

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

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

Date: Tuesday, 18th December, 2018

Time: 5.00 p.m.

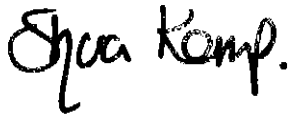
A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1972
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency
3. Apologies for absence
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Looked After Children Council Update (Pages 1 - 5)
6. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th October, 2018 (Pages 6 - 14)
7. Liberty House - Update (Pages 15 - 29)
8. IRO Annual Report 2018 (Pages 30 - 54)
9. Rights to Rights Annual Report 2018 (Pages 55 - 73)
10. Virtual School (Pages 74 - 81)
Development Plan
Priorities and Actions
GCSE Progress Update
11. Performance Monitoring October 2018 (Pages 82 - 103)
12. Peer Review (Pages 104 - 118)
13. Directorate invites for 2019

14. Exclusion of the press and public
That under Section 100(A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 (information relates to finance and business affairs).
15. Child Criminal Exploitation (Pages 119 - 133)
16. Date and time of the next meeting: -
Tuesday, 12th February, 2018

Membership of the Corporate Parenting Panel: -

Councillors G. Watson (Deputy Leader and Children and Young People's Services Portfolio holder), V. Cusworth (Chair of the Improving Lives Select Commission), P. Jarvis (second representative of the Improving Lives Select Commission), M. S. Elliott (Minority Party representative) and J. Elliot (representative on the Fostering and Adoption Panels).



Sharon Kemp,
Chief Executive.

Rotherham Looked After Children's Council & Lil' LAC CLUB –

Update Report for December 2018 - **Corporate Parenting Panel**

Summary

The LAC Council and Lil' LAC Club have been busy having fun, socialising and working together achieving fabulous results by continuing to help shape Rotherham Services and engage in Rotherham Remembrance Sunday Service and Parade. The LAC Council are very proud to have collected their Pride of Rotherham Awards, and applaud our LACC member Kiran for winning Young Volunteer Of the Year 2018 Award. The group have collected their consultation fees from the NHS LAC Health Assessment Consultation and have shared their Xmas Crafts Activity Session with some 'friends' of the group. The numerous experiences and opportunities offered to young people at the LAC Council and Lil' LACC are specifically designed to increase social capital, self-awareness and self-esteem, to foster resilience and support better outcomes for our vulnerable young people. Here are some of the things that we have been doing to achieve these outcomes that we would like to share with you;

LAC Council Shaping Services

Muslim Foster Carer Project – Kiran, a senior LAC Council

member has put forward suggestions to improve lives for Muslim Children in Care. After highlighting inequalities in opportunities for religious celebrations between children of Muslim faith and those of Christian faith at the Corporate Parenting Panel take over day earlier this year where Kiran shared how she experienced loneliness and isolation living as a Muslim LAC in a non-Muslim household. The LAC Council asked for an Eid party for Muslim LAC every year, for Muslim children to be paired with Muslim Foster Carers, and for those Muslim LAC living with non-Muslim Foster Carers to be given the opportunity to participate in Ramadan and Eid with a Muslim 'Host' Family. Kiran's experiences and suggestions to improve the Service for Muslim children and young people are being heard at the newly formed Muslim Foster Carer Project who are building their action plan around Kiran's suggestions. This is a very exciting project for the LAC Council who are feeling very positive about co-producing improvements with Social Care.



LAC Council Award Winners

Pride of Rotherham Awards 2018

In October the Pride of Rotherham Awards (PORA) were held at New York Stadium to celebrate the success of our Looked After and Leaving Care Young People. The annual event had a Hollywood/Bollywood Theme and guests were invited to dress up accordingly. This was a fantastic event which generated great excitement as 210 children and young people were individually nominated by Teachers, Social Workers, Support Staff etc for something they had done that warranted special recognition over the previous year. Social Care management contributed to the fun by delivering a creative Bollywood dance performance to the squeals and laughter of an appreciative audience. Alongside other nominations, all of our LAC Council and Lil LAC Club members were nominated for the community award for their contributions to the LACC & Lil LACC. Each young person received an Oscar type trophy and certificate.



Young Volunteer of the Year 2018

We are very proud to include the news that LAC Council member Kiran Meharban has scooped the Young Volunteer of the Year Award at the Community Achievement Awards in November. Kiran was nominated due to her unwavering commitment and dedication to volunteering with the LAC Council for the last 3 years. This opportunity has seen her successful involvement with Destination Poland Project fund raising, The LACC Bin Liner Campaign and the Muslim Foster Carer Project! Kiran is a valued member of the group who welcomes all new members, is patient, caring and non-judgmental. Kiran's LAC Council peers spoke on film to say why Kiran deserves the award and how much they value, respect and care for Kiran, with one member talking about how Kiran has helped him accept himself as being Muslim and gay, and another saying simply *'We just love her'*

The DVD was shown at the Awards ceremony was held at the Carlton Park Hotel, Sharon Kemp presented Kiran with her glass trophy and bouquet of flowers. There wasn't a dry eye in the place as Kiran accepted her Young Volunteer of the Year 2018 Award. Well Done!!



Community Engagement

Remembrance Sunday 2018

12 Members of the LAC Council joined Mayor Buckley and Chief Exec Sharon Kemp at the Town Hall for the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service at the Minster. The young people were filled with pride and excited to be part of this special day. LAC Council member Brogan was voted by his peers to lay a Poppy Wreath of remembrance and gratitude on behalf of the group.



Fundraising

This year the LAC Council have been actively pursuing funding to support LACC activities and session refreshments. This has included writing to supermarkets and asking to engage in bag packs to raise money, contacting Rotherham Tescos to ask for donations of end of day bread/pastries. Unfortunately, these have not been successful to date due to the enormous competition in local requests for support.

However, the group have been very successful in obtaining funding for activities through the Community Leadership Fund and CIDON Construction who have paid for group activities, Day trips, and almost 100 Suitcases for LAC when they move placement. Another avenue the group are exploring is their ability to raise funds through using their unique position and expertise of being a Looked After Child within the care system by engaging in consultations and delivering training to Foster Carers and Social Workers which will improve practice with Looked After and Leaving Care young people

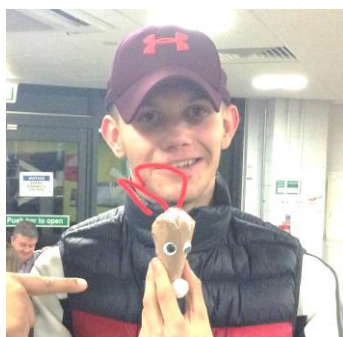
This year the group engaged in a number of workshops to give their voices to issues arising from NHS LAC Health Assessments to support improvements in the service. The group received a consultation fee of £400 in November, handed over by Paul Theaker, Commissioning Manager, NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group. Paul came to the LAC Council to feedback results of the consultation and let the young people know that their ideas are being taken seriously and considered.



Christmas Crafts with the LAC Council

Every year the LAC Council hold their Christmas Crafts session to let off some creative steam after all the hard work throughout the year with their projects and campaigns to make sure the voices of some of our most vulnerable children are heard. The group invite 'friends' of the LAC Council, to come along and join in the fun. This year we had the pleasure of our CEX Sharon Kemp, Strategic Director Jon Stonehouse, Steve Simpson and Jane Galloway from CIDON construction.

The young people had lots of fun showing the adults how to make homemade gifts like snowman soup, xmas tree decorations, snowflakes and Rudolf Chocolate. This is a very special time of the year when our group come together have lots of fun and create gifts and cards for people they care about most.

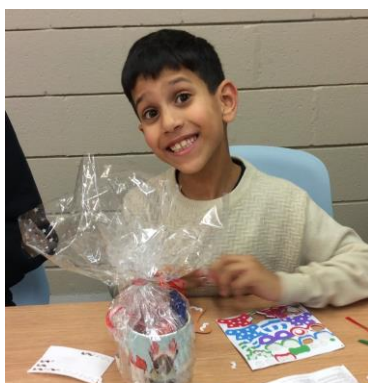


**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**



Xmas Crafts

Our Lil LAC Club (Lil LACC) are going from strength to strength, meeting up at the group and building on friendships with other LA Children. We continue to actively recruit new members to the LIL LAC Club to give as many children the opportunity to have fun, meet and make new friends and play games together in a safe welcoming environment. The children have been engaging in creative seasonal crafts, making cards and homemade gifts for people they care about the most. They have their Xmas party later in December where Father Christmas is due to make an appearance **ho ho ho!**



LAC Council Guests - Young people from the LAC Council would like to thank all of our guests, friends, volunteers and supporters who have visited the LAC Council. These include:-

Ian Walker – Head of Service Children in Care

Sharon Kemp – Chief Executive RMBC

Jon Stonehouse – Strategic Director

Paul Theaker –Commissioning Manager, NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group

Clr Alan Buckley – Mayor

Sandra Buckley - Mayoress

Jane Galloway -Procurement Manager CIDON Construction

Steve Simpson – Director CIDON Construction

LAC Voice, Influence & Participation Volunteers

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Thank You All 😊

Contact Name:

Lisa Du-Valle

LAC Voice, Influence & Participation Lead
Children in Care

Tel: 01709 822130 or Mob: 07748143388

Email: lisa.duvalle@rotherham.gov.uk



@LACCRotherham



LACC Rotherham

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL
Tuesday, 16th October, 2018

Present:- Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Cusworth, Elliot and Jarvis.

