files brought up to date and maintained</li> <li>All social workers/Personal Advisors are to complete CSE risk assessments and trigger indicators for their</li> </ul>



<p>information in the young person's plans, and if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the young person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that information for each young is up to date to assist in locating young people who are missing including favoured places and addresses are included in line with local protocol.</li> <li>• Child Sexual Exploitation risks assessed in a timely manner and are subject to regular review.</li> <li>• Any injuries to young people are fully investigated and assessed following safeguarding procedures.</li> </ul>	<p>Daily Interaction Record which will improve visibility of absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Service user Risk Assessments</b> – the current form used from the referral teams is in-adequate and the risk Assessment review process is not timely. Agreement made with Personal Advisors that staff at Hollowgate can update these risk assessments immediately a major incident occurs or a new concern arises and email document to them for input and signature.</li> <li>• New internal risk Assessment form will be completed for all new service users. Gradually, all service users risk Assessments will be transferred to this new format.</li> <li>• The Personal Advisor risk Assessment form will remain as part of the referral information.</li> <li>• Existing guidance on what is an Incident and how to record incidents has been re-circulated to all staff.</li> <li>• Incident report form, Incident log book &amp;</li> </ul>			<p>young people. These will inform and supplement the Accommodation's CSE risk assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training on CSE is available on-line (all staff to complete). Evolve and Barnados to be invited to have workshops with team and young people.</li> <li>• Gaps exist in the quality of Support Plans and Risk Assessments – Management will provide on-going review of these documents and provide staff with guidance and training.</li> <li>• Support Plans and Risk Assessments – Management workshop scheduled for Team meeting of 20/04/2016.</li> </ul>
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incident file introduced and now in use.

- New guidance on dealing with Disclosures-Allegations, report form, log book & file introduced and now in use.
- All young people's risk assessment and support plans to be reviewed **with** young people and Personal Advisors. Going forward, these will be reviewed each quarter or earlier if new support needs and/or risks have emerged.
- Young people's risk assessments will be discussed in individual staff supervision and in team meetings.
- All staff have been reminded that the young people's episode of going missing from the project will be recorded as incidents.
- Each young person's missing from home management plan has been updated with known individuals' details and historical information including favoured places and addresses associated with the young person when they go missing.

<p><b>3. Upkeep of property and grounds</b></p>	<p>Thorough clean-up of driveways, car park and paths completed.</p> <p>Skip ordered to have now removed discarded furniture and rubbish.</p>	<p>██████</p>	<p>29/02/16</p>	<p>████████</p>	<p>Area is kept appropriately clean and tidy.</p>
<p><b>4. Service user engagement</b></p>	<p>More focus on service user consultation and involvement in how the service is provided and in quality assurance.</p> <p>1:1 meetings with management.</p> <p>Management attendance at service user consultation meetings</p> <p>Service users will be encouraged to appoint their representative who can represent them in advancing service improvement</p> <p>Weekly activities to include quiz nights, arts and crafts, cooking</p> <p>Snack and drinks provided during sessions</p> <p>Young Inspector to be invited to meet with young people using the Leaving Care</p> <p>Accommodation to seek feedback on their experience and views about any changes they want,</p>	<p>██████</p>	<p>31/03/16</p>	<p>████████</p>	<p>Suggestions and feedback form and resource now available.</p> <p>TARA meetings now in place with a schedule of dates and an agenda.</p> <p>Young people asked to be represented at team meetings with managers.</p> <p>A young people’s representative has been identified.</p> <p>Activity schedule up and running including crafts, baking and</p> <p>Invitations to partners that can provide support and advice.</p> <p>Service Improvement questionnaire with a suggestion that the names of those completing a questionnaire should be placed in a hat and the first name picked out received a £25 gift voucher.</p> <p>Example of peer challenge – the use of cannabis by some residents appropriately challenged by others.</p> <p>Communal space for young people to have private meetings and group meetings or have space away from their flats.</p> <p>Snacks and drinks available at sessions. Fruit is now provided in reception as a result of feedback from a young person.</p>
<p><b>5. Health promotion</b></p>	<p>Breakfast club introduced</p> <p>Fruit basket introduced</p>	<p>██████</p>	<p>31/03/16</p>	<p>████████</p>	<p>The breakfast club introduced and well received by young people.</p>

	Cooking sessions increased				<p>Provision of fruit freely available.</p> <p>Cooking sessions is enabling the young people to have company while learning about keeping healthy and developing their independence skills.</p>
<b>6. Health And Dental Care</b>	Links to be developed with Health and Dental Care	■	29/04/16		<b>Links still to be developed with Health and Dental partners</b>
<b>7. Staff Rota</b>	Staff raised concerns regarding short breaks when transiting from night shifts to day shifts, as well as the fact that L2 staff work 3 weekends out of 4, and that the rota pattern makes it difficult for some staff to attend team Meetings etc – consultation with staff, senior management and tenants to be started March 2016 and to consider different rota options	■	29/04/16		There is currently a review of staffing as there has been some changes due to other resources being closed. This will enable some flexibility in the service offer not just to young people in Hollowgate but those in Residential/ in their own tenancies and those in supported/dispersed accommodation. Alongside this review will be consideration of the current rota and its suitability for the needs of the service.
<b>8. ICT</b>	<p>Availability of computer/internet access for service users.</p> <p>More multi-media literature and resources will be provided.</p>	■	12/03/16		<p>Wi-Fi infrastructure has now been installed at Hollowgate. Awaiting RMBC IT department to finalise the connection.</p>
<b>9. Records management</b>	Archiving of previous service user files at Nelson Street and Hollowgate prioritised – order placed with Records Management – awaiting delivery of archive boxes.	■	12/03/16		All Nelson Street documents and Hollowgate ex-tenants documents have now been archived with RMBC Records Office.

<b>10. Work and resource space at Hollowgate</b>	<p>Area to be open for business</p> <p>Fitting and equipping allocated flat prioritised</p> <p>– Furniture and fittings sourced from Residential service closed homes – to be collected from 12/02/2016</p>		15/02/16		<p>The development of the resource space is completed and ready for use.</p> <p>This has been an improvement the service and welcomed by young people.</p>
<b>11. Staff support via supervision</b>	<p>Structure now in place to ensure all staff receive adequate supervision - at a minimum of 1 session per month unless higher frequency identified as required.</p> <p>Deputy Manager will supervise Level 2 staff.</p> <p>Team Manager will supervise Deputy Manager and the 3 Level 3 staff</p> <p>Supervision matrix to be put in place</p>		12/03/16		<p>All staff supervised in February and March. April supervisions progressing.</p> <p>Staff supervision folders updated with all available supervision notes.</p> <p>Supervision matrix is in place and will be monitored by the Service Manager</p> <p>Most staff members have now completed their profiles which will be used to identify areas for development and in the Learning Log to be provided to all staff members which will be reviewed and discussed in supervision.</p>
<b>12. Partnership working and professional resources for service users</b>	<p>Updating our partner resource list.</p> <p>Inviting partners for regular scheduled drop in visits to the service to support staff and service users.</p> <p>To start seeking partners feed-back on quality of our interaction and response to them</p>		31/03/16		<p>There is evidence that staff are moving towards a more inclusive process of working.</p> <p>Staff have visited team meeting and management meetings in leaving care team.</p> <p>Professionals are being invited to TARA meetings and activity sessions in order to develop a more trusting relationship</p>

					<p>between young people and professionals they may have to work with in the future.</p> <p>Personal advisors are more visible within Hollowgate.</p>
<p><b>13. Development of a more supportive, enabling and empowering support approach to working with service user that promotes development of life and independent living skills</b></p>	<p>Support should be provided in accordance with the service users support Plan and weekly key-working session plans.</p>	<p>██████</p>	<p><b>On-going</b></p>		<p>Plans have been reviewed and there is an improvement.</p> <p>On-going reviewing of support plans and including young people and professionals in the process.</p> <p>Change of use of one of the rooms to a communal space/resource.</p> <p>Support plans are 6 weeks, 3mths then 6mths No emergency placements to be accepted.</p> <p>Referral process via 16 + accommodation panel being reviewed. A system to be linked to moving on rather than after the young person is placed.</p> <p>PACE model of working with and supporting young people delivered by the RMBC in Team meeting.</p> <p>Second monthly team meeting introduced as a platform for reflective practice and training.</p>
<p><b>14. HR Compliance – Evidence that all staff have a current DBS which is satisfactory as per Rotherham’s procedures updated every</b></p>	<p>Report is being run by HR to confirm compliance for each member of staff.</p>				<p>Report run by HR – Matrix being developed and any missing documents requested to ensure compliance</p> <p>All staff now have in-date DBS checks</p>

three years					
15. Recruitment of a deputy manager to the Leaving Care Accommodation Team	Interim Deputy Manager recruited	■	05/02/16		Permanent Recruitment to be prioritised.
16. Training Matrix for staff which flags when mandatory training is required	Completed	■	29/2/16		Completed Training Matrix is being updated as staff complete training.
17. Individual and up to date Training record for each member of staff to be placed in supervision folder and supervision to evidence that gaps / training needs are identified	To be addressed as part of supervision	■	31/03/16		To be evidenced in supervision folders.  Target not met. Staff reminded of need to complete refreshed on-line training modules. More time is being made available for staff to complete modules.  A number of face-to-face training has been received by staff to date and a number are booked on forthcoming training.
18. TOIL procedure to be put in place and monitored effectively	TOIL procedure to be rolled out and staff made aware of how this will be managed going forward	■	29/02/16		LR has agreed to provide the link to the appropriate TOIL procedure  Local procedure to be put in place
19. Service User files should be peer audited for quality at least 3 monthly	Matrix for this needs to be developed	■	15/03/16		All files have been audited by QA but a Matrix for this needs to be developed going forward to ensure that the files for the leaving care accommodation service are appropriate.

<p><b>20. Management meetings between Leaving Care and Leaving Care Accommodation</b></p>	<p>Regular fortnightly meetings between Leaving Care Managers to share information about young people of concern and to ensure a joined up service.</p>	<p>■</p>	<p>15/02/16</p>	<p>■</p>	<p>Meetings taking place</p>
<p><b>21. Promoting engagement with young people and improved support</b></p>	<p>The move-in induction process will be enhanced to ensure all necessary documentation is available before young person takes residence.</p> <p>Expectations to engage will be highlighted and emphasised to the young people as part of the induction.</p> <p>The tenancy agreement and recommendation process for young people to bid for own homes is to be reviewed to strengthen young people's engagement</p> <p>Reward/incentive scheme being explored to reward positive engagement.</p> <p>Key-work/Support Plan meeting planner introduced</p> <p>Tenants activities planner introduced</p> <p>Tenants consultation meetings to be held monthly</p> <p>Management to consult each tenant individually in the month of February to have</p>	<p>■</p>	<p>30/05/16</p>	<p>■</p>	<p>PACE (playfulness, Accepting, Curiosity, Empathy) training was completed on 23/02/2016</p> <p>Review of Service to include developing and building on the engagement and support of young people and introduction of an induction pack and process.</p>



	their assessment of service provided and how service could be improved.				
<b>22. Review of Statement of Purpose and role of the team</b>	Review with relevant services the 16 + accommodation service and the offer to young people. Plan to be reviewed and redrafted to take into account any changes/improvement to the service.		<b>April 2016</b>		<b>In progress</b>
<b>23. Review of Statement of purpose of 16+ accommodation panel and referral process</b>	Rewriting of the statement of purpose of the 16+ accommodation panel to ensure representation at the right level and from the appropriate services to ensure timely and appropriate plans for young people and to provide solutions and appropriate challenge.	<b>E</b>	<b>April 2016</b>		<b>In progress.</b>
<b>24. Review of the roles of Level 3 and Level 2 staff</b>	To be completed as part of the review of the Leaving Care Accommodation Team and	<b>■</b>	<b>April 2016</b>		<b>Service Manager progressing discussions and review.</b>

	discussions with HR about terms and conditions for staff within Leaving Care and Leaving Care Accommodation who are currently subject to Action for Children Terms and Conditions				
<b>25. Discussion with HR around bringing all members of staff within terms and conditions of RMBC</b>	Work to be completed with HR	█	<b>05/03/16</b>		Service Manager has had initial discussion and is progressing the review.