Also present were Anne Marie Banks, Pete Douglas, Catherine Hall, Tina Hohn, Helen Mangham, Sharon Sandell, Ian Walker, Rebecca Wall, Jon Stonehouse, Sue Wilson and Cathryn Woodward.

Lisa Duvalle together with Adorabella, Angelina, Chelsea, Jordan, Kira, Kiran. Judith Badger was in attendance for Minute No. 28 (Looked After Promises).

Apologies for absence were from Councillor M. Elliott.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

26. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 28TH AUGUST, 2018

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th August, 2018.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th August, 2018, be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

Arising from Minute No. 15 (EID Party and Foster Care Matching for Muslim LAC), it was noted that there was engagement with the local community which would hopefully have a massive impact on Muslim LAC. There was also 2 voluntary IVs from the Muslim community.

27. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN COUNCIL UPDATE

Adorabella, Angelina, Chelsea, Jordan, Kira, Kiran had chosen the following from their LACC update report to talk to the Panel about:-

Diana Award Winners – LAC Council Shaping Services

- Members of the Looked After Children's Council (LACC) had attended a star studded ceremony in Leeds to collect a prestigious Diana Award for their outstanding contribution to society
- The LACC was publically honoured for the work they had done to campaign for the rights of children in care in particular the 'Bin Liners are NOT Suitcases' campaign

Eid Party and Muslim LAC

- Should have the same importance as a Christmas party for Christian LAC
- Muslim Foster Care Project

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL - 16/10/18

- Mosque visit

LAC Summer Activity Programme

- Town Hall visit
- Skeggy Vegas Trip

Community Engagement

- Rotherham Show 2018

Pride of Rotherham Awards

Lil LAC Club Activities

- Participation sessions now moved to Dalton Youth Club
- Actively recruiting to give as many children the opportunity to have fun, meet and make new friends and play games

Resolved:- That the October 2018 update be noted.

28. STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES - LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S PROMISES

Judith Badger, Strategic Director Finance and Customer Services, gave the following verbal report on the areas of her responsibility and how they impacted in terms of the LAC Promises:-

Finance and Customer Services

- Responsibility for the majority of the corporate services of the Council
- Officers included accountants, solicitors and IT professionals
- Responsibility for the Capital Programme that supported the budget holders who managed Children Services
- The Council had invested over £20M in CYPS

Procurement

- Worked with Children Services to support the procurement and tendering processes around care placements and the commissioning of care services

Council Tax

- Recently offered Council Tax support to care leavers

Legal Services

- The biggest financial challenge was the costs in supporting Children Services in safeguarding and protecting children
- Involvement with the Licensing function in particular with regard to taxi licensing

Information Management

- Freedom of Information and Subject Access requests
- Work with the Information Commissioner to ensure protection of

victims/survivors of CSE by not disclosing information with regard to costs of CSE claims against the Council whereby the victim/survivor could be identified

- More work required on Subject Access requests

Judith was thanked for her report.

29. REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS AND APPROACH TO CHILDREN MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR FAMILIES

Sharon Sandell, Service Manager Leaving Care and Contact Service, presented a review of arrangements and approach to children maintaining relationships with their families.

A review was undertaken in February 2018 which covered the whole process from the point at which decisions were being formulated and considered to remove children through to how services recorded and used the time children spent with their families to build memories and support parents/adults in their parenting. A sub-group had also been established to explore buildings and environments.

The Contact Service was now known as The Family Activity Base Team (FAB Team) and the Contact Centre known as Family Activity Base (FAB) and based in the Cranworth Centre, Eastwood.

One of the key priorities for the review was to create opportunities to offer a rationale and a story for the child as they moved through care and into adulthood by placing arrangements for children and families seeing their families in a more prominent position at the heart of decision making. Part of this was to develop a comprehensive document which underpinned the Service's approach to how decisions were made for children to maintain a relationship with their families and how the decisions were recorded but also for young people to read about their relationships with their families in a more meaningful way. The Policy and Practice Guide was attached at Appendix A of the report submitted.

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- Numerous comments made by birth parents with regard to the standard of the property where contact took place
- The new arrangements had not been launched as yet - the finances were not in place as yet; currently the existing resources were being better managed.
- The report was a wish list should the finances become available
- A number of additional properties had since become available in the Council portfolio as possible localities which would be investigated
- Travelling distances for the family v the child – the child's best interests outweighed the family
- It was important to model an environment that agencies would expect birth parents to achieve if their children were to be returned to their

care

Resolved:- (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That a further report be submitted once/should the finances become available.

30. ROTHERHAM FOSTERING SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017/18

Anne-Marie Banks, Services Manager, Fostering and Adoption, presented the Rotherham Fostering Service 2017/18 performance report and the updated Fostering Service Statement of Purpose 2018 which fulfilled the requirements of Standard 1 of the Fostering Services Minimum Standards (Care Standards Act, 2000) and Regulations 3 and 4 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

The report set out:-

- The 3 teams within the Fostering Service i.e. Recruitment Team, Mainstream Support and Specialist Support
- Fostering Panel and its composition
- Fostering Panel Business 2017/18
- Fostering Families – Placements
- Approvals, Deregistration and Resignations
- Children Placed in Foster Care
- Placement Stability
- Unplanned Endings and Disruptions
- Staffing in the Fostering Service
- Fostering Supervision and Support
- Activities and Events
- Consultation
- Complaints and Compliments
- Training
- Fostering Recruitment Activity and Outcomes
- Fostering Service Recruitment Target Key Areas
- Key Challenges, Developments, Targets and Actions

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- The team of workers within the Service were highly motivated and committed to children
- Introduction of a marketing and communications lead, a dedicated Duty Worker whose role was to lead on matching and making placements as well as a dedicated Fostering Advisor role
- The need to recruit/retain foster carers - 24 foster carers lost last year
- Review of the demographic of foster carers
- Massive progress had been made with the Panel Advisor driving the change

- Placement stability was the best it had been for 2 years
- Work taking place with the Fostering Network with regard to retention of foster carers
- The issues flagged up by the Fostering Panel had helped strengthen the Service
- The Service had used Signs of Safety on a case and developed practice guidance of how to support foster carers

Resolved:- (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That a 6 monthly progress report be submitted to the Improving Lives Select Commission.

31. ROTHERHAM ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

Anne-Marie Banks, Service Manager Fostering and Adoption, presented the Rotherham Adoption Service 2017/18 annual report together with the updated Adoption Service Statement of Purpose 2018.

The report set out:-

- The Adoption Service
- Activity
- Timeliness of Adoption
- Family Finding
- Early Permanence Placements (Fostering to Adopt Placements)
- The Adoption Panel
- Staffing
- Adoption Support Services
- The Regional Adoption Agency
- Improvement and Development for 2018/19 onwards

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- Rotherham had its own Therapeutic Team and had committed a Post-Adoption Worker to utilise the adoption fund effectively to provide therapy for children including those placed out of authority
- It was not always known what resources/services were available to children placed out of authority and relied upon the Adoption services where the children were placed to source the appropriate service on behalf of the Authority
- There had been some nervousness with regard to using Early Permanent Placement for older children but it had been used due to disruption of an adoption placement and had enabled the right support to be in place, gave the opportunity to support through the fostering phase into adoption and meant that the young person did not have to endure another move

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

32. CORPORATE PARENTING MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT - AUG 2018

Consideration was given to the report presented by Sue Wilson, Head of Service Performance and Planning, provided a summary of performance for key performance indicators across Looked After Children Services for August, 2018. This was read in conjunction with the accompanying performance data report at Appendix A detailing trend data, graphical analysis and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages where possible.

A Service overview and context was provided which indicated a continual increase in the Looked After Children profile. Between March 2017 and March 2018 the number of LAC had increased by 29% (488 to 628). As at the end of June this had increased further to 651.