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## Dragons Den Challenge Event LAC/Leaving Care Review

### 1. Introduction and background

As part of Rotherham Council's review of Looked after Children & Leaving Care service, an event was held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

A panel of young people was convened with representative from Young Inspectors, LAC Council and Youth Cabinet. A member of Health Ambassadors was also invited, but unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances was unable to attend. The panel would be asking attendees a series of questions and then based on their responses; the panel would invest a sum of money to each service provider.

Providers were invited to from  
Homelessness Provision

- Rush House
- Action for Housing
- YWCA (Fleming Gardens)

Leaving Care Provision

- Hollowgate

Short Breaks Provision

- Liberty House
- Cherry Tree

These providers were each invited to nominate a manager, front-line worker and service user to attend this event.

Young Inspector Coordinator put together a series of 6 questions that each of those attending would be asked on an individual basis, these was approved by senior manager.

### 2. Questions

#### Managers & Front Line Workers

1. Do young people using your service have a voice?
2. Are young people using your service actively listened to?
3. Do you take into account what the young people want or need?
4. Are young people using your service safe?
5. How do you know they are safe?
6. Do the young people know who to contact in case of an emergency or in danger?

#### Service Users

1. Do you feel you have a voice?
2. Do you feel you are actively listened to?

3. Do managers/front-line workers take into account what you want or need?
4. Do you feel safe?
5. How do you know that you are kept safe?
6. Do you know who to contact in case of an emergency or in danger?

### 3. Responses to Questions

#### YWCA (Fleming Gardens)

##### Manager

1. Confident that young people definitely have a voice, listening to young people about where they would like to live and about their education. This is followed through their pathway of services with YWCA (Fleming Gardens).
2. Residents meetings, suggestion boxes, inspection of properties and discuss with young people their properties e.g. a young person requested a ramp to their property, this was put in place. Monthly meetings are also held with residents.
3. Support planning is done with young people and listening about their interests. Guidance is offered about what young people want or need.
4. As safe as any young person can be. Risk assessments are carried out. Young people are given information on how to keep safe and they are allocated a key worker, but a young person can speak with any member of staff.
5. Feedback on risk assessments are reviewed every 3 months. Ensure young people have information where to get outside support.
6. Residents have a handbook with information about what to do in a time of emergency and emergency contact numbers.

##### Front-line Worker

1. Yes, young people have a voice – it is captured during assessment and helps workers to identify what to focus on, because different young people want different things.
2. Definitely, direct work taking young people to places they have asked to go to. Young people ask about certain activities/tasks and if these are assessed as suitable but there is reluctance from parents/family, staff from our service will act as an advocate.
3. It is sometimes difficult balancing what they want and what they need. You have to be respectful to the young person. Example – a young person wanting to try drugs, but work needed with young person and family around drug misuse – in circumstances like this education is key.
4. As safe as can be, it is about working with individual young people and it can be complicated in particular around subjects such as abuse.
5. Hardest part of the job, knowing they are safe – it is about building a relationship of trust and understanding why they do certain things. Some

strict guidelines need to be in place. It sometimes helps to listen to conversations of groups of young people and observe body language

6. Having somewhere like My Place where young people can attend and see information about safety. It is about building relationship/partnerships with schools, police and other services in Rotherham to keep children and young people safe. Need to make sure young people have the confidence to contact the police

### **Service User**

Young person -

1. Felt she had a voice and she can go to the office if she wants to put forward her voice and say what is on her mind. Workers accessible when office is open. Opening times of office is 9:30 to 5:30 – not 24/7.
2. Felt her voice is actively listened to – she knows where to go if needs to make a complaint and would know that she would be listened to and get a response. Has all the information about complaints procedure.
3. Felt her needs were listened to and staff always there to support her and when says what she wants, is usually satisfied with things that happen.
4. Feels very safe, there are CCTV cameras throughout the estate.
5. Has always felt safe, been to Fleming Gardens twice and would not have returned if she hadn't felt safe.
6. Knows to ring police and which members of staff to contact if an emergency came up.

### **Rush House**

Manager from Rush House not able to attend, but front-line worker did offer to try and respond to manager questions. It was explained they are the exact same questions.

### **Front-line Worker**

1. Yes, they have suggestions box and suggestions can be put forward at any part of their journey being supported by Rush House.  
Young people are given regular questionnaires – feedback forms on moving in, interim and moving out. Regular residents meetings. Open door policy of manager of this service.
2. Yes they are actively listened to, but cannot wave a magic wand and give them everything they want. If issues can be resolved the aim is to do so.
3. Listen to suggestions, house meetings – all issues are not resolved, but will work with young people to help have their needs met, but cannot always deliver what they want. Staff will listen if a young person is not happy with their living arrangements.
4. Relatively safe, in a certain extent they are safe in particular if they are living in Rush House, if dispersed in community not as much so. Assist and guide

young people, so they do not take risks. The main issue is young people putting themselves at risk.

5. Boundaries are set for young people living in Rush House; there is a tolerance policy against violence and an anti-bullying policy. Outside of Rush House it is not always easy to say whether young people are safe.
6. Service is open 24/7, always a member of staff available. Young people are given all relevant numbers i.e. mental health crisis team, police and other emergency service numbers.

### **Service User**

#### **2 Young People**

1. Felt they had a voice, every resident gets together in activity room and discuss things, this is how we get to have a say about what we want from Rush House.
2. Felt their voice is taken in account and staff do what they can for them.
3. Yes – Example given – 1 of the young people in attendance said she was pregnant and had family issues – Rush House have found her a place to live, taken her to GP appointments and obtained the medication needed – felt that you only had to knock on staff door and they would try to help.
4. Yes definitely feel safe, it is the safest place I have been. Staff are there 24/7.
5. They have rules and if you don't follow them you get a warning. There are lots of cameras around the building.
6. Felt that you can go to staff and they listen to you – they help you in time of emergency, would help you to contact the police or any other service that deemed the right service to chat with.

### **Hollowgate**

#### **Manager**

1. Their voice is not heard enough, this service needs to involve young people more. Service will be reviewed and it is planned to have young people involved in that review to find out how they feel and have input into what they would like their home to look like and help develop policies to support this. It will be a better service, if young people are involved
2. They try and make sure young people have a say through some meetings and consultations, but improvements are needed. Manager would like to introduce more meetings – TARA meetings, Visioning Days – those that use the service and those that have used it in the past should help shape the service.
3. Yes, but there is room for improvement, the manager is not convinced the service does exactly what it should. Sometimes what the young person wants is not the best thing for them, it is about getting the right balance, young people using this service need more support. Corporate parents should become responsible parents.

4. Yes, relatively safe, there is a system in place to monitor who is in and out of the home. Manager would like to introduce some group work on key safety issues and listen to young people with experience of safety issues.
5. Risk assessments, are updated regularly. Pathway and support plans need to be kept up-to-date. Need to listen more to young people and ask them do they feel safe and what improvements could be made to make them feel safer.
6. All young people using this service have contact details for Emergency Duty Team (EDT), key workers and other numbers to contact for out of hours services.

### **Front-line Worker**

1. Yes, but we need to make capturing the voice of young people more integral into everything we do, there is room for improvement
2. Yes, staff listen to young people and pass on what they say but we do not achieve everything they want.
3. Yes, this is something that is ongoing and is dependent on each young person, we cannot deliver everything, and every child is looked at individually.
4. Young people are safe, staff are available 24/7 and some are based at the office at the entrance of the building.
5. Monitoring is in place to capture which residents in or out of the building; visitors to the building and registration of cars visiting the building are taken. Policy in place, nobody over 21 years with the exception of family visiting the building.
6. Yes, young people have mobile contact and landline for the building, there should be no occasion when they cannot contact a member of staff.

### **Service User**

#### **Young Person**

1. Felt they did have a voice, but prefers to keep themselves to themselves
2. Felt they could ask for things and talk to staff if needed
3. Can sit with staff and talk
4. Felt safe
5. Felt safe because doors have codes and are locked at all times
6. Have staff numbers and would always let staff know if there was an emergency

### **Liberty House**

#### **Manager**

1. Yes – they get to express their opinions in weekly meetings. Young people are asked to contribute on all aspects of their short-break i.e. activities, food choices and menu planning.
2. Young person having concerns can raise these with senior staff.

Make sure that young people with a disability have the appropriate tools to have their voice heard – i.e. Makaton, symbols and all staff receive training in different forms of communication.

3. After decision at short-break panel for a young person to attend our service, meetings are held to including young person to match young person to activities and take into account what they like to do. Young people and their families are invited for tea visits to help young person become familiar with surroundings.
4. Yes – stringent safeguarding policy in place. Building has fingerprint scanning to get in and out of the building, so a young person would not be able to leave without a member of staff. All staff trained re safeguarding. Regular up-dates with police to discuss any potential hot-spot areas to avoid taking young people to risk areas.
5. All (26) staff DBS checked. Service has Reg 44 checks. Ofsted inspect to make sure safeguarding is in place for young people. Cameras are strategically positioned throughout the building. No child has ever gone missing.
6. Each young person allocated a 1 to 1 worker. Risk assessments are carried out and each young person has a travel file. Regularly review policies and procedures around safety. Young people receive fire escape procedure training.

### **Front-line Worker**

1. Yes – residents meet weekly. There is a suggestion/feedback box and a complaints/ compliments box. Staff work directly with young people and capture their wishes and feelings.
2. Young people are listened to and communication is adapted to meet the needs of the young person i.e. Makaton. Verbal and body language is also observed.
3. Try to accommodate requests for particular activities, these are discussed as a group and reach agreement with all young people, taking into account logistics such as transport.
4. The building is very safe, young people cannot leave without a member of staff. Staff follow safeguarding and dignity policies. All work with young people recorded and all staff have received safeguarding training.
5. We know all young people are physically safe, staff follow care plans and outcomes of risk assessments. Young people are not able to manage their own risks; they need staff to support them.
6. When a young person is having their short-break it is the responsibility of staff to keep them safe. If they are out of the building, a travel file it put together to manage all situations of an emergency.

### **Service User**

1. Yes I have a voice



2. Yes I feel listened to
3. Yes what I want is taken into account
4. Yes I feel safe
5. Staff look after me
6. I am not sure but there is always a member of staff with me

Young person brought along a sheet with the questions and written response as well as attending in person.

## Cherry Tree

### Manager

1. Yes – we have toolkits that we use. It is about working around each individual young person and having a team to support. Young people have 1 to 1 discussions where they can raise issues.
2. Young people have Independent Reviewing Officers and advocates from Rights-to-Rights and Orchard Stars that they can discuss matters with. Reg 44 monthly visits, look for evidence to make sure that the young person is being listened to. Ofsted inspections look for this evidence also.
3. Young people are actively involved in their own care – topics discussed e.g. menu planning, ideas for activities. Discussions take place with key workers and at residents meetings.
4. Yes, would like to think they are safe. Fingerprint access system in place. Monthly safety checks take place. Risk assessments are carried out. Environmental risk assessments also carried out, working closely with police to know areas to avoid when taking young people out for activities.
5. Risk assessments determine levels of risk and what steps need to take place to help keep a young person safe. Never had a young child go missing.
6. Young person would find a member of staff, they all know who their key worker is and who their advocate from Rights-to-Rights. Information shared on police and fire escape procedures.

### Front-line Worker

1. Yes, young people involved in various meetings including residents meetings and young people can speak with any member of staff
2. During LAC Reviews, young people have opportunity to discuss things important to them. They have opportunity to say what they would like to do and we try to accommodate and support their wishes and build this into a weekly routine. Adaptations are made to have discussions with young people in their preferred communication i.e. Makaton.
3. Try and put the needs of young people first, wherever possible and include their families in discussions.
4. We have a safe building with the fingerprint system. Night time buzzer system on doors. Staff on site 24/7.
5. We know young people feel safe, in the way they express themselves and we

listen to them family.

6. Young people would always communicate with a member of staff and all staff know of each individual child’s disability and communication needs – issues are discussed with social worker.

**Service User**

Young Person

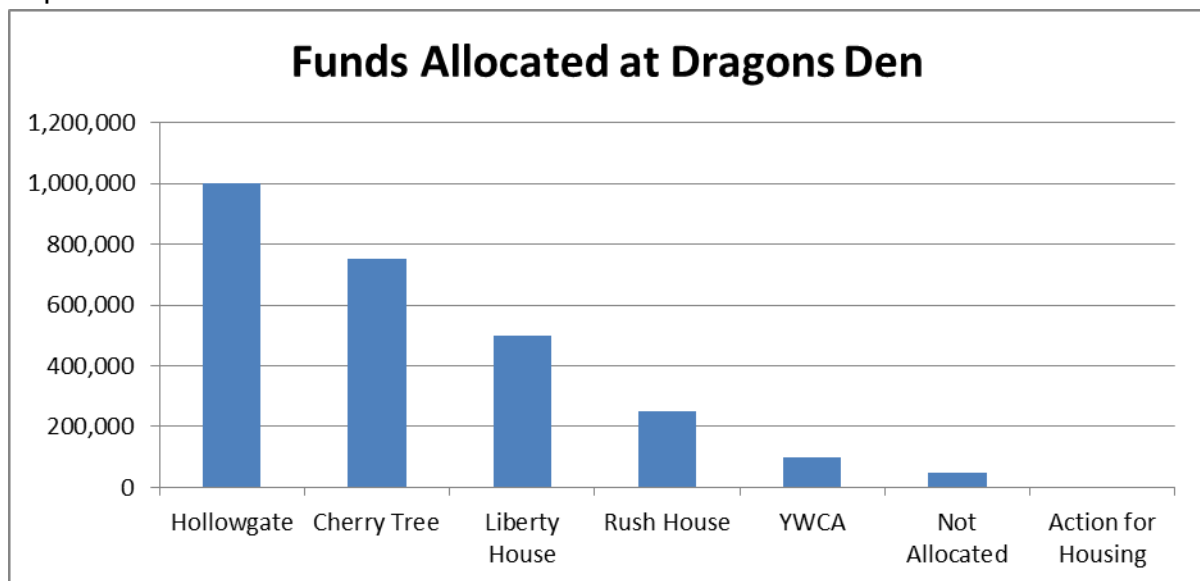
1. Yes I have a voice
2. Yes I feel listened to
3. Yes what I want is taken into account
4. Yes I feel safe
5. I am safe
6. I contact staff

Action for Housing did not attend the event

Manager from Rush House was not available to attend the event

**4. Conclusion**

On conclusion from the event, the panel of young people were asked to see who they would invest their ‘dragons den’ money. They had 6 sums of money to allocate to providers. This was their choice



Reasons for their choices

- Hollowgate recognised they need to improve, and the manager discussed some ideas for improvement that involved young people. Front-line worker also recognised is some areas there are areas for improvement; they did not try and paint a rosy picture, the panel felt they deserved the most money.
- Cherry Tree & Liberty House were both very close and managers and front-line workers were both very confident they listen to their young people and take all their needs into account and keep them safe. They chose Cherry

Tree to come 2<sup>nd</sup> above Liberty House, because Cherry Tree spoke more about other partners being involved i.e. advocates from Rights-to-Rights, social care with independent reviewing officers and police.

- Rush House did not have management representation, but two young service users were both confident that Rush House did the best for them.
- YWCA was behind Rush House for the main reason that the young service user said that staff only available during office hours 9:30 to 5:30 and not 24/7 like all other services.
- The final sum of money was not allocated
- Action for Housing was not given any funds, because they did not send any representative to the event.

Services users from all providers, responded positively to all questions and felt they were having their voice heard, their wants and needs looked at and are helped to stay safe. They did not make any negative comments about the service they use.

Services talked about having the tools in place to capture voices i.e., suggestion/compliments/complaints boxes but there was limited examples of outcomes being achieved as a result of a young person putting their opinions forward.

With the exception of Hollowgate, no other service talked about making any improvements.

Liberty House, in response to the question about taking into account what young people want or need, said they talked to young people individually, but then discussed requests with all service users to see if there is any common ground for young people to do things together. Hollowgate, in response to same question said they talked to individuals and aimed to meet individual needs; they maybe could possibly learn from Liberty and have group discussions, which the manager did put forward as one of the improvements they would like to introduce.

There were some concerns around the responses to the safety questions – Rush House said they felt confident that young people living at Rush House were safe, but young people supported by Rush House dispersed in communities they have issues with young people putting themselves at risk, and they could not be confident that these young people are safe. Also YWCA said knowing that young people are safe is the hardest part, and do feel sometimes young people put themselves at risk and they learn from this by trying to understand the reasons why young people do this.

## 5. Thank You

Special thanks with this event

██████████ Young Inspector Coordinator

██████████ Active member of Youth Cabinet

██████████ Active member of LAC Council

██████████ Young Inspector

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## Benchmarking of LAC & Leaving Care Services

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### 2. Introduction and background

As part of Rotherham Council's review of Looked after Children & Leaving Care service, benchmarking was undertaken with other local authorities to find out how other local authorities deliver their residential service and services to support looked after children and those leaving care. A total of 6 local authorities were identified as contacts. After identifying an appropriate contact person for looked after children each person was sent a request to share appropriate documents and asked questions about their service and processes.

The website of each local authority was researched to identify relevant information that was accessible on-line

These findings are based on the following authorities:

1. Derbyshire
2. Northamptonshire
3. Rochdale
4. Sheffield
5. Middlesbrough
6. Doncaster

One of the local authorities Doncaster Children's Services is no longer delivered by the council. Their services are delivered by Doncaster Children's Services Trust. Information on Doncaster services was obtained from their website. My contact made to Middlesbrough, coincided with the day that Ofsted announced they would be carrying out a Single Inspection Framework inspection at Middlesbrough, therefore the information also for Middlesbrough has been obtained from their website.

After researching 'Edge of Care' which has been identified as an innovative service to support looked after children, 2 local authorities were identified as implementing this service, these are Coventry and Birmingham.

### 2. Profiles of Looked After Children

**Rotherham** currently has 426 looked after children (11.1.16) compared to 390 at time of Ofsted inspection September 2014 an increase of 8.5%. Rotherham reported December 2015 they had 204 Care Leavers

**Northamptonshire** has 926 looked after children (January 2016) this is an 11% increase from 2014. Northamptonshire currently has just over 300 Care Leavers.

**Rochdale** reports that at any one time they average 540 children in care

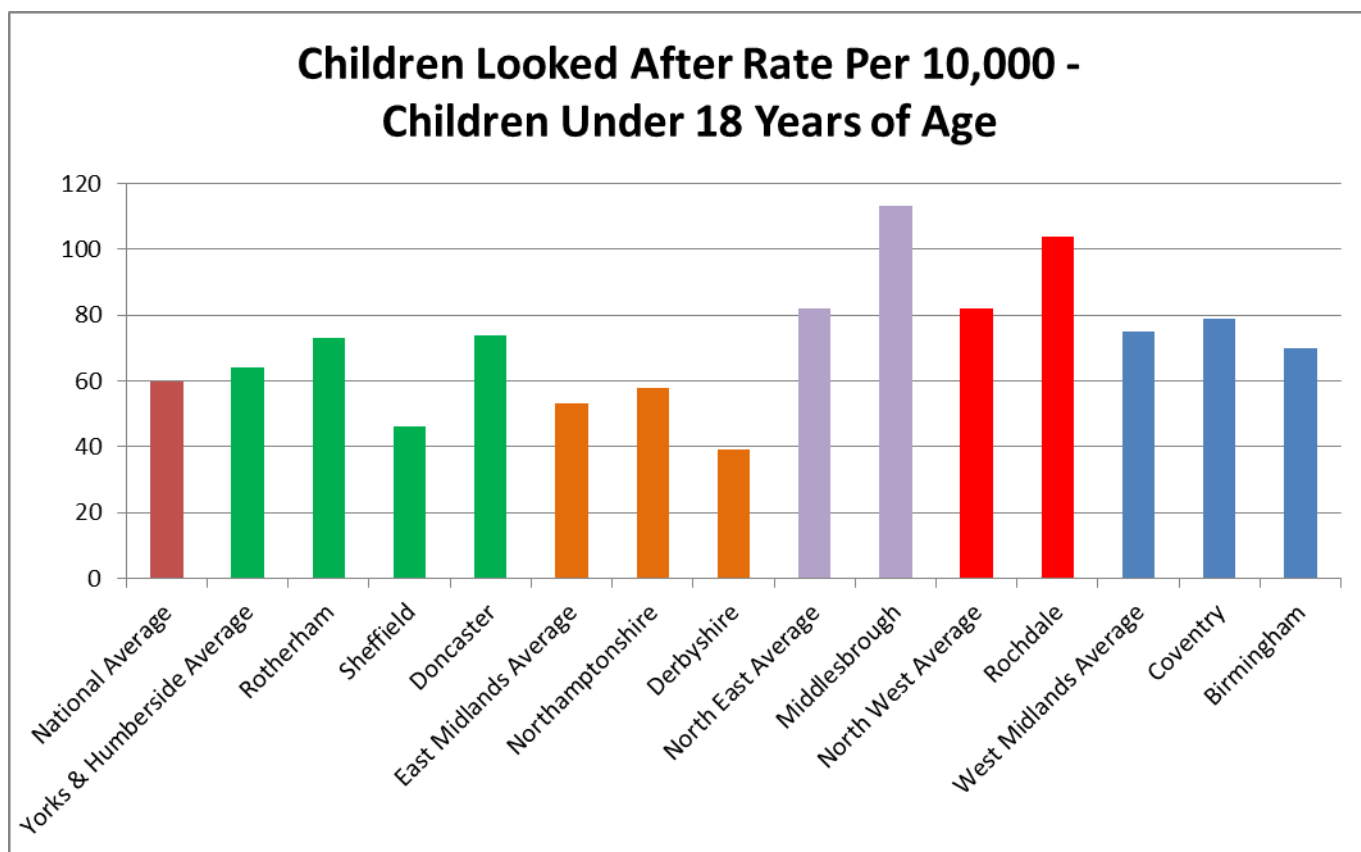
**Sheffield** currently has 515 looked after children (January 2016), this is a small reduction from 526 in January 2015. Sheffield has 300 Care Leavers

**Derbyshire** reported in October 2015 they had 629 looked after children, this is an increase from March 2015 (608), but a decrease from March 2012 when it peaked at 700.

**Middlesbrough** reported in February 2015 they had 377 looked after children

No information on current number of looked after children or care leavers were obtained from Doncaster.

The chart below shows the rate of children looked after per 10,000 for each of the local authorities researched and their regional average.



### 3. Requests – for Relevant Documents

Each local authority was asked if they could share with us any relevant documents regarding looked after children and leaving care services.

Information was either sent via email from other local authorities or information found on their website, these are saved in benchmarking evidence folder

- Northamptonshire
  - Coming into Care Guide
  - Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015/2017
  - My Life, My Way Toolkit
  - Annual Report – Promoting Health & Wellbeing of Children in Care 2014/2015
- Rochdale
  - Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015/2017
  - Care Leavers Offer July 2015
- Sheffield
  - Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015/2017
  - Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report 2014/2015
- Derbyshire
  - Sufficiency Strategy
  - Children in Care & Care Leavers Strategy & Improvement Programme 2013/2015

No documents obtained from Middlesbrough or Doncaster

#### 4. Questions

##### Q1. Within your local authority is residential provision for looked after children, provided in-house/external or a mixture of both?