This increase in LAC numbers and the consequential shortage in available placements, had had an increase in the number of young people placed outside of the local area which in turn had had a negative impact on Social Work capacity. However, despite the additional capacity pressures, in general performance remained sustained across a number of areas.

Rotherham continued to have an increasing Looked After Children profile. The 651 children at the end of August equated to a rate of 115 per 10,000 population; this was significantly high when compared to the statistical neighbour average of 81.3.

Overall Rotherham's LAC age profile followed a similar distribution to that of the latest national comparator. The most notable differences being the higher rate of children aged 5-9 years (23% compared to 19%) and a lower proportion aged over 16 (17% compared to 24%).

The percentage distribution by legal status remained consistent with 53% of children subject to full Care Orders, 32% on an Interim Care Order, 10% on Placement Orders with Care Order and 5% were under Section 20.

Despite ongoing high demand, a high proportion of LAC had up-to-date plans. Compliance had increased to 91.4% at the end of August compared to 89.5% at the end of March 2018.

In recent months there had been a decline in the timeliness of LAC Statutory Reviews (96.1% March 2018 to 85.6% August 2018)). This was reflective of the summer holiday period when many IRO's, Social Workers and foster carers were not available. This would be closely monitored in September to ensure that it was not part of an ongoing trend.

Despite the overall increase in numbers, the proportion of children placed

in a family based setting remained stable at 82.6%. August had seen a further improvement in the proportion of long term LAC who had lived in the same placement for at least 2 years (66.9% - 101 out of 150 children), an improvement of 5.7% compared to the end of March 2018 and reduced the gap with statistical neighbour average to 1.3%. This was the best performance of the year so far and bettered the performance achieved in 2016/17 and 2017/18. The measure had been impacted by the increasing number of long term LAC and the desire to bring children closer to home and into family placements.

There had also been a positive reduction in the number of LAC experiencing multiple placement moves in the last 12 months from the highest point this year of 14.8% at the end of May to 11.9% at the end of August.

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/highlighted:-

- A seminar had been held on 10th September with Health colleagues where it was agreed that there would be greater flexibility both in terms of venue and additional after-school clinics for health assessments. The paediatrician had also agreed to undertake more of the sessions in community based settings. It would be run as a pilot to assess the impact on the young people and professionals the outcome of which would be submitted to the Panel
- Relaunch of Challenge 63

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the report and accompanying dataset (Appendix A) be received and noted.

(2) That an update be provided to the next Panel meeting on the pilot being undertaken with regard to the increased flexibility for the health assessments.

33. VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEAD TEACHER REPORT 2018

Tina Hohn and Pete Douglas presented the 2018 Virtual School Head Teacher Report which was contained information under the headings of:-

- The context regionally and nationally
- The current school age population
- Education Outcomes summary
- Primary Outcomes
- Year 11 Outcomes
- Care Leavers
- Attendance
- Exclusions

together with Appendices:-

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL - 16/10/18

- 1) Promoting Emotional Wellbeing and Removing Barriers
- 2) Virtual School Team 2018
- 3) Key Questions for School Leaders
- 4) Pupil Premium Plus 2018/19
- 5) The Budget 2018/19
- 6) Previously Looked After Children and Young People
- 7) Signs of Safety
- 8) The Virtual School Vision

The following issues were highlighted from the report:-

- Quality of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) had improved significantly since the last inspection
- Ensuring children placed out of authority received the same service and input as those children in Rotherham and the surrounding areas
- The attitude of young people had changed towards education and PEPs and wanted to be involved
- 2 new Educational Advisors had joined the Team as well as a 0.6 Speech Therapist
- A vast number of schools had undertaken/about to undergo a variety of training programmes including Attachment Friendly School programme, emotional coaching and ELSA
- All schools could access the training but the priority was given to those that had the most LAC through Pupil Premium
- Solution focussed staffing meetings and interventions had seen a 3.2% drop in the number of fixed term exclusions
- Educational Psychologist had visited schools which had influenced some to change their policies and practises resulting in reduced exclusions
- As Educational Advisors, the schools were visited at least 3 times a year so it was hoped the momentum would be kept through the PEP meetings as well as the Educational Psychologist still being full involved
- It was hoped to undertake a piece of whole staff training and then set up a network in school in an attempt to manage Y3 in Attachment Friendly schools and look to establish School Attachment Champions
- Pleasing KS1 results and very good FS2 results
- Focus on closing the gaps for the end of KS2 and the readiness for secondary school. A qualified teacher to work with Y5 and 6 children on a 1:1 basis
- Interventions in KS3 and 4 were seeing real benefits. A software system, Sound Learning, was a bespoke intervention put in place for pupils to catch up
- Attempts to improve data analysis
- Issue with persistent absence with regard to young people, particularly Y9-11, who had moved out of the area and length of time it took for the admission process to get them back into education
- Although attending PEP meetings, emotional support was not provided to out of authority LAC that children placed within the

Borough accessed

- Concern regarding raising the attainment and progress in KS4
- Work also took place with the foster carers as well as extra tuition for the children. They received training from Early Years not only from the academic perspective but also from the emotional and wellbeing aspect from the Educational Psychologist

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That future reports include a summary of the headlines in improvement and performance that the Panel's attention wished to be drawn to

34. CHAMPIONS' FEEDBACK

There was no issues to report.

35. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETINGS: -

Resolved:- (1) That a further meeting be held on 18th December, 2018 commencing at 5.00 p.m.

(2) That discussions take place with the LACC with regard to future start times of the meetings during 2019.

Summary Sheet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Corporate Parenting Panel

Report Title

Up-date Report on Liberty House

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

John Stonehouse, Strategic Director, Children and Young People's Services

Report Author(s)

Mary Jarrett - Service Manager, Children with Disabilities Team and EHC Assessment Team, Children and Young People's Service

Ward(s) Affected

All

Summary

Liberty House is Rotherham's only registered Children's home; it offers Outstanding provision for children with disabilities allowing parents/carers of children with complex needs to have confidence that their child is having a positive and productive experience when away from home.

Recommendations

- **That Report is noted**

List of Appendices Included: Ofsted Inspection report 2017

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

None

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

1. Recommendations: That the Report is noted.

2. Background

2.1 Liberty House is a Residential Home that offers Respite Care for children and young people aged 8-18 with complex needs and disabilities.

2.2. Liberty House now offers provision for 4 children to receive respite care per night with a higher number of young people on a Wednesday night where a group of high functioning young people attend who require a lesser amount of direct support.

2.3 Liberty House also offers full time residential care for a child or young person who needs an emergency placement. This service has been almost continually utilised over the last 12 months offering support to disabled children and young people whose permanent placements have broken down or whose parents are no longer able to care for them safely whilst a long-term placement is sought.

2.4 During 2017 it became apparent that utilisation of the emergency bed was causing frequent cancellations of planned respite causing distress to parents and young people. Therefore the Registered Manager and Responsible Individual undertook to increase the permanent staffing of the home increasing it by two care staff and one senior member of staff and also reviewed rota arrangements to ensure consistent staffing across the week and pro-rata allocation of weekend annual leave.

2.5 Liberty House staff are passionate about supporting children and young people to achieve their potential. Over the last year staff have launched 'Wow' moments with young people. These 'Wow' moments celebrate individual children's successes and achievements. Children and young people are now set targets using the Signs of Safety/Wellbeing framework to achieve whilst they stay at Liberty House, for example to support independence skills or improve communication and when these are achieved 'Wow' certificates are awarded and a 'Hall of Fame' photograph taken and displayed in the home.

2.6 Celebrations are a big part of Liberty House life. The Annual Christmas party is a big success and a Summer Fun day was held this year for the first time and was well attended. Staff have variously encouraged children and young people to participate in themed activities to celebrate the World Cup; Halloween, Easter and individual events to celebrate birthdays and mark children starting or leaving the unit.

2.7 Of the 24 young people who receive care from Liberty House the majority of children and young people are designated 'Children in Need' under section 17 of

the Children Act and their care is part of a Child in Need plan reviewed regularly by their Social Worker. There are 2 young people who are long term Looked After Children on full care orders where Liberty House is utilised by Foster Carers to offer placement support and 4 Children who are Looked After under section 20 of the Children Act because the number of nights care they receive and the complexity of their care packages require an Independent Reviewing Officer to have oversight of their Care plans. The emergency bed is currently occupied by a young person who arrived at Liberty House in November 2018, they are also on a full care order.

2.8 DLT have recently approved plans to allow Liberty House to utilise Liquid Logic so that for the first time all children's records will be held in one place and can be accessed both by residential care staff and Social Workers. This will prevent duplication of records and ensure good communication when there are issues in relation to a child or young person's care.