**Northamptonshire** have 4 residential homes which are in-house and after Ofsted inspections in 2015 these are all rated good. This provides the majority of residential provisions; external provision is sought if and when required.

**Sheffield** has 5 in-house residential homes that offer 24 placements. After Ofsted inspections in 2015 they have 3 rated good and 2 rated requires improvement. External provision for Sheffield comes through the White Rose consortium which they use as and when external provision is needed.

Sheffield are in the final stage of reviewing residential service provision and they are reviewing the option to make one of their residential services an emergency provision.

Service to support Care Leavers has been brought back in-house after reviewing the services under the Belongings Agenda.

**Derbyshire County Council** is the main provider and has no plans at present to change for their fostering and residential placements for children in care.

Derbyshire's children residential homes are currently rated 1 Outstanding, 2 Good, 1 Requires Improvement (with element of good) 1 Requires Improvement by Ofsted

They have closed their emergency/short term residential unit as they could not see that this service was leading to positive outcomes for children.

**Middlesbrough** residential care was brought back in control of the council in 2014. It had been previous to this contracted to Fiver Rivers Child Care Ltd.

Middlesbrough in-house children's homes have varied inspection outcomes from Ofsted, from inspections in 2015, one home rated inadequate; one requires improvement and one outstanding.

No information was obtained from Doncaster or Rochdale.

**Q2. Does your local authority have any specialised in-house service to support looked after children or children at risk of becoming looked after i.e. Edge of Care Service or Transition Assessment Centre**

**Northamptonshire** - although this is not a provision to prevent children and young people coming into care, Northamptonshire have introduced a service to try and provide consistency for young people coming up to care leavers' age.

They are offering incentives to Foster Carers to deliver 'floating support' for young people coming up to care leavers age, to give continuity with the relationship and for young people to be supported with moving to independence from the Foster Carers that they have been living with.

**Sheffield's** Edge of Care provision and processes are currently under review.

They have effective Early Intervention procedures in place, which contributes to their figures on children being in care, being a lower % per population than other local authorities.

**Derbyshire** In 2015 they set up 2 Preventing Family Breakdown Teams - largely using Innovations Funding with 4 other Local Authorities and Morning Lane Associates. Process and procedures set up to support this can be found at

- <http://derbyshirecaya.proceduresonline.com>



Derbyshire are working with Impower (until March 2016) to increase their in-house fostering capacity and thus enable less residential and IFA use – it's starting to make a difference

**Doncaster Trust**, have teams which provide intensive family support.

The prime purpose and function of the Intensive Prevention Team is to reduce the numbers of Children in Care within Doncaster. Support is provided to families in crisis or if there is a risk of family breakdown.

No information was obtained from Middlesbrough or Rochdale

Two local authorities that I researched and found they do have Edge of Care teams are Coventry and Birmingham.

### **Coventry - Edge of Care Service**

Support for young people age 11 to 18 years

Aim - To prevent and reduce number of children and young people coming to care by managing risks associated with maintaining young people within families and communities in Coventry.

Procedures can found -

[http://coventrychildcare.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_edge\\_care\\_interv\\_serv.html](http://coventrychildcare.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_edge_care_interv_serv.html)

### **Birmingham - Edge of Care Service**

Introduced June 2015

Aim - To safely prevent and reduce the number of children and young people entering care in Birmingham

Introduced evidence based crisis intervention model

Supporting young people age 11 to 18 years and their families, supporting them for a period of 4 to 12 weeks.

Information can be found –

<http://www.communitycare.co.uk/2015/06/09/birmingham-new-service-deliver-change-edge-care/>

**Q3. Does your local authority have any innovative services, regarding provision for LAC/Care Leavers? Has anything new been developed that you could share**

**Northamptonshire** have developed a number of documents, developed a new service and made pathway planning interactive to support looked after children and care leavers

- Coming into Care Guide - supported with the putting this document together, Northamptonshire Children in Care and Voice of Young People in Care Group.

- Pathway Plans - Interactive document
- Leaving Care Guide - includes financial policy information; joint housing protocol
- Northamptonshire has a provision of a 'hub' which is specifically for Care Leavers and Looked After Children and is co-located with Children's Rights Team - On offer is - Daily Living Programme, Breakfast Club, Trainer Kitchen, Duty Service - No sleeping arrangements on offer at this 'hub'. This service opened October 2015
- Northamptonshire have both Looked after Children Council and Leaving Care Council.

**Sheffield** has a number of opportunities for looked after children and care leavers to have their voice heard.

- Executive Director for Children, Young People and Families has an 'open door' for all care experienced children and young people. Offering them an opportunity to have their voice heard.  
Monthly sessions held 4 pm to 6 pm first Thursday of each month - this is reported to be used regularly by children in care and care leavers
- Sheffield has a LAC Council and Care Leavers Council. Both these councils have regular interaction with Corporate Parenting Panel, Panel members (councillors) visit every 6 months and members of councils are encouraged to attend panel meetings when there is appropriate and relevant information for sharing.

**Derbyshire** after closing their emergency/short term residential unit, they established for crisis response a small community based flexible outreach team – they are now reporting that this is making a real difference.

**Doncaster Children's Services Trust** delivers a specific 18+ Service

- The 18+ Service is a dedicated service for young people who have left the care of Doncaster Children's Services Trust (or formerly the local authority), and meet the definition of being a 'care leaver'.

No information was obtained from Middlesbrough or Rochdale

## 5. Future Plans

A number of authorities are reviewing some of their services for looked after children and care leavers.

**Northamptonshire**

To assist care leavers with supported living – there is currently a tender process in progress to identify a provider to give support to young people in the accommodation which is made up of 21 flats which has been developed as suitable accommodation for use of care leavers in Northamptonshire.

### **Sheffield**

Are reviewing residential services and they are reviewing the option to make one of their residential services an emergency provision.

### **Derbyshire**

Derbyshire are researching whether they should establish/re-designate some residential provision to be 'therapeutic' as they judge they can do it better and cheaper, for many (not all), early days in their needs assessment but may include something for those with autism and not severe learning difficulties and/or other therapeutic

Also under review in Derbyshire is their emergency foster carer scheme

## **6. Conclusion**

There are two local authorities out of the ones benchmarked who are achieving a rate below national average for the rate of looked after children per 10,000, these are Sheffield and Derbyshire. Both of these authorities reported that they either had specialist teams in place to support edge of care or they had effective early intervention procedures in place.

There are three local authorities whose statistics show they are below their regional average, Sheffield, Derbyshire and Birmingham. Birmingham also has a team in place to support edge of care.

Northamptonshire has 4 residential homes for looked after children all have been Ofsted inspected and rated good

Derbyshire has one home that has been inspected and rated outstanding by Ofsted

**Appendix 2 : Silverwood Ofsted Inspection History**

<b>Recent Ofsted Inspection History Silverwood Children's Home</b>		
<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Inspection Type</b>	<b>Inspection Judgement</b>
12/09/2013	Full	Good
03/03/2014	Interim	Good Progress
24/09/2014	Full	Inadequate
12/11/2014	Full	Good
30/06/2015	Full	Good
15/02/2016	Interim	Declined Effectiveness

<b>Recent Ofsted Inspection History Cherry Tree Children's Home</b>		
<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Inspection Type</b>	<b>Inspection Judgement</b>
31/07/2013	Full	Adequate
25/02/2014	Interim	Good Progress
05/11/2014	Full	Inadequate
05/01/2015	Full	Adequate
18/08/2015	Full	Requires Improvement
23/03/2016	Interim	Improved Effectiveness

## Summary Sheet

Cabinet/Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting – 6th June 2016

### Title

Update of the Transport Policy Statement: Learners Aged 16-19 March 2016 and Home to School Transport Policy - April 2016

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

No

### Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Damien Wilson – Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment

### Report Author(s)

Elise Squires – Transport Assessment Officer, Passenger Services Team and  
Craig Ruding – Principal Officer – Education Transport, Passenger Services Team  
Regeneration and Environment

### Ward(s) Affected

All

### Summary

Updates to the Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 years and the Home to School Transport Policy have taken place to include details covered within the statutory guidance documents issued by Department for Education (July 2014).

### Recommendations

The Cabinet is asked to:

- 1 Agree publication of the update of the Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 March 2016
- 2 Agree publication of the update of the Home to School Transport Policy - April 2016.

### List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1: Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 March 2016 (revised)

Appendix 2: Home to School Transport Policy April 2016 (revised)

**Background Papers**

N/A

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

No

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

**Title: Update of the Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 - March 2016 and the Home to School Transport Policy - April 2016**

**1. Recommendations**

1.1. The Cabinet is asked to:

1.2.1 Agree publication of the update of the Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 March 2016

1.2.2 Agree publication of the update of the Home to School Transport Policy - April 2016.

**2. Background**

2.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide further education transport to “eligible” students. The criteria for assessment of entitlement, details of provision and all relevant information about this assistance are contained within the Transport Policy Statement. The current policies require updating to take account of recent guidance.

**3. Key Issues**

3.1 The more prescriptive appeals procedure was introduced nationally following lobbying by England’s Local Authority Education Transport Officers so that parental appeals for free transport assistance, would be administered more equitably across all Local Authority regions.

3.2 There had been no previous statutory guidance regarding appeals procedures, only a statement that the Local Authority should have a “robust” appeals procedure in place. Rotherham Council already had robust appeals procedures in place which had been tested via parental complaint to the Ombudsman.

3.3 It should be noted that there are no significant changes to Rotherham’s appeals procedure highlighted in this report. The statutory guidance from the Department of Education of July 2014 requires some minor procedural administrative changes only. Examples of these include changes to wordings such as 2013, 2014 and 2016, estimated sample charges, contact details such as e mail addresses and telephone numbers, and the change to Education Health and Care Plans which are replacing Statements of Special Educational Needs.

3.4 The guidance on appeals from the Department of Education July 2014 is intended to ensure greater consistency in approach, clearer and more transparent for both parents/carers and Local Authorities.

**4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

4.1 Publication of the updated Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 years and the updated Home to School Transport Policy is required to ensure that the Council is working to current statutory guidance. It is recommended

that these are approved for publication for the 2016/17 academic year and will remain in place until such time as a review is required by local or national circumstances.

- 4.2 Until the proposed draft policies are approved for publication the Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 in FE and the Home to School Transport Policy both remain in force and both meet current statutory duties.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 The proposed draft policies contain some minor text changes in order to bring it up to date, there are no changes to statutory duties. It is anticipated that a holistic review of services will be carried out in due course and this will involve extensive consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

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

- 6.1 The proposed policies should be published without delay. Parents /carers and students receive written confirmation from the Local Authority from April (each year) onwards about their educational placements. Families seek details on transport provision at this stage and need to access up to date information for 2016/17. The policy statements are published on the Council's website and must be available for all the public to download.

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

- 7.1 There are no financial or procurement implications; small administrative changes and costs being met from within existing budgets.

## **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The Local Authority has a duty to publish and review their transport policies. The current published transport policies and the proposed draft updated ones remain legally compliant.

## **9. Human Resources Implications**

- 9.1 None.

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

- 10.1 The publication of the policies affects pupils and students aged under 5 years up to aged 19 years. Colleagues in Children and Young People Services have been consulted and will be advised of these approved policies. There are currently no changes to the criteria for eligibility to transport assistance. There are currently no implications for vulnerable adults up to age 19.

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

- 11.1 The policies have due regard to the Equality Act 2010 to ensure eligible children and young people have access to transport assistance in line with the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education July 2014.



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

12.1 None known.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 The current published policies do not contain the updated appeals procedure. The appeals procedure to be followed will need to be that as described in the updated policies.

13.2 Although not considered to be a major issue, there remains the possibility of procedural issues being escalated by families to the Ombudsman. It is therefore important that all published policies are up to date and take account of national guidance.