2.9 Ofsted Inspect Liberty House annually and thus another Inspection is expected before Christmas. Liberty House has received Outstanding outcomes from the last two full inspections, November 2016 & December 2017. Liberty House in accordance with 2015 Children's Home Regulations produces a 6 monthly self-evaluation (Regulation 45 report) and has monthly visits from an Independent Person (Regulation 44 Visit) which provide advice, guidance and safeguarding oversight of the provision of care. The regulation 44 reports are shared with the Registered Manager, Responsible Individual, and the Assistant Director for Safeguarding.

3. Key Issues:

Report for information and up-date only

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

Report for up-date and Information only.

5. Consultation

Report has been shared with the registered manager for approval.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

6.1 Not applicable

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

7.1 Not applicable

8. Legal Implications

8.1 children and Young People are cared for according to the Children Act 1989; the Children's Homes Regulations 2015 and The Children and Families Act 2014

9. Human Resources Implications

9.1 None

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 Liberty House provides a much valued resource offering high quality residential respite care for children and young people with disabilities and complex needs and as such meets the Council's statutory duty to provide respite care for children with disabilities.

11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Report Author: Mary Jarrett. Mary.jarrett@rotherham.gov.uk

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

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

SC037521

Registered provider: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by the local authority. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation, under short-break arrangements, for up to eight children or young people who have learning and/or physical disabilities, some of whom have complex and/or life-limiting conditions. The service has an additional emergency bed.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 December 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 16 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- The manager and staff know the children and young people's care needs and vulnerabilities very well. They successfully meet the care needs by providing highly structured and individualised care for the children and young people who access the short-break service.
- Safeguarding practice is given high priority. Trusting and secure relationships have developed between the staff, children, young people and their families. Parents have confidence in, and are reassured by, the quality of care provided by the staff team. The safety and well-being of the children and young people are of paramount importance.
- The children and young people are exposed to a wealth of positive experiences in the home, and through community activities. They have opportunities to develop meaningful peer friendships due to the careful matching process that takes place.
- The diverse and complex health needs of the children and young people are clearly known, understood and well met by the manager and staff team. Relationships with health professionals underpin the ability of the staff to administer medication correctly and attend to individual health and feeding processes.
- Transitions, both into and out of the home, are well planned and are tailored to the individualised needs of the child or young person, and their family. Parents feel totally at ease in the knowledge that their child, while progressing to adulthood, will not be without continuing care and support.
- The manager is motivated and knowledgeable, and has high aspirations for the children, the young people and the staff team.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The manager needs to ensure that case records, care plans and behaviour management plans are consistently updated by the staff team.
- The manager, in conjunction with the senior leadership team, needs to prioritise staffing levels and staff rotas to ensure that short breaks are not cancelled as a result of an emergency admission or staff sickness.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/11/2016	Full	Outstanding
17/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/01/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The children and young people receive consistent and high-quality care from a well-established and diverse staff team. The home is welcoming and homely, and radiates warmth and laughter. The children and young people feel safe and secure, and experience a sense of belonging. This has resulted in all the children and young people, regardless of their disabilities or complex health and learning needs, being involved in the day-to-day activities of the home. The lounge has a vibrant and eclectic atmosphere, and the staff plan activities and celebrate diversity that meet the range of needs and choices of the children and young people. The recent Christmas party was a resounding success with children, young people and their families, past and present, enjoying festive food and activities. When one young person was asked what he wanted for Christmas he said: 'A week staying at [Name of home]!'

The children and young people have the opportunity to develop friendships and socialise with their peers in a safe environment. They are able to do this because of the careful matching that takes place during the referral and admission process. The children and young people seldom get the opportunity to spend quality time and engage with their peers when at home. Attending respite at this home has provided these opportunities. The children and young people make choices about how they wish to spend their time together, which builds their self-confidence and social skills. This has seen the children and young people flourish and make sustained progress relative to their complex needs and disabilities. On a recent outing to watch a football match at a new stadium, a social worker who works on behalf of parents said: 'It was unbelievable what they did for our children. Full credit to the staff.'

The home is well equipped, with a sensory room, a ball pool, a television and computer gaming area, and an abundance of craft activities. The children and young people have a voice, and participated in developing the outside areas of the home. A parent enthusiastically said: '[Name] absolutely loves it at [Name of home]. He gets his case ready and is so excited. He comes twice a week and knows all the staff really well. It's a fantastic place.'

Highly individualised planning ensures that the children and young people have a smooth and welcoming transition into the home. Staff are adept at managing any concerns and anxieties faced by the parents and carers. As a result, parents and carers are reassured and confident that their children are being cared for by a diverse, diligent and motivated staff team. As testament to this, a professional commented: 'Children experience a really positive transition. Staff work very flexibly. Three placements over the last few months have been in an emergency. The manager and staff are extremely good at anticipating difficulties, alleviating anxieties and working collaboratively.'

A significant strength of the home is the relationships that have been developed and established with partner agencies, including health and social care professionals. Each

child and young person has an individualised healthcare plan that ensures that the staff are fully appraised of their complex health and medical needs, and can administer safe and consistent care. Staff training ensures that they are equipped to provide a range of medical procedures, such as enteral and gastrostomy feeding techniques, moving and handling, and managing epilepsy. A parent said that their child's food intake is closely monitored. The staff consistently use a food diary and regularly check whether there are any dilatory changes. Medication is administered to the child to support him to sleep at night, and the medication is stored securely.

The whole ethos of the home is one of participation and inclusion. There are pictures and memorabilia around the home that remind the children and young people of their fun times and special memories. Achievements are celebrated, with staff presenting the child or young person with a 'WOW' moment memento that says: 'TODAY [NAME] HAS HAD A WOW MOMENT BECAUSE..... WELL DONE YOU.' The children and young people have fully participated in the home's journey, being involved in the monthly newsletters and a 'feel good' wall, and in creating a staff team picture. Parents are encouraged to bring some home comforts that are kept at the home. The children and young people plan their own activities and complete an evaluation form that includes my activities, my thoughts and my targets. A parent said: 'My child loves his time spent here. He gets to access facilities and resources that we do not have at home. He asks every day if he is going. Also, all of the staff are great. They are easy to talk to and my child is happy enough to go to any of them to have his needs met. Because of all of this, I can completely relax when he's there and get the rest I need.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Ensuring the safety and well-being of the children and young people is given high priority. The home has recently facilitated two emergency admissions that have seen the manager and staff being proactive in ensuring that systems are in place that prepares for such admissions. This has ensured the delivery of optimum care in protecting the more vulnerable children and young people. High staff ratios, with all children and young people receiving one-to-one care, guarantee their safety, and their protection from themselves and others. A social worker said: 'The manager and all of the staff go above and beyond in ensuring the safety and protection of the children and young people. They all have a wealth of experience. The manager supports social care. It is a fantastic service, adaptable and flexible.'

The administration and management of complex health conditions, and for some children and young people limited life expectancy, are undertaken by a fully competent and skilled staff team. Risk assessments underpin the protective measures that are in place to ensure that the children and young people are safe when out in the community, or in the home's environment. Children and young people are clearly aware of their individual vulnerabilities and are adept at anticipating predictable behaviours that may cause harm to themselves and others. A parent said: 'The home is a very welcoming, safe environment with excellently trained and friendly staff. I feel very confident leaving my child in their capable hands.'

There is a vigorous and transparent safeguarding culture in the home, and staff are fully appraised and trained in identifying and responding to concerns about the safety of a child or young person. Statutory procedures are maintained. Multi-agency working practices ensure that the safety of the individual is at the centre of all decision making. The children and young people are physically held when they are at risk of harming themselves or others. All incidents are thoroughly recorded, and the manager uses learning from such incidents to evaluate and enhance practice. A member of staff said: 'Physical intervention training also teaches you different ways to manage behaviour without using restraint. I feel that I am getting a wealth of experience from staff, the young person and by talking to parents.'

The children and young people receive exceptionally good support to manage their anxieties, which can affect their presenting behaviour. Staff support the children and young people to follow individualised behaviour support plans and structured routines. The staff are invariably by the side of children and young people, which has significantly helped in reducing the children or young people's anxiety levels, as they respond well to a more predictable daily life. A parent said: 'My child will hurt himself if he becomes frustrated or overanxious. The staff are able to help him calm down enough so he can move onto an activity and stop hurting himself.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably qualified with a level 5 diploma in leadership and management. He has acquired a wealth of knowledge and experience, spanning a number of years working in residential care. The manager leads by example, and has nurtured a motivated and committed staff team that ensures the delivery of professional and safe practice and personal care. The result of this is a sustained improvement in the lives of the children and young people accessing the short-break service.