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

Karen Hanson – Assistant Director, Community Safety and Street Scene – Regeneration and Environment

Pete Hatfield – Corporate Transport Manager – Regeneration and Environment

Julia Russell – Passenger Services Manager – Regeneration and Environment

Craig Ruding – Principal Officer, Education Transport - Regeneration and Environment

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services: - Jon Baggaley

Director of Legal Services: - Liz Anderton

Head of Procurement: - via Howard Tweed

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:-  
<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>

# TRANSPORT POLICY STATEMENT

Learners aged 16-19 years in further education  
and training and continuing learners with a  
learning difficulty and/or disability (LLDD) aged 19  
and over

April 2016

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

☎: 01709 822649 📧: [education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk)

## 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

نەگەر تۆ یان کەسێک کە تۆ دەبیناسی پێویستی بەیارمەتی هەبێت بۆ ئەوەی لەم بەنگەنامە یە تێبگات یان بێخوینیتەوه، تکایە پەییوەندیمان پێوه بکە لەسەر ئەو ژمارەییە سەرەوهدا یان بەو ئیمەیلە.

## 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.

March 2016

**Name of Local Authority:** Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

**Department Responsible:** Environment & Development Services

Corporate Transport Unit, Passenger Services, Sandbeck Building, Hellaby Depot, Rotherham S66 8QL [education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk)

## **1. Summary of policy statements and main objectives**

- 1.1 There is no automatic entitlement to free home to school or college transport once a student is over 16 years and beyond statutory school age. Responsibility for making appropriate transport arrangements rests with a student and/or parents/carers.
- 1.2 Providing assisted transport (e.g. taxis, specially adapted vehicles) will only be given for students with special educational needs who have had their needs assessed against set criteria including distance, age, mobility and the effect of their complex needs on their ability to travel. This may include:
  - Complex communication difficulties
  - Severe and complex learning difficulties
  - Complex learning and behavioural difficulties
  - Physical and medical difficulties
  - Dual sensory impairment
- 1.3 Learners with special educational needs who have received transport assistance and are moving from statutory education (Y11) to Further Education will need to have their transport needs reassessed when they apply for transport provision. This is to ensure that any assistance so offered is suitable to meet those needs. Continuing post 16 learners will also have their transport needs reviewed on an annual basis.
- 1.4 Learners must be permanently resident within the Rotherham District.
- 1.5 This policy outlines what transport support is available when starting a full time (over 12 guided learning hours per week) further education course up to the age of 19.
- 1.6 This policy covers the statutory duties of the Local Authority of Section 509AA of the Education Act 1996 and subsequent amendments. It only applies to residents of the Rotherham Metropolitan area. Further information can be obtained by visiting the Direct.gov website. [www.direct.gov.uk/en/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/index.htm).

## **2. Concessionary fares, discounts, subsidies, passes or travel cards available for post 16 learners in colleges, sixth forms and at some training providers**

The following passes and tickets are the most appropriate for those using public transport to access education and training:

- **16-18 student pass**

This pass is available to all South Yorkshire residents, attending full time courses at all Colleges and Sixth Forms, within Rotherham, aged between 16 and under 18 (on 1<sup>st</sup> September). It entitles the learner to travel, from the first day of the academic year, for the concessionary fare of 70p per journey on all buses and trams, and for half adult fare on

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trains within South Yorkshire. Application Passes and the verification code (UVC) are available from your learning provider or they may also be downloaded from [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com). A MyTSY account should be created in advance at <https://mytsy.travelsouthyorkshire.com/signup/>

Individual enquires can be made to **Transport Executive Traveline on 01709 515151**.

- **Travelmaster18**

This ticket is available to anyone aged 16, 17 or 18, and allows unlimited travel on all buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire. Your learning provider may be able to assist with funding towards the cost of this ticket. Please contact **Traveline on 01709 515151** to make an enquiry.

- **Travelmaster20**

This ticket is available to anyone aged 19 or 20 and allows unlimited travel on all buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire. Your learning provider may be able to assist with funding towards the cost of this ticket. Please contact **Traveline on 01709 515151** to make an enquiry.

- **Student term travelmaster**

This ticket is available to any individual undertaking full time study at a college of further education in South Yorkshire, at the discretion of the college. In Rotherham, these are Dearne Valley College, Rotherham College of Arts & Technology and Thomas Rotherham College. This ticket allows unlimited travel on all buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire. Your learning provider must supply you with authorisation to buy this product. Your learning provider may also be able to assist with funding towards the cost of this ticket.

Further details on all of the above passes and tickets, including operators' tickets, are available on the Travel South Yorkshire website [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com).

- **Zero fare passes**

These may be available to some students attending Dearne Valley College, Rotherham College of Arts & Technology and Thomas Rotherham College, and are allocated at their discretion. Contact student services at the college for details. Further details are available on the Travel South Yorkshire website [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com).

### 3. Support for learners with special educational needs (SEN)

- **Disabled person's pass**

A disabled person's pass may be available to some Rotherham residents following assessment of qualification and allows free travel on buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire and some cross boundary services. Severely disabled people, who are unable to travel without assistance, may also qualify for a special disability pass that enables a carer to travel with them free of charge. E-mail: [CSCTeamSupervisors2@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:CSCTeamSupervisors2@rotherham.gov.uk) or visit your local Customer Service Centre to obtain a letter of authorisation. Further details are available on the Travel South Yorkshire website [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com).

Those unable to take advantage of the above Disabled Person's Pass should contact student services at their chosen college or school sixth form.

All pupils with special educational needs (SEN) should have their transport needs reassessed when they move from compulsory schooling to post 16 education. This is in accordance with the Post 16 transport to education and training statutory guidance for local authorities.

- Page 169
- 3.1 Post 16 learners will be aged between 16 and 19 years at the start of the academic year (i.e. September) and those continuing learners who started their programme of learning before their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- 3.2 Post 16 students are expected to take advantage of the concessionary fare schemes so they can access public transport for their daily travel to and from school/college in and around the Rotherham district. The following learners will, however, be considered for transport assistance under this policy:
- Consideration will be given to students who have complex communication difficulties, severe and complex learning difficulties, complex learning and behavioural difficulties, physical and medical difficulties and dual sensory impairment which affect their ability to travel.
  - The distance between home and school or college, offering a suitable course, must exceed 3 miles by the shortest available route. This may be disregarded where learners require assisted transport as a result of their learning difficulty and/or disability.
- 3.3 Young people will be engaged in learning or training at:
- A school (including academies)
  - A further education institution
  - An Authority maintained or assisted institution providing further education
  - An establishment funded directly by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) e.g. independent specialist providers for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- 3.4 Learners are encouraged to attend courses within the Rotherham district and only when it is absolutely clear that such provision cannot be met locally will consideration be given for students to receive help with travel to attend colleges out of the district. Specific details of the course and reasons for choice will need to be given in order that an assessment can be made having due regard to the efficient and effective use of resources.
- 3.5 Where a suitable course is available in the Rotherham District but the learner or parents/carer wish to attend a college outside the district, this will be on the clear understanding they will be fully responsible for all travel and related costs. However, where the local college cannot meet the learner's specific needs (e.g. curriculum or care needs) then the college will be expected to provide written evidence to this effect. This may be requested as supporting evidence when applying for transport assistance.
- 3.6 The following information will also be required to support the learner's application for assistance:
- Recent medical evidence from a GP, Consultant, specialist service or qualified person which is no more than 3 months old.
  - Supporting evidence/recommendation from Education, Health and Care Assessment Team
  - Supporting evidence/recommendation from Rotherham Integrated Youth Support Service (formerly Connexions Service) contact 01709 822087 voicemail service available.

#### **4 How will learners be assessed for assistance?**

- 4.1 Learners are expected to take advantage of the concessionary travel arrangements available. However, if a learner can demonstrate they have exceptional circumstances as to why other assistance may be required, then the appropriate transport enquiry form should be completed. The form is available online on the Council Website:

*Free internet access is available at all our library sites.*

- 4.2 You **may** be asked to provide any supporting documentary evidence as detailed in section 3.5. Please be aware that failure to provide all the evidence may result in a delay in your application being processed or your application refused.
- 4.3 Completion of the transport enquiry form does not mean learners are eligible for transport assistance. The form is an expression of interest in order that the Corporate Transport Unit (CTU) can undertake an assessment.
- 4.4 The CTU will consider the enquiry and make a determination of whether the young person qualifies for transport and what this provision should be. Each case will be assessed individually and will depend upon their particular needs and circumstances. Please see section 1.2 for qualifying categories.
- 4.5 Where assisted transport has been recommended this may be on a shared vehicle with other learners. Parents/carers, or learners, will be required to make a financial contribution towards the cost of the transport provided. See section 7 for further details.
- 4.6 Approval for transport assistance will usually be for the academic year (2015/16) only. Each case should be reviewed annually in time for the start of the next academic year (2016/17) to ensure the arrangements are still appropriate. If there is a change in individual circumstances prior to this, such as change of address, change in needs as referred to in section 1.2 of this policy. Or if the student is able to walk, cycle or drive to school/college, it is the responsibility of the learner and/or parents/carers to inform the CTU to ensure the necessary review is undertaken.
- 4.7 Transport is usually only provided at the beginning and end of the school/college day. Rotherham Council will not fund additional transport during the day, inter-site transport, work placement transport or induction/enrolment days.
- 4.8 Where assisted transport is provided, no variation can be made to the journey without the prior consent of the CTU.
- 4.9 Learners who are in receipt of assisted transport and subsequently fail to attend school or college, without a valid reason, may have their transport support withdrawn or temporarily suspended.

## 5 Apprenticeships/traineeships

Transport assistance is not provided to learners undertaking work placements, apprenticeships or traineeships. In these circumstances learners are advised to contact their employer or learning provider.

## 6 Independent travel training

As learners become older and move towards greater independence they may want to develop their skills of independent travel and, for some, this may mean using public transport, walking or cycling to school/college. For others, transport assistance may be required throughout school/college life. Schools/colleges and independent specialist providers are encouraged to provide independent travel training to students for whom it is appropriate.

## 7 Charges for transport assistance. Page 171

- 7.1 Charges apply to all post 16 learners where they require help in travelling to school or college regardless of whether they are living in the parental home or sheltered/residential accommodation.
- 7.2 Learners and/or parents/carers will be notified of the charges in advance of the travel arrangements and usually invoiced as soon as possible before the start of each term. These charges **must** be paid immediately so that transport arrangements can be made. Every opportunity will however, be given for learners and/or parents/carers to pay the charges by smaller, more manageable payments suitable to the learner and/or parent/carer if requested.
- 7.3 Where it has been agreed to provide transport assistance to provision within the Rotherham District, learners and/or their parents/carers will be charged on a termly basis (i.e. 3 invoices per year will be sent, usually before the start of each term) based on the current cost of the concessionary student fare 70p per journey and school term dates. Summer term 2016 approximate costs are as follows:

Summer Term 2016 (Apr-July) 14 weeks @ £7.00* per week = £98.00 <b>Charges are based on one return bus journey per day at £1.40 from September 2015</b>
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- 7.4 Where it has been agreed to provide transport assistance to provision outside the Rotherham District\*\*, learners and/or their parents/carers will be charged with 3 invoices per year usually before the start of each term based on the current cost of the concessionary student fare 70p per journey and school term dates. Summer term 2016 approximate costs are as follows:

Summer Term 2016 (Apr-July) 11 weeks @ £14.00* per week = £196.00 <b>Charges are based on four bus journeys (2 return journeys) per day at £2.80 from September 2015</b>
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\* This can be subject to change. Charges will depend on school/college actual term dates, actual number of days per week students attend school/college, and the cost of the concessionary bus fare.

\*\* The journey to some learning providers may require more than one bus journey each way.

- 7.5 Refunds of transport costs cannot be made for occasional day's absence. If, however, the student is absent for a full week (e.g. due to illness/holiday) then refunds will be considered upon receipt of confirmation of attendance details from the school/college.
- 7.6 Where the learner and/or parents/carers during the course of the academic year fail to make payments or make a reasonable contribution towards their assisted transport, engage with the appropriate agencies to secure a manageable payment plan or submit an appeal, then the learner may have their assisted transport withdrawn for the following academic term. This action will only be taken as a last resort after all other options have been explored.