The manager is held in high regard by parents, professionals and the staff team. There is complete confidence in his management of the home and the standards of care that he aspires to. Close working relationships and regular communication have promoted improvements in the quality of care for the children and young people. One staff member said: 'This home really adopts a safe practice approach. Seeing the kids being able to build relationships and have lots of positive experiences and learn new things is amazing to see. It has really changed my perception of residential care and short-break provision.'

The manager said: 'We are on a continuous journey of improvement.' The manager understands the home's strengths and weaknesses very well, and utilises research-informed practice to develop a range of tools and approaches to communicate and engage with the children and young people. A parent said: 'My child's care plan is drawn out by us and the staff, so they always care for him in the way we want them to. But also, they give us great ideas on how to introduce new things to him and how to resolve any behaviours, which is always appreciated.'

The staff have received specialised training in medication, the Mental Capacity Act, deprivation of liberty, safeguarding and communication. The manager gives priority to continuous professional development, and staff are given specific responsibilities, such as participation and engagement with children and young people. This approach has resulted in the implementation of an abundance of new and innovative ideas. The staff benefit from support systems through supervision, individual development plans, team meetings and detailed shift handovers. The quality and regularity of supervision for some staff, and staff attendance at team meetings, are varied, leaving shortfalls that the manager must address.

The manager has amended the statement of purpose to ensure that the service operates in accordance with service requirements, and to accommodate the occasional need for emergency placements. The recommendation and requirement made at the last inspection relating to the quality and timeliness of regulation 44 reports have been addressed by the outsourcing and appointment of a new independent visitor. The manager takes complaints very seriously and responds within statutory timescales. Complaints have related to the cancellation of a respite period due to unforeseen circumstances. The manager, together with the senior leadership team, is ensuring that staffing and staff rotas are arranged so that cancellations are kept to an absolute minimum.

Professionals and parents are extremely positive about the manager and the staff team. The home's collaborative and holistic approach demonstrates the effective and meaningful relationships that the manager has built with partner agencies, professionals and parents. The manager's determination to be child centred is having a positive impact on the staff, as well as the children and young people who are receiving respite care.

The manager utilises his interactions and hands-on approach with the children and young people when evaluating the service delivery and the provision of high-quality care. Recent file audits have identified some inconsistencies in recording activity, and actions are in place to address this shortfall. Online survey reports, and feedback from stakeholders and independent visitors, are used to evaluate the service and contribute to a continuous journey of improvement in the safety and well-being of the children and young people.

Information about this inspection

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

after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with The Children's homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC037521

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider address: Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S60 1AE

Responsible individual: Mary Jarrett

Registered manager: Darren Higgins

Inspector

Cath Sikakana, social care inspector

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Summary Sheet

Report Title

IRO Annual Report 2018.

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jon Stonehouse – Director – CYPS.

Report Author(s)

Tracey Arnold, Service Manager IRO and Advocacy Service, CYPS.

Ward(s) Affected

All

List of Appendices Included

IRO Annual Report – 2018.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

DLT Leadership team and Corporate Parenting Panel.

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

IRO Annual Report - April 2017 – March 2018

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 DLT and Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to consider the content of the report that offers an overview of the function from 2017-2018, and offer feedback around the key messages and action plan to confirm if these are agreed.

2. Background

- 2.1 This Annual Independent Reviewing Officer's (IRO) Report reflects the compliance, progress and contribution the IRO service has made to the outcomes for Looked after Children in Rotherham and against required statutory legislation as set out in the IRO Handbook and Care Planning Regulations (amended 2015). This includes quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the IRO services for the period of April 1st 2017 to 31st March 2018.

The cyclical nature of a good learning organisation, the journey from compliance to quality and the health of a locality is very much embedded within the functioning of the IRO service. We have seen emerging themes in terms of stability in care planning and management grip and pace. There are much more embedded working relationships between service managers and this is changing cultures within the organisation, which translates to better communication at all tiers, better resolution of issues and swifter and ultimately better outcomes for our children. As service manager for the IRO service over the past seven months, I want to work towards a situation where our IRO's are seen as a critical friend of the organisation. We recognise that we are at the beginning of this journey and the following points are very much integral to that process.

3. Key Issues

The most important key issue for the IRO service is ensuring that it becomes an integral part of the culture within Children's services within Rotherham, as Guardians are an integral part of the Court process.

The service is developing a more sophisticated suit of data to ensure that, together with monthly performance meetings, the IRO service has a footprint in our children's lives which are linked to better outcomes. This will go some way to addressing the question, how effective is the IRO service in its critical friend function.

Children and Young people chairing or co participating in their own reviews is a fundamental development within the service. This will help shift the focus culturally from the review being seen as an administrative task, to a restorative conversation with the young person about their plans. This will link into the

development of more focused care plans and the development of child friendly plans which are formatted and focused on the child.

In order to ensure grip and pace within the IRO service, the escalation and challenge process is being reviewed. This will lie within Liquid Logic and will ensure timely responses from managers are performance managed. This ties into the development of mid-way reviews to purely focus on the progression of the child's plan.

A mature learning organisation knows itself well and a good independent IRO service is integral to this cycle. It is important that the introduction of link teams, having a voice at the AP forum, attendance at residential panel, PLOP and MST FIT, is embedded and the knowledge that comes from the IRO service about the health of the organisation is developed into a threat that runs from senior managers to social workers.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 DLT is asked to consider the contents of the report which includes the changes and progression of the IRO Service over the last 12 months. DLT are also requested to give thought to the action plan included within the report.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 N/A

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 The action plan identifies a number of system and performance data changes which need to be embedded and developed over the next 6 months. I would expect that all the actions identified are addressed and completed by the 1st July 2019.

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 N/A

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 Rebecca Pyle, Team Manager, has had sight of the report.

9. Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 Amy Leach has had sight of the report and has no comments regarding the contents

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 The report offers a clear focus around RMBC's statutory duty to provide an IRO function as determined by The IRO Handbook and Care Planning Regulations.

11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 All IRO's are conscious and take into account Human Rights implications in all their work with young people, children and their carers and parents.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 Within the attached report

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Within the attached report

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Rebecca Wall, HoS Safeguarding, Quality and Learning.
Tracey Arnold, Service Manager IRO and Advocacy Service.

Approvals Obtained from:-

	Named Officer	Date
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services	Neil Hardwick,	Approved on 4 th December 2018.
Assistant Director of Legal Services	Sent to Legal team manager on the 4 th December 2018.	
Head of Procurement (if appropriate)	N/A	
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)	Amy Leach	Approved on 4 th December 2018.

Report Author: Tracey Arnold, Service Manager IRO and Advocacy Service.

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

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

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE
INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER'S
ANNUAL REPORT 2017 – 2018

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This Annual Independent Reviewing Officer's (IRO) Report reflects the compliance, progress and contribution the IRO service has made to the outcomes for Looked after Children in Rotherham and against required statutory legislation as set out in the IRO Handbook and Care Planning Regulations (amended 2015). This includes quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the IRO services for the period of April 1st 2017 to 31st March 2018.

1.2 Each Looked after Child or Young Person in Rotherham has an allocated IRO, which allows the IRO to build a relationship with the child or young person, monitor progress between reviews and address any delay in implementing the child's care plan in a timely manner leading to placement stability and positive impact for the child. The IRO monitors the child's care plan between Looked after Reviews and is informed of any significant events within the child's life to ensure positive outcomes for Rotherham's looked after young people.

2. Purpose of the Service and Legal Context

2.1 The Independent Review Officers' (IRO) service is set within the framework of the updated IRO Handbook, linked to revised Care Planning Regulations and Guidance, introduced in April 2011 and reviewed and amended in 2015. This most recent review strengthened the IRO role in relation to the wider overview of each child's journey through care, including regular monitoring and follow-up between reviews. The IRO has a key role in relation to the improvement of care planning for Children in Care, challenging drift and delay and ensuring the best possible outcomes for individual children.

2.2 The National Children's Bureau (NCB) research 'The Role of Independent Reviewing Officers in England' (March 2014) provides a wealth of information and findings regarding the efficacy of IRO services. The research outlines a number of important recommendations with three having a particular influence on IRO's work plan priorities:

- i) Where IRO's identify barriers to their ability to fulfil their role, or systemic failures in the service to looked after children, they must raise this formally with senior managers. These challenges and the response should be included in the Annual Report.
- ii) IRO's method for monitoring cases and how this activity is recorded should be clarified.
- iii) A review of IRO's core activities and additional tasks should be undertaken. There is a need to establish whether IRO's additional activities compromise independence or capacity.