## 8 Financial hardship

### 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund supports the most financially disadvantaged 16 to 19 year olds and those young people who most need help with the costs of staying in education.

You can find an overview of the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund below. Further information, including details about how to apply is available on [www.gov.uk/1619bursary-fund](http://www.gov.uk/1619bursary-fund).

**Who can apply for a 16 to 19 Bursary?** Page 172 The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund is distributed in two ways:

1. *Central allocation to eligible young people*

A yearly bursary of up to £1,200 is available to young people in one of the four defined vulnerable groups, which includes:

- young people in care
- care leavers
- those on Income Support or receiving Universal Credit in place of Income Support
- disabled young people (in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment)

2. *Discretionary awards made by institutions*

Institutions are allocated funding from which they can make discretionary awards to young people. Discretionary awards are for any students who are facing genuine financial barriers to participating in education. Institutions can determine the eligibility criteria and the frequency and conditions of payments. Please apply to your school or college direct the learner wishes to be considered for a bursary.

- 8.1 Families in financial hardship (low income families or learners) can apply to have the transport charges waived. Consideration will be given as to whether or not the learner has applied for, or is in receipt of an allocation from 16-19 bursary fund from the learning provider.
- 8.2 Eligibility for help with transport to school/college is not dependent on means testing, but a means test will be used to determine whether the contribution towards the transport costs should be waived for low income families. The Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 years in Further Education, uses the low income eligibility criteria as set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006, e.g: Free School Meals eligibility in Y11 or being in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit. Written evidence of these benefits will be requested by the Local Authority and where evidence has not been provided (or is not relevant to the period in which transport is being provided) charges will be made.

To make an application for free school meals please contact the Council's Benefits Section via [www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200008/benefits](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200008/benefits).

To make an application for Working Tax Credit, please contact the Tax Credit Helpline on Tel. 0845 300 3900.

Please be aware that changes are pending according to the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the introduction of the Universal Credit System.

## **9 Raising participation age**

From Summer 2013, all young people up until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 will be required to participate in education or training. From 2015, this requirement now applies until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. There is no change to the statutory school age which remains at 5 to 16 years.

This change will not extend the entitlement for the provision of free transport assistance beyond Y11 as it does not mean that the student has to stay at school; they may choose to work full time and study part time, continue full time study at school or college, be involved in part time training whilst volunteering or follow an apprenticeship.



More information about Raising the Participation Age can be obtained from the Department of Education website at:-

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/rpa>

This continues to mean that transport will only be allocated to students who qualify under the criteria as set out in 1.2.

## **10 19- 25 Learners**

Learners who are aged 19-25 and have an Education Health and Care Plan should contact their education provider to discuss the possibility of transport assistance.

## **11 Appeals and complaints process**

- 11.1 Learners and/or parents/carers who wish to appeal against the decision not to award assistance, to withdraw existing support or to appeal to have the post 16 transport charges waived, should do so in writing by completing and returning the appropriate appeal form. Please request a Notice of Appeal Form from [\*\*education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk\*\*](mailto:education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk)
- 11.2 Appeals must be made within one calendar month of the original decision. The completed Notice of Appeal form must also include any relevant medical reports which are no more than 3 months old. This will then be considered by an independent appeals panel within one calendar month from submission.
- 11.3 Where invoices have been submitted for payment of transport costs but parents/carers then wish to appeal against the charges they must do so **within 21 days of the date of the invoice**, otherwise the CTU will not be able to intervene and recovery of the debt may be passed to a debt collection agency.

# DRAFT HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

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

**Email:** [education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk)

## Slovak

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## Arabic

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APRIL 2016

## REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT

### CORPORATE TRANSPORT UNIT

Passenger Services Team, Hellaby Depot, Sandbeck Way,  
Hellaby, Rotherham S66 8QL Fax 01709 823042

Principal Officer – Education Transport

**E-mail: [education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk)**

Useful Contacts	Contact
To enquire about a zero fare bus pass	<b>Search for “zero fare bus pass” at <a href="http://www.rotherham.gov.uk">www.rotherham.gov.uk</a> and complete the on-line enquiry form.</b>
To enquire about special educational needs and/or disability transport	<b>Search for “special needs transport” at <a href="http://www.rotherham.gov.uk">www.rotherham.gov.uk</a> and complete the on-line enquiry form.</b>
To cancel or amend existing transport provision	<b>Contact</b> <a href="http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200086/schools_and_colleges/587/cancel_or_change_school_transport">www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200086/schools_and_colleges/587/cancel_or_change_school_transport</a>
South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive Traveline / Enquiries	<a href="mailto:traveline@sypte.co.uk">traveline@sypte.co.uk</a>  Tel. 01709 515151
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	<b><a href="mailto:MASH-referral@rotherham.gcsx.gov.uk">MASH-referral@rotherham.gcsx.gov.uk</a></b>  Tel. 01709 336080
<u>Other South Yorkshire Local Authorities</u>  Barnsley – School Transport  Doncaster – Pupil Support and Transport  Sheffield – Home to School Transport	<a href="mailto:schooltransport@barnsley.gov.uk">schooltransport@barnsley.gov.uk</a>  <a href="mailto:transport&amp;pupilsupport@doncaster.gov.uk">transport&amp;pupilsupport@doncaster.gov.uk</a>  <a href="mailto:customerservicecentre@sheffield.gov.uk">customerservicecentre@sheffield.gov.uk</a>

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

### **The Statutory Duty to provide free transport assistance to eligible learners**

Section 508B of the Education Act 1996 (amended by the Education & Inspections Act 2006) deals with the duty on local authorities to make such travel arrangements as they consider necessary to facilitate attendance at school for “eligible” children to “qualifying schools”. Schedule 35B of the Act defines “eligible” children. The duty applies to home to school travel arrangements at the start of the day and school to home travel arrangements at the end of the day. It does not relate to travel between educational institutions during the school day.

Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. Section 444 of the 1996 Act outlines the situations in which a parent/carer may have a defence in law against a prosecution by a Local Authority for their child’s non-attendance at school. Section 444(4) provides a parent/carer with a defence if he or she proves that the Local Authority has not fulfilled its statutory duty to make suitable arrangements for home to school transport for those that are eligible. Further information regarding home to school transport and the statutory duties to which Local Authorities must have regard are contained within the “Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance” 2007 issued by Department for Education to accompany the Education and Inspections Act 2006, and the “Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance” 2014 which replaces it.

This Policy explains the criteria used in establishing a learner’s eligibility for transport assistance for those living in the Rotherham Authority following a request for this to be provided.

This Policy is correct at the time of publication. It should not be assumed, however, that there will be no changes to this information before the start of, or during the school year. Every effort will be made to update this Policy in a timely manner according to changes in statutory duties.

Key information submitted for assessments and reviews will be treated in a confidential manner and may be shared with the transport operator/provider of home to school Transport.

If there is a change in individual circumstances, such as change of address or change in needs, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the Passenger Services Team to ensure the necessary review is undertaken.

## 2 TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE AND ELIGIBILITY

### **Transport assistance may consist of one of these options:-**

- i) A zero fare bus pass which entitles a pupil to free bus travel between the nearest bus stop to their home address and their registered school base.
- ii) Refunded travelling expenses according to the cheapest available public transport route for those learners able to access public transport services.
- iii) Mileage expenses in accordance with the Council’s current rate, for pupils requiring special arrangements, provided that the pupil is unable to access any existing Local Authority transport. Mileage expenses will only be paid for journeys for which the pupil is in the vehicle.

- iv) Free or subsidised travel on a coach, minibus, taxi or specially adapted vehicle if the learner is unable to travel by public transport due to the distance, their mobility, or effect of their complex special educational needs (see section 2.08).

## **Eligibility to Free Transport Assistance – Mainstream**

### **2.01 Pupils under the age of 5 years**

There is no statutory duty to provide transport assistance to children under the age of 5 years. Parents/Carers are expected to accompany children under the age of 5 years to their early year's provider and on public transport.

Currently, there is no charge for children under the age of 5 years to travel by public transport if accompanied by a parent/carer paying full fare. Financial assistance is not given to parents/carers for their personal transport costs when they accompany their child to early year's provision. The bus operator may charge the concessionary fare to a child under the age of 5 years if they are travelling with older siblings paying a concessionary fare.

### **2.02 Pupils aged 5-7 years**

For pupils aged 5, but less than 8 (on 1st September) attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school\* or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority), free transport assistance (usually a zero fare bus pass) will be provided where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles (otherwise referred to as the lower statutory qualifying distance). For pupils issued with a zero fare bus pass, parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their child's safety by making appropriate arrangements for their child to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stop and during the journey.

### **2.03 Pupils aged 8-16 years**

For pupils aged 8-16 (on 1st September) attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school\* or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority), free transport assistance (usually a zero fare bus pass) will be provided where the distance between home and school is more than 3 miles (otherwise referred to as the upper statutory qualifying distance). For pupils issued with a zero fare bus pass parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their child's safety by making appropriate arrangements for their child to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stop and during the journey.

\*The nearest appropriate qualifying school is one with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child.

The distances of "more than 2 or 3 miles", referred to above, are measured using a computerised mapping system. This is from the front door of the home address to the nearest designated school entrance by the nearest available walking route (see section 2.06v for more details).

## **Raising the Participation Age**

From the summer of 2013 a change was made which increased the age to which pupils/students must continue their education or training until at least their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

This change does not extend the entitlement for the provision of free transport assistance beyond age 16 as it does not mean that the student has to stay at school; they may choose to work full time and study part time, continue full time study at school or college, be involved in part time training whilst volunteering or follow an apprenticeship. There is no change to the statutory school age which remains at 5 to 16 years.

More information about Raising the Participation Age can be obtained from the Department of Education website at [www.gov.uk/government/collections/raising-the-participation-age](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/raising-the-participation-age)

Post 16 students are also advised to read the “Transport Policy - Learners Aged 16-19 years in Further Education which gives details of various transport options available to this age range. This Policy can be read and downloaded from the Rotherham Council website by searching “Further Education Transport Policy”.

#### 2.04 **Pupils attending denominational schools**

Free transport assistance to denominational schools has previously (historically) been provided on a discretionary basis to pupils meeting the distance criteria. However, there is no statutory duty to provide it except for eligible secondary aged pupils from low income families. Changes to Policy were made in September 2013 following consultation. From this date only new applications for secondary aged denominational pupils who qualify under low income criteria will receive free transport assistance (see section 2.07).

Pupils already attending denominational schools prior to this date who are in receipt of free transport assistance will continue to receive this; for primary aged pupils up until the end of Y6, and for secondary aged pupils up until the end of Y11. If individual circumstances change, e.g. a change of address or school, pupils will need to be re-assessed for entitlement and free transport assistance may be withdrawn for those pupils no longer qualifying.

#### 2.05 **Pupils not attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school\* or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority)**

The Local Authority recognises its obligations under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002, to comply with parental preferences regarding choice of school. In order to ensure the efficient use of its resources the Local Authority will only provide free transport assistance where the school attended is the nearest appropriate qualifying school\*, or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority, from the pupil’s main home address.

Parents/Carers who apply for a place in a school for their child/children which is not the nearest appropriate qualifying school\*, or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority, will not be provided with free transport assistance, regardless of the distance involved, unless the low income criteria applies (see section 2.07).

\*The nearest appropriate qualifying school is one with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child.