3. Profile of the IRO Service

3.1 The Rotherham IRO service sits under the auspices of the Safeguarding unit and also includes the foster carer IRO, Right to Rights children's advocacy service and the Independent Visitor service.

3.2 The IRO service operates within the framework of the IRO Handbook. This is statutory guidance issued to Local Authority's in 2011 and is prescriptive in relation to its remit but its primary function is in relation to the improvement, development and quality assurance of the care planning for our Looked after children and to challenge drift and delay in the making and delivering of those plans for children and young people.

3.3 IRO's have an important and critical contribution to the planning for children. We are currently developing a suite of data which will be more attuned to identifying themes and patterns of concerns in respect of individual children and collectively and to make senior leaders aware of where we need to take positive action. IRO's have a duty to prevent drift and delay in care planning but to also ensure that children's plans move with grip and pace. The responsibility of being a Corporate Parent is significant and within Rotherham we have committed as part of our Rotherham Family Approach to ensuring we always ask, 'would this be good enough for our child'. The IRO service is fundamental in ensuring that the Local Authority are not only meeting our children's needs but being also aspirational around their future

3.4 It is our key focus over the next 6 months that the IRO service will be linked and culturally embedded within the social work teams across LAC, Locality and the Disability Service with the implementation of the Link Team agenda. Each IRO has a specific team or area in which to drive good practice. They will use the IRO Handbook as a bench mark for good practice and this will be developed into the suite of data via Insight.

3.5 The IRO service in Rotherham consists of:

- Rebecca Wall – Head of Service for Safeguarding, Quality and Learning,
- Tracey Arnold – Service Manager for the IRO and Advocacy Service
- 9 full time permanent IRO's and 1 agency IRO.
- Full time Foster Care IRO
- We have recently been given permission for a further agency IRO for 12 weeks given the rises in our looked after population.

3.6 The Head of Service and Service manager have been in post for 12 and 4 months respectively and are very much committed to ensuring that the IRO footprint and strategic overview of practice drives both cultural and practice standards change within the Local Authority for our children.

3.7 Through the last quarter of this reporting year we had unprecedented sickness levels within the service with at one point over a third of the Team either off sick or on a phased return to work. This has been unusual for the service and has resulted in challenges around managing demand and timeliness, while also supporting continuing relationships for you young people.

3.8 The team is predominantly staffed with female staff. Of the current staff group 2 are male. The majority of the team are white British ethnic origin, with 2 Black team members. All the IRO's have significant post qualifying experience, most have been team managers and one has been a previous Service manager.

3.9 To support strategic oversight, positive information sharing and critical challenge the Service Manager for the IRO service contributes to a number of the panel processes, to support a joint strategic approach to driving forward good practice and outcomes. This supports a clear avenue

of commutation to allow themes and issues from practice from the IRO to be feedback into strategic decision making.

4. A - Quantitative information - Looked After Children and IRO Service.

4.1 At the end of March 2018, there were 628 Looked after children within Rotherham, which is an increase of 141 at March 2017. This equates to 111.0 per 10,000 population. This places Rotherham above its statistical neighbours (81.3) and the national average (62). Admissions into care continued to increase through the time period reaching an all-time high of 650 in July 2018.

4.2 In terms of context of the IRO service, we have undertaken 1658 reviews, 96.1% being undertaken within timescales. The reviews not held in timescales were due to IRO sickness levels and linked to social workers not completing the necessary pre meeting reports prior to the review. Where this was felt to be detrimental to the child to progress, a decision was made to postpone the full review.

4.3 The IRO handbook recommends that the average caseload for an IRO is between 50 and 70 children. At times through the reporting period and particular in quarter 4 linked to IRO sickness and IRO's on a phased return or off work sick, the caseloads ranged from 74 to 79. It is important to note that the size of caseload alone does not indicate the whole workload for an IRO. There are a number key responsibilities that we expect the IRO to fulfil including visits to children between reviews, midway reviews, attending key strategy or care planning meetings and raising challenge or Escalations where concerns cannot be resolved informally. IRO's complete a Quality and Compliance before every review and write up all their own decisions and minutes. In terms of contributing to the strategic footprint each IRO has a Link Team, completes monthly 'lets' reflect' Audits and contributes to performance clinics.

4.4 The number of children who have ceased to be looked after has been growing month on month from 12 in January, to 14 in February to 26 in March 2018; however, these figures are low in comparison to the number entering care for the same period, 27 in January, 18 in February and 44 in March 2018.

4.5 Analysis of the data together with varied professional opinions as to the increased volume is a complicated and multi-faceted issue which includes the following:

- The legacy issue which is focusing on addressing previous and historical poor practice and performance.
- An increase in the complexity of cases which include CSE, international components including Eastern European families, human trafficking and radicalisation.

- The number of new born babies who are removed from parents who have had multiple children removed over a period of time.
- The outcome of the Children Act section 20 review in the wake of case law Re N, aimed at avoiding the misuse and abuse of section 20 arrangements.
- As a previous inadequate authority, it was necessary to have a robust PLO and LGPM process to manage the initiation of proceedings.
- Emerging and ongoing areas of work including proceedings which are initiated from police operational investigations.

4.6 In order to reduce the number of Looked after children, there have been a number of strategies put in place in order to shift the balance and as corporate parents we need to be mindful of the following:

- The Right Child Right Care strategy ensures that the right planning is in place for each child and that permanency plans, in whatever form, are moved along with pace.
- There has been a cohort of 170 children identified where there is a possibility of a return home to family members. While it has been acknowledged it may not be possible to secure alternative permanence or a return home for all these children, the Right Child Right Care review aim is focused on this group and explore barriers.
- As a learning organisation, we need to re-visit the frontloading, developing family networks and use of family genograms in order to place with family when possible at the right time and without delay.
- We know that the highest numbers of young people who are accommodated under section 20 are young men between the ages of 15 and 17. Frontloading Edge of Care provision has reduced this number and ensured that accommodation becomes a measure of last resort. The IRO Service Manager undertakes a section 20 overview each month and presents to PLOP business meeting.

4.7 IRO's are responsible for ensuring that looked after children achieve permanence and this this occurs without drift or delay. Permanency planning is integral to their role and this is being embedded within the cultural norms of the authority. The percentage of looked after children who have secured permanency through Special Guardianship, Child Arrangement Orders or Adoption increased to 34.6% in March 2018, a rise from 16.7% in January 2018.

5. Participation of Young People:

5.1 In relation to young people engaging and participating in their looked after review, performance data indicates that the vast majority of LAC reviews involved the young person either through their attendance, contributing themselves or using an advocate to act on their behalf or sending a written response but did not want to attend the formal review meeting. In 75.3 % of reviews the IRO has some form of contribution from the child. 18.7% of the children who are looked after are under 4 therefore do not contribute in the way which is captured by the performance data. A further 2.5% of young people did not attend their review or sent their views.

5.2 A critical part of the IRO role is to visit children prior to their review. There has been a drive to focus on these visits since April 2018 and the data shows that this is becoming embedded within the service. From a very low base of 14 recorded visits made to children in April 2017 to monthly figures of between 52 to 75 visits per month in July 2018. There were some recording issues historically where visits were being recorded under IRO case notes and this practice has now been reviewed and we are better able to capture visiting data to review and monitor progress in this area.

5.3 As part of the IRO development for 2018 - 2019, we are working to support IRO's facilitating young people either chairing or co-chairing their reviews. This piece of work is critical to the embedding of the child's voice within their plans and the wider organisation. The service has trialled this with one IRO who prepared a sibling group of 3 to chair their review which resulted in the completion of a care plan for the adults and professionals and a care plan for the children in their own language which they could understand.

6. Permanence Outcomes:

6.1 Permanence outcomes for looked after children is a key way for IRO's to be able to monitor their impact to measure where positive outcomes have been achieved for children and young people.

6.2 The percentage of looked after children who have ceased to be looked after due to Adoption, the making of a Special Guardianship orders or Child arrangements order has been inconsistent ranging from 37.5% in 2014/2015, rising to 40.1% in 2015/2016, reducing to 27.9% in 2016/2017 and dipping to 27.3% in 2017/2018. The Right Child Right Care strategy has been put in place in order to support achieving permanence through permanent orders to family carers, foster carers, or exploring return to

parents'. In terms of development over the next year, early permanence planning remains a key priority explicit in the IRO's responsibilities, ensuring that this is on the agenda for each looked after review. There are good strategic links between the Service Manager for the IRO service and the Service Manager for LAC ensuring a joined up approach to permanency outcomes.

6.3 In terms of the pace of completion of adoptions, the time between a child entering care and being placed with adopters was on average 325 days. This remains below our statistical neighbour average of 511 days and the national average of 558 days and places Rotherham within the top quartile.

6.4 The time between the placement order being made and the match with the adoptive parents is on average 125 days, compared to our statistical neighbour average of 214 days and the national average of 226 days, putting Rotherham in the top quartile.

6.5 Whilst there has been a dip in the numbers of children being adopted within Rotherham, there are 43 children on the Adoption pathway and therefore in a good position to increase numbers in the next year.

6.6 The number of our young people who are care leavers has increased since 2014/2015 performance data resulting in 2017/2018 figures of 257, a rise of 34 since 2016/2017. Despite the increase in the numbers of care leavers, performance remains strong with the number of care leavers with an up to date pathway plan has increased to 70.3%.

6.7 With an increased presence of the Service manager for the IRO's on the Residential panel, held weekly, there is a greater emphasis on collaborative working in relation to preparing our young people to move on to appropriate independent living and this work needs to happen much earlier in the young person's journey. This is one of the priorities of the IRO service over the next reporting period. We are looking at the possibility of a specific IRO who can focus on those young people who are in residential care and those who are moving into semi-independent living to ensure that their plan has grip and pace. This innovation will be the focus of the next 6 months.

7. Care Plans

7.1 The number of children and young people with an up to date plan has increased from a low of 79.1% in 2016/2017 to 89.7% in 2017/2018.

7.2 The IRO plays a key role in ensuring the quality of plans for looked after children in terms of securing good outcomes. As part of the role of driving forward quality outcomes, as well as ensuring compliance, the IRO service completes an IRO Quality Assurance and Compliance checklist prior to each review. This process has been in place since October 2016. It allows the IRO to comment on key areas of the young person's plan and journey through care and offer an overall grading as to the quality of the work completed around the young person. There are 4 gradings; Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate. In order not to duplicate work, where a case is graded as Inadequate this is also regarded as a stage 1 Escalation and a plan is formulated between the IRO and Team manager following the review to support improvement.

7.3 The IRO service undertook 2037 quality and compliance audits from April 2017 to April 2018. Whilst the vast majority were Requires Improvement, the number of Good audits are increasing month on month whilst the 366 which were inadequate triggered a stage 1 escalation and a subsequent action plan.

7.4 Feedback from IRO's in their performance meetings highlights the quality of care plans as the issue which needs to be improved over the next reporting period. This will be a key area of focus for the IRO's to share via the Link Team relationships and will work to address the consistency of good quality care plans for our looked after children.

8. Placement Stability

8.1 The increase in the number of looked after children are part of a national trend and as a result the placement market is increasingly saturated making appropriate matching decisions an increasing challenge. The Intensive Support Programme undertaken by Rotherham Therapeutic Team is having some positive impact on the number of placement disruptions for the most vulnerable and challenging of our young people. As a result of the Right Child Right Care project, it is envisaged that long term placements will be converted to Special Guardianships orders or Child arrangement orders which will have a significant impact on the stable placement performance data over the course of the latter end of 2018. A further 44 children are on track to have Long term matches progressed with their current foster carers in the latter half of 2018, early 2019.

B. Qualitative Information - Achievements and Impact of the IRO Service.

9. IRO Monitoring and Challenge

9.1 The IRO Handbook and Care Planning Regulations (2010) clearly place responsibility upon the IRO to 'monitor the child's case' on an ongoing basis. There is the expectation that the IRO will challenge managers where necessary and 'champion' positive care planning which is timely and relevant in respect of individual children. As a part of the monitoring function, the IRO also has a duty to monitor the performance of the local authority's function as a corporate parent and to identify any areas of poor practice. IRO's seek to ensure good outcomes for children. They do this on an individual basis through the quality assurance role they have within the LAC Review process.

9.2 The IRO's undertake considerable work in working to ensure that they offer a high level of challenge balanced with a high level of support when they see concerns around outcomes and impact for a child. In order to reflect this role, improve the IRO footprint and evidence of restorative challenge we developed the IRO preparation for review tool. The Quality Assurance and Compliance checklist launched in October 2016 was developed for IRO's and CP Conference Chairs to complete before every review to reflect their discussions and view of the child's journey through care as reflected on their file. This includes consideration of multiagency practice around health assessments, PEP's and SDQ's. This has supported us to build on the positive practice or to highlight concerns around cases in a more formal and consistent way. The QAC checklists are graded alongside the Ofsted grading (Outstanding to inadequate) and an overall grading is given. The QAC does consider key areas of compliance but also focuses on quality. A key element of the checklist is the rationale for the grading and the discussion with the SW and Team Manager that takes place around this. When cases are graded by the IRO as inadequate this is regarded as a stage 1 escalation in line with our Challenge and Escalation process and there is an expectation that the IRO develops and action plan in conjunction with the manager to ensure that actions are taken forward.

9.3 **Table 1** below highlights the progress that has been achieved over the past few months in terms of the reportable IRO footprint. There has been a real drive in terms of the visits to children and the number of midway reviews being undertaken each month by the IRO service.

9.4 Midway reviews are an integral part of the check and challenge which IRO's bring to the progress of children's care plans. At mid points

between children's reviews, the IRO will undertake an exercise with the social worker in order to check on the progress of the decisions and recommendations of the review. The key aim is to minimise drift and delay in achieving agreed outcomes. As we progress through the compliance to quality journey, we know the IRO midway reviews become more embedded within the culture of the organisation and have an impact on the Right Child Right Care cohort.

9.5 The trajectory of visits to children and midway reviews has increased throughout August and September to 62 visits to children being accomplished in September and 69 midway reviews being undertaken in the same month. The challenge for the IRO service over the next reporting period is how we measure the effectiveness of this activity in terms of the progression of the right plan for a child.

Table 1

	Visits	Midway Reviews	LAC Reviews
Apr-17	14	0	101
May-17	28	0	139
Jun-17	45	0	136
Jul-17	33		138
Aug-17	24	0	119
Sep-17	40	1	146
Oct-17	30	1	153
Nov-17	56	33	142
Dec-17	27	9	125
Jan-18	58	26	173
Feb-18	25	17	140
Mar-18	53	55	166
Total	433	142	1678

9.6 **Table 2** below reflects the Quality Assurance and Compliance Checklists that have been completed and their grades. They are completed on the child's file and grading reflects the IRO's view of the QAC on the file and care planning process.

Table 2

Month	Good	Requires Improvement	Improvement / Inadequate	Grading Not Recorded	Total
Apr-2017	0	2	0	91	93
May-2017	9	64	29	11	113
Jun-2017	10	65	28	14	117
Jul-2017	7	74	42	5	128
Aug-2017	7	69	32	4	112
Sep-2017	11	97	20	8	136
Oct-2017	13	101	23	5	142
Nov-2017	17	73	18	8	116
Dec-2017	10	61	12	0	83
Jan-2018	23	94	15	0	132
Feb-2018	21	71	10	1	103
Mar-2018	36	75	25	0	136
Total	164	846	254	147	1411

9.7 The focus over the coming months is to create a pathway via the existing performance meetings, Senior manager meetings and Corporate Parenting panel whereby senior managers and partners within children services can be briefed on themes emerging from this date and to tie this into Quality learning and Development for our staff.

9.8 The Thematic headline messages from the escalations are as follows:

- Stage 1 escalations between IRO's and team managers are generally focused upon no pre meeting reports being prepared for a

LAC review by the social worker, reports for the review not being shared with parents and young people prior to the review, decisions and recommendations not being acted upon and not being communicated to the parties who attend the review when a recommendation is in dispute and issues in terms of the progression of care plans.

- Escalations which are progressed within stages 2, 3 and 4 tend to focus upon fundamental differences in relation to the progression of the care plan and drift within that process, the progression of our young people to semi-independent living and the support which is wrapped around such a move and delays in the progression of SGO's and child arrangement orders.

9.9 The thematic headline messages from the Q and C audits are as follows:

- pre meeting reports not prepared for the LAC review, reports not shared with parents and young people,
- insufficient direct work undertaken with young people,
- lack of management oversight recorded,
- disputes about the frequency of supervision,
- managerial oversight of the decisions and recommendations of the review,
- no up to date care plan and little evidence of review and progression of this plan,
- Where the Q and C's are graded Good or Requires improvement, there is good evidence of frequent supervision and managerial oversight, decisions made in timely ways and any delay gripped and actioned, the voice of the child is paramount and informs the care planning process, contingency plans are evident and good interagency working informs assessments and plans.