**Please note that the ultimate responsibility for the safety and conduct of any pupil during the journey to or from school rests with parents/carers.**

#### 2.06 **Exceptions**

Exceptions to this policy may be made in the following circumstances:-

- i) A zero fare bus pass may be given to pupils who attend a school outside Rotherham, providing that it is the nearest appropriate qualifying school\* to the home address, beyond the statutory walking distance and is within South Yorkshire.
- ii) If a pupil is permanently excluded from their school and attends an alternative base of educational provision (which is located beyond the appropriate qualifying distance from the home address), a zero fare bus pass may be allocated via Rotherham Pupil Referral Unit.
- iii) Pupils from low income families (see section 2.07).
- iv) A pupil attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school\*, or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority, who has a temporary medical condition affecting their mobility may be provided with free transport assistance. Parents/Carers who wish to request such assistance should apply on-line, along with supporting formal medical evidence, to [education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk)
- v) Consideration for providing a zero fare bus pass for pupils attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school\*, or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority, will be made if the route is not considered available to walk. When assessing the safety of an “available route”, only the potential risk created by traffic, the highway and topographical conditions will be considered. Set criteria have been established by Road Safety GB in “Assessment of Walked Routes to School” guidelines. These criteria and assessments are common to all the South Yorkshire Authorities. A zero fare bus pass will not be issued where an assessed available walking route to school (determined by the Local Authority in accordance with the above guidelines) exists. Details of “Assessment of Walked Routes to School” can be found at [www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/2105.html](http://www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/2105.html)
- vi) Transport assistance may be available for pupils whose parents/carers have disabilities. Where it is a condition of the availability of the walking route that they are accompanied, but their parents/carers disabilities prevent this, alternative arrangements will be considered. These disabilities may include dual sensory impairment or physical difficulties.

## 2.07 Pupils from low income families

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced free transport assistance for qualifying pupils from low income families. Those who qualify are pupils entitled to **Free School Meals** or from families in receipt of **Maximum Working Tax Credit**. Pupils from “low income” families meeting these criteria will receive free transport assistance (usually a zero fare bus pass) on condition that:



- i) Pupils aged 8 to 10 years attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school\* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority), where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles.
- ii) Pupils aged 11 to 16 years attending any 1 of their 3 nearest appropriate qualifying schools\*, where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles, but not more than 6 miles.
- iii) Pupils aged 11 to 16 years attending their nearest appropriate denominational school on grounds of religion or belief, where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles but not more than 15 miles.

The distances referred to in section 2.07 are measured as:

- Up to 2 miles – as per the statutory walking distance, along the nearest available walking route.
- From 2 miles up to the 6 mile or the 15 mile upper limits – along road routes passable by suitable motorised transport.

\*The nearest appropriate qualifying school is one with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child.

**To make an application for free school meals please contact the Council's Benefits Section via [www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200008/benefits](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200008/benefits)**

**To make an application for Working Tax Credit, please contact the Tax Credit Helpline on Tel. 0845 300 3900.**

## 2.08 **Eligibility to free transport assistance – Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)**

### **Pupils under the age of 5 years**

Parents/Carers are usually required to take children under the age of 5 to their early year's provider. If, however, a child is assessed as requiring specialist transport, parents/carers will be requested to make subsidised contributions towards this transport, for those attending non statutory education. The cost will (currently) be a maximum of £1.40 per day, but if families qualify under low income criteria (see section 2.07) then no charges will be applied.

### **Pupils aged 5 to 16 years**

Pupils with SEND will have their individual transport needs assessed against set criteria taking into account the distance, their age, mobility and the effect of their complex needs on their ability to travel. This may include:-

- Complex communication difficulties
- Severe and complex learning difficulties
- Complex learning and behavioural difficulties
- Physical and medical difficulties
- Dual sensory impairment

Under the provisions of paragraph 3 of Schedule 27 to the Education Act 1996,

parents/carers may express a preference for a child with an EHC Plan or Statement of SEN to attend a school which is not the nearest suitable school identified by the Local Authority. If the Local Authority considers that it would be incompatible with the efficient use of its resources to provide and fund home to school transport to the more distant parental preference, it may name both schools within the child's EHC Plan or Statement of SEN (paragraph 9.214 of the SEND Code of Practice), on the express condition that parents/carers accept, and continue to accept, liability for arranging and funding home to school transport.

### **Disabled Persons Pass**

A Disabled Persons Pass may be available to some Rotherham residents following assessment of qualification and allows free travel on buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire and some cross boundary services. Severely disabled people who are unable to travel without assistance may also qualify for a special disability pass, which enables a carer to travel with them free of charge. More details are available on the Local Authority website [www.rotherham.gov.uk](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk) and searching for Disabled Persons Pass. Applications may be made at any library or contact centre. Further details are also available on the Travel South Yorkshire website [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com)

### **SEND Pupils attending Respite Care**

There is no statutory duty within national Home to School Transport guidance to provide free transport assistance to respite care placements. Free transport may be provided where pupils can be accommodated on existing home to school transport provision and this does not incur any additional cost to the Local Authority.

### **SEND Pupils in Public Care**

When a pupil with an EHC Plan or Statement of SEN becomes a "Looked After Child" (LAC), funded by Rotherham Local Authority, the transport to and from their school or registered educational base will be organised and funded from the Home to School Transport budget provided that they reside within the Rotherham boundary.

Were that LAC is fostered outside the Rotherham area the funding for their home to school transport will be provided by LAC Social Care, irrespective of whether their educational placement is within or outside the Rotherham area. LAC's who are the financial responsibility of a Local Authority other than Rotherham need to refer to their home authority for the provision and funding of home to school transport.

Requests for transport assistance to settings other than the registered educational base need to be authorised and funded via the child's Social Work Service Manager.

## **2.09 Appeals**

The decision regarding refusal of free home to school transport assistance is based upon information available to officers at the time of the decision. Parents/Carers have the right to appeal against the Authority's decision not to provide free transport assistance if they feel that an error has been made in the assessment of the entitlement, distance measurement, route safety or there are **exceptional or compelling circumstances** that breach this Policy.

### **Appeals against the Local Authority's refusal to issue a zero fare bus pass**

Parents/Carers must, in writing, within 20 working days of the original decision, request a

review of the original decision which will be undertaken by a Senior Officer (**Stage 1 Review**). The Senior Officer will respond in writing within 20 working days of receipt of the parental request either upholding or overturning the original decision. This will explain the reasoning behind the review decision and unless the original decision is overturned, offer the parent/carer the opportunity to escalate their appeal be heard by an independent panel, (**Stage 2 Review**).

Parents/Carers will be provided with a Notice of Appeal form, which must be completed and returned within 20 working days of the Stage 1 Review letter. This should be accompanied by any other relevant evidence or medical reports that the parent intends to rely upon. A Notice of Appeal Form can be obtained from [education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk) but this will not be provided unless the preceding appeals route has been followed.

Following receipt of the completed Notice of Appeal form, a Statement of Appeal will be prepared by the Local Authority and both this and the completed Notice of Appeal will be sent to Democratic Services, together with any other relevant correspondence. Democratic Services will then convene a Zero Fare Pass Appeals Panel meeting comprising of Local Councillors, who will make a decision regarding the appeal and decide whether a zero fare pass should be issued. Parents/Carers will be invited to attend this meeting which will also be attended by Transport Officers, Legal Officers and Administrative Officers. Our Democratic Services Officer will make contact with you when the date/time of the Appeal Panel meeting has been established, to which you will be invited to attend, and you will be forwarded copies of all relevant paperwork.

The decision regarding issue of a pass will be made only by the Councillors present and this decision will be communicated to you shortly after the Panel meeting has taken place. Any decision made by the Councillors will be effective for the complete academic year following which entitlement will be reviewed for the next academic year. You will then again have the right to appeal this decision if necessary.

If there is a change in individual circumstances during the academic year, such as change of address or change in needs, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the Passenger Services Team to ensure the necessary review is undertaken at that stage.

### **Appeals against the Local Authority's refusal to provide other types of transport assistance**

Parents/Carers must, in writing, within 20 working days of the original decision, request a review of the original decision which will be undertaken by a Senior Officer (**Stage 1 Review**). The Senior Officer will respond in writing within 20 working days of receipt of the parental request either upholding or overturning the original decision. This will explain the reasoning behind the review decision and unless the original decision is overturned, offer the parent/carer the opportunity to escalate their appeal be heard by an independent panel, (**Stage 2 Review**).

Parents/Carers will be provided with a Notice of Appeal form, which must be completed and returned within 20 working days of the Stage 1 Review letter. This should be accompanied by any other relevant evidence or medical reports that the parent intends to rely upon. A Notice of Appeal Form can be obtained from [education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk) but this will not be provided unless the preceding appeals route has been followed.

Following receipt of the completed Notice of Appeal form, a Statement of Appeal will be prepared by a Senior Officer and both this and the completed Notice of Appeal will be presented to a member of the Senior Management Team for review. If the member of the

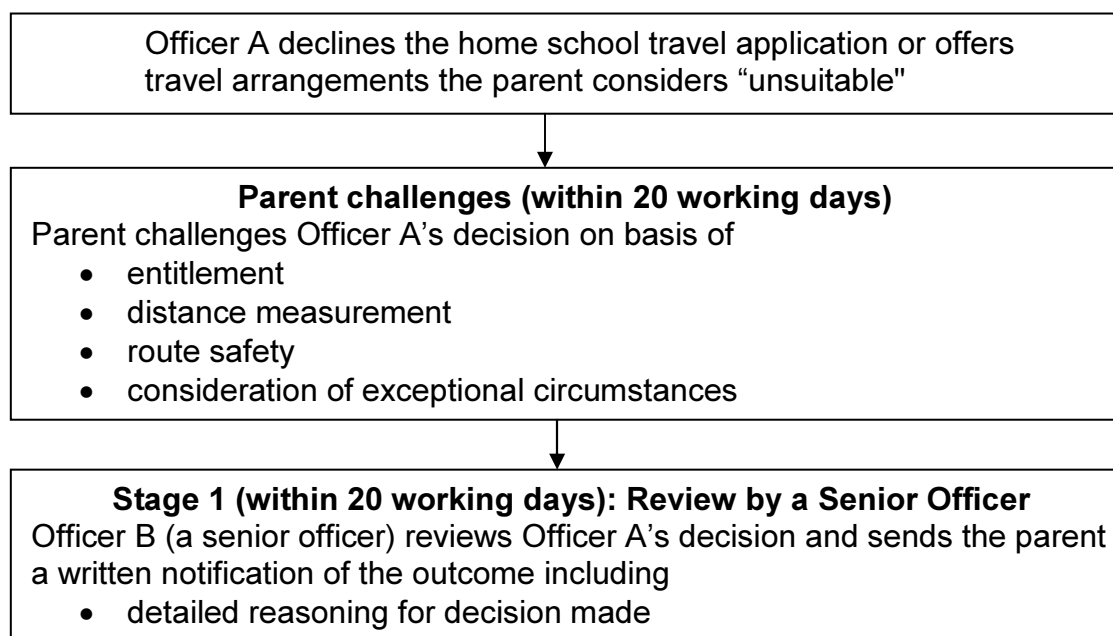
Senior Management Team upholds the Appeal, transport assistance will be provided accordingly. If the member of the Senior Management Team rejects the Appeal it will be passed to a Director to review. Both the member of the Senior Management Team and the Director will have had no involvement in the original transport decision to ensure an independent Appeal hearing. The Directors decision will be final and will be communicated to the parent/carer shortly after the Appeal hearing has taken place.

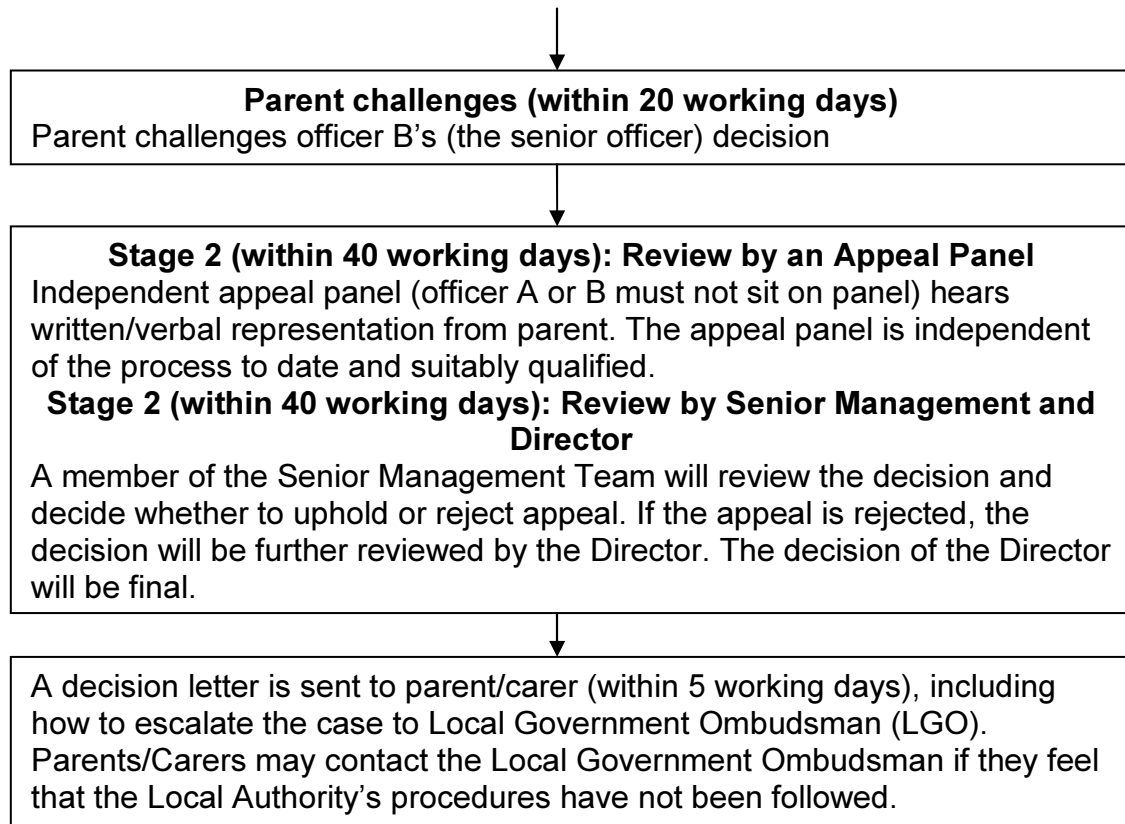
### Appeals Timings

Within the “Home to School travel and transport guidance” July 2014 issued by the Department of Education, recommendations regarding timings of Appeals procedures were made. These timings are recommended and not compulsory. Although many appeals will be dealt with much sooner than the timings stated, more complex cases may take longer.

Further information in relation to appeal timings can be obtained from the flowchart below.

### Home to School Travel and Transport – Flowchart of the Appeals Process





### 3 PARENTS/CARERS GUIDELINES - MAINSTREAM TRANSPORT

#### Provision and Conditions

The majority of Rotherham pupils assessed as entitled to transport assistance are issued with a zero fare pass allowing them to travel free by public transport to/from school. Where specific buses are provided for mainstream home to school transport, these may be run commercially by the operators or on contract to the Local Authority. In both instances, these are registered services available to the general public and as such parents/carers should consider the need to accompany the pupil as necessary.

- 3.01 A pupil's home address is considered to be the one that is in receipt of Child Benefit. Pupils in receipt of free transport assistance will have their eligibility re-assessed following a move of address or circumstances as this may affect both the identity of the qualifying school and the distance.
- 3.02 The distance between the pupil's home and school is measured using a computerised mapping system. This is from the front door of the home address to the nearest designated school entrance by the nearest available walking route.
- 3.03 Pupils who do qualify for a zero fare bus pass (see section 2) will continue to be assessed and reviewed each school year.
- 3.04 Dual residence or parents/carers work and family commitments will not be regarded as valid reasons for determining entitlement to transport assistance. A pupil's home address is considered to be the one that is in receipt of the Child Benefit.
- 3.05 Where it is not possible for pupils to travel by public transport, the Local Authority may consider other arrangements.
- 3.06 Secondary aged pupils, not qualifying for transport assistance through the Local Authority need to obtain a concessionary fare pass issued by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE). The MegaTravel (Proof of Age) Pass allows the holder to travel at the concessionary fare on buses trams and trains in South Yorkshire. Further information and application forms are available from the Travel South Yorkshire website [www.travelsouthyorkshire.com](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com) or the Rotherham or Meadowhall Interchanges, or contact Traveline on Tel. 01709 515151.
- 3.07 Pupils attending a school in Rotherham, who live outside the Rotherham boundary, must apply to their home Local Authority, for assistance.
- 3.08 It is the responsibility of parents/carers to meet other transport needs

including travel to and from work placements, breakfast and after-school clubs, extra-curricular activities, transitional travel or any other arrangements they make with the school.

- 3.09 The ultimate responsibility for the safety and conduct of any pupil during the journey to and from school rests with parents/carers. Some pupils may need to be taken to the bus stop and supervised until the bus arrives. Similarly, these pupils may need to be met on their return journey. Pupils who are unaccompanied between home and bus stops should follow a safe route known to the parents/carers.
- 3.10 Parents/Carers are expected to explain to their child that it is important to behave while they are travelling on transport. Parents/Carers who apply for a zero fare pass sign to accept the Code of Conduct that the pupil will follow. If any pupil persistently endangers their own safety, or that of others, by not following the Code of Conduct, transport assistance will be withdrawn.
- 3.11 In the event of a pupil exhibiting persistent, deliberate, disruptive or dangerous behaviours (including physical and verbal abuse), the Local Authority may exclude you child from using school transport or withdraw a zero fare bus fare. Additionally, the bus operator can refuse entry to the vehicle for such pupils and in some circumstances the Police may be involved. Parents/Carers will be expected to make their own arrangements to ensure their child attends school.

Guidance entitled "Promoting Positive Behaviour by Pupils on Public Transport in South Yorkshire" has been developed by Local Authority Education Transport Officers, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, South Yorkshire Police and Transport Operators and can be accessed at

<http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/onboard/teachersbehaviour>

- 3.12 It is against the law to smoke on buses, coaches, minibuses and in taxis.

## **4 PARENTS/CARERS GUIDELINES – SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND) TRANSPORT**

### **Provision and Conditions**

Many secondary aged pupils who have been assessed as requiring transport assistance, other than a zero fare bus pass, will receive support for independence and mobility training as part of their school curriculum. The aim is to reduce their reliance on individual transport in Key Stages 3/4. Plans to encourage independent travel will be considered at the earliest opportunity by the school working in partnership with parents/carers.

- 4.01 Pupils in receipt of transport assistance will have their eligibility re-assessed following a change of address or circumstances, as this may affect both the identity of the qualifying school and the distance. Dual residence or parents/carers work and family commitments will not be regarded as valid reasons for determining entitlement to transport assistance. A pupil's home address is considered to be the one that is in receipt of the Child Benefit.
- 4.02 Transport assistance may be reviewed on a term-by-term basis. Any recommended changes to a pupil's transport arrangements will be considered by the Local Authority. Changes, for various reasons, may be necessary during the school term and you will be informed of these as soon as possible. Where individual transport is ceased, pupils may be eligible for a zero fare bus pass, provided they live beyond the statutory walking distance (see section 2).
- 4.03 Pupils issued with a zero fare bus pass will access free transport which will operate from and to the bus stops nearest to the pupil's home. Parents/Carers should ensure the pupil's safety by making appropriate arrangements for them to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stop as appropriate.
- 4.04 It is the responsibility of parents/carers to meet other transport needs such as travel to and from work placements, breakfast and after-school clubs, extra-curricular activities, transitional transport or any other arrangements they make with a school.
- 4.05 Pupils who are assessed as requiring transport on a coach, minibus or taxi will be picked up and dropped off at named points near their home address. If the pupil is not at the boarding point at the agreed time in the morning, the transport will continue its journey to avoid late arrival at schools. If the pupil is collected from home please ensure they are ready to board the vehicle at the agreed time.
- 4.06 Pupils who attend a residential school (e.g. a term-by-term basis) outside Rotherham named in their EHC Plan or Statement of SEN will be allocated a maximum of 6 return journeys to/from their place of education. No additional journeys will be funded by the Local Authority.



- 4.07 Some parents/carers may wish to use their own vehicle to transport their child to and from school. They may be entitled to claim a fuel allowance, when no spaces are available on existing transport, or where no contracted transport provision exists. This will only be paid for the journeys **when the eligible child is travelling in the vehicle**. Further information can be obtained from [education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk)
- 4.08 Any special transport equipment, seating, restraints, or training required due to the pupil's physical, medical or behavioural needs which require supervision during travel will usually be arranged by the Local Authority. In some circumstances, an agreed written individual transport care plan will be required to be signed by the parent/carer before the pupil can travel on any contracted vehicle.
- 4.09 Where a vehicle collects a pupil from the home address, drivers will not usually be expected to leave the vehicle and bring the pupil from the house. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child's safety by making appropriate arrangements to accompany their child to and from the designated pick up point, and to see them safely onto and off the vehicle. In exceptional circumstances, agreed by the Local Authority, a passenger assistant/driver may assist with movement of the pupil if they are specifically trained to do so.
- 4.10 If your child will not be going to school for any reason, such as illness or holiday, you must inform the Passenger Services Team as soon as possible to prevent unnecessary charges being made (especially if your child travels alone). You must inform the Passenger Services Team in advance when you need the transport to start again (**please note that 24 hours voicemail is available**).
- 4.11 If your child is due to receive medical treatment which affects their mobility and fitness to travel, you must inform the Passenger Services Team, [EDS-PassengerTransport@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:EDS-PassengerTransport@rotherham.gov.uk) at least 10 working days in advance so that an updated transport assessment can be undertaken. Your child may be refused transport provision until this assessment has taken place and it is deemed safe for them to travel.
- 4.12 If a pupil is transported in a wheelchair, it is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that this is in good condition and free of defects. This also includes any wheelchair harness. Any defects should be reported and rectified by contacting Wheelchair Services at [Rotherham.wheelchairs@rothgen.nhs.uk](mailto:Rotherham.wheelchairs@rothgen.nhs.uk) to ensure the safety of the child. Defective equipment will result in transport being stopped as **all** drivers are instructed to refuse to transport pupils with defective wheelchairs.
- 4.13 If your child is due to change their wheelchair or buggy, including seating system, you must inform the Contract Monitoring Officer at least 10 working days in advance at [EDS-PassengerTransport@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:EDS-PassengerTransport@rotherham.gov.uk). It is important that the correct restraints are used to secure the wheelchair into

the vehicle. All drivers are instructed to refuse transport provision for pupils until these changes are made and until it is confirmed safe for the pupil to travel.

- 4.14 If your child has a medical care plan for transport where treatment or equipment is essential for the child's health (e.g. epipen, inhaler, vagal nerve stimulator magnet, suction machine etc.) it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure this is sent with the child. This should always be in date and in good working order otherwise your child will be refused transport by the operator.
- 4.15 Transport Staff will **not** administer medicines unless these are part of the Transport Care Plan and staff have received appropriate training. It is important that such medicines are in date, clearly marked with the pupil's name and the dosage prescribed.
- 4.16 Parents are advised to contact their child's school, to check on their policy for the carriage of items such as letters, money or medicines. Transport staff may agree to transport these but cannot accept responsibility for any loss.
- 4.17 As a parent/carer you must ensure that a responsible adult meets the child when they are dropped off by the transport provider. If an emergency occurs which prevents this, the Passenger Services Team should be informed urgently (Tel. 01709 334322 or 334325). In the event of a responsible adult not being available to meet the child, the Transport Operator will contact the Passenger Services Team. If the issue cannot be resolved the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (Tel. 01709 336080) will be contacted and the child taken to a place of safety until the pupil is collected by a responsible adult.
- 4.18 In the event of a pupil exhibiting persistent, deliberate, disruptive or dangerous behaviours (including physical and verbal abuse), the Local Authority may withdraw the transport provision. Parents/Carers will be expected to make their own arrangements to ensure their child attends school.

Updated 15/4/16

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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