10. Supervision of the IRO's

10.1 There is a permanent Service Manager for the IRO service who has been in post since April 2018. All IRO's have monthly supervision in addition to an open door policy in terms of practice issues. A new supervision template has been designed which focuses on performance issues whilst encompassing the signs of safety agenda. Supervision is now themed each month to ensure that IRO's have grip and act with pace in order to drive forward care plans. Since April there has been a focus on those children in residential care, those whose plan is for permanency, and those young people between 15 and 17 who are moving onto semi-independent living. All the IRO's have had a PDR for 2018.

10.2 The Service Manager for the IRO service also has line management of the Advocacy and Independent Visitor service and the IRO for fostering. This equates to 15 direct reports. In terms of the provision of supervision for the Advocacy service, the development of group supervision in line with our restorative practice agenda will be our focus for the next year, with additional team management support.

11. The Challenge and Escalation Process (Formally the Dispute resolution process – DRP)

11.1 A review of the Dispute resolution process for IRO's and Escalation process for conference chairs found that issues were raised around compliance but there needed to be a greater emphasis on the overarching needs and outcomes for the young people we work with. Changes in the level of management also meant that the stages of the Dispute Process needed to also be reviewed. As a result in September 2016 the DRP process for IRO's and Escalation process for CC's became the Challenge and Escalation process. The emphasis remains on offering high challenge and acknowledges that Escalation is needed to progress cases where things cannot be resolved, but the focus was also around not just considering compliance but consider the outcomes and impacts and if these were being achieved for our young people. This united formal process for IRO's and CP Conference Chair's reflects the drive to ensure that there is a clear and consistent evaluation of the impact of the services and interventions we provide for our most vulnerable children and young people. The key aim is to ensure the outcome for the child is the key focus and that any barriers to this are raised, where needed at the most senior points in the authority and if required via CAFCASS and the Court process for IRO's.

11.2 In Rotherham this means:

The stages reflect the level of management where the concerns are raised and the identified response time.

- Stage 1 - IRO to Team manager (1 day to respond)
- Stage 2 - Ops manager for IRO's to Service manager (5 days)
- Stage 3 - Head of Service for Safeguarding to Head of Service (4 days)
- Stage 4 - Head of Service Safeguarding to Deputy Director / Director (5 days)
- Stage 5 – Referral to CAFCASS

11.3 The process should provide for no more than 20 working days, to resolve the issue. In practice however it can take longer due to the complexity of the issues raised via the process.

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Contact with CAFCASS
April 2017	23	5	1	1	0
May 17	29	4	3	0	0
June 17	28	3	6	0	0
July 17	42	1	7	2	0
August 17	32	2	0	3	0
September 17	20	1	0	0	0
October 17	23	1	0	0	0
November 17	18	1	0	0	0
December 17	12	0	0	0	0
January 18	15	0	0	0	0
February 18	10	0	0	0	0
March 18	25	2	2	0	0
Total	277	20	19	6	0

11.4 The above table reflects that stage 2 escalations remain high but there is a very clear reduction from September. Of significance is that the stability in the CIC workforce has become much more apparent to the IRO service from May 2017 and the lower level of stage 1's and Inadequate QAC's for September 2017, combined with a sustained strong Requires Improvement cohort, potentially reflects the impact of this for the children reviewed, recognising that supporting change for this group of young people is not always immediate and needs to be sustained to show an impact for a child. There has also been a reduction on the theme around changes in social worker and management supervision becoming much less apparent.

11.5 The main issues that have been raised in stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the escalation process have related to the following issues, which seem to be ongoing themes for the year.

- Quality and clarity of care plan
- Concern around delay in legal care plans and the lack of final evidence and care plans being discussed with the IRO,
- Some Decisions and recommendations from reviews not being acted upon and no robust mechanism in place where decisions made at reviews are not agreed by the LAC/locality service.
- Concerns around the regulation of placement with parents and management of risk related to this
- Lack of appropriate education provision
- Concern around placement suitability.
- Concerns re transition to adults services
- Issues around contact that need to be addressed
- Impact of changes of social worker on planning
- Provision of service – access to records

11.6 A key area of focus is on improving the quality of care plans. While some plans are excellent and use the voice of the child to evidence the outcomes identified, this is not consistent across the service. As a key document that supports and defines the outcomes for children we need to ensure this a key area of development work with our field work Team Manager and Social workers.

11.7 A positive progression has been around the confidence that the IRO service has and support from senior management to raise issues at a more strategic level. This is evidenced in the table above with an increase over the last 12 months through the increase in stage 4's. The key themes raised have been linked to placement sufficiency and suitability for some of our most vulnerable young people with the most complex level of need. This includes issues around transition and also around ensuring the right legal status and support is in place. The escalation is tracked until addressed and IROs display tenacity around retaining oversight until the outcome is achieved. Senior Leadership have been clear in ensuring that while restorative conversations can happen, they want to be sighted on key barriers and this commitment has supported a focus.

11.8 These figures do not reflect the full extent of the work done by IROs to flag up issues as part of the regular preparation before reviews. Intervening early and monitoring between the reviews ensures that routine issues are resolved in a timely manner and before the reviews take place.

12. Identifying good practice and problem resolution :

12.1 Of note, IRO's have noted improvements in relation to the timeliness of visits the increase the quality of contact between children, young people and their allocated Social Workers and completion of Personal Education Plans. Supervision and management oversight has also been much more prevalent on files and is clearly supporting the development of better social work practice.

12.2 A further significant shift over the past 5 month has been a reduction in issues around staffing changes and management oversight. Escalations around this have reduced and the vast majority are around ensuring plans are around ensuring plans are progressed and placements offer the right level of support to match children's current and future needs. IRO's continue to be clear they are not decision makers but that play a pivotal role in ensuring decisions are well evidenced and that assessments reflected needs of children and place them at the heart of what we do.

13. Feedback from Practice Observations of each IRO

13.1 Since the permanent service manager was appointed in April 2018, each IRO has been observed chairing a review. This practice will be undertaken at least once a year. In terms of practice, the following themes have been identified:

- IRO's are authoritative in reviews,
- IRO's complete a quality audit before each review and prepares fully for each review,
- IRO's communication with children and young people is good and they participate in their reviews when they attend.
- There is challenge within reviews from IRO's.
- IRO's are inclusive of parents, carers, professionals and children within those reviews,
- Our focus over the coming months needs to be the cultural embedding of visits to children prior to a review and how we communicate with those children who are placed at a distance in residential care. A clear focus will be using this contact to make a difference in having the child's voice heard in their review and care plan

14. Any resource issues putting at risk the delivery of quality services to our Looked After Children

14.1 At the time of writing, Rotherham Children services has 650 looked after children. This is higher than our South Yorkshire neighbouring Local Authority's in Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster. Rotherham has 9 permanent IRO's and 1 agency IRO therefore most caseloads are between 74 and 79. This is higher than the recommended caseload specified in the statutory guidance for IRO's of between 50 and 70.

14.2 The IRO team has been through a challenging year but with the addition of a permanent Service Manager, there is a real drive to effect strategic and practice change and embed the IRO footprint, however, there are real barriers to ensuring that our footprint is embedded consistency across the service given the continuing rise on our looked after population.

15. Strategic and Practice Influence of the IRO Service:

15.1 Within Rotherham, there are cultural changes that are needed to ensure that the IRO service is better embedded within the fabric of the organisation. There are a number of initiatives which ensure that our strategic footprint is integral to our corporate parenting overview:

- The IRO Service Manager sits on and is an integral part of Residential placement panel which monitors our children's placements and more recently sits on the Public Law Outline panel which gate keeps the initiation of legal proceedings for children's services. In addition, the Service Manager is part of the group who is responsible for the MST – FIT initiative.
- The IRO Service Manager will attend one LAC performance meeting a month to ensure that issues from IRO performance meetings are disseminated amongst practitioners and drive quality and performance.
- Formal links are being developed between the IRO Service Manager and the Commissioning team within children's services to review the quality of placement provision for the younger children who are placed within a residential unit. There is a check and challenge function which reviews the effectiveness of the IRO overview in such circumstances.
- The development of a suite of IRO performance data that specifically relates to the IRO service supports themes from the quality audits undertaken before each review in order to drive practice within LAC and locality services. This will link into monthly meetings with Service Managers for LAC and Locality in order to discuss practice gaps, drive timely permanency planning and ensure that the right child has the right care.
- In terms of strategic drive, the IRO service is able to report directly into the Senior Management Team and Director Leadership team meetings in terms of practice challenges for the coming year.
- The Link team initiative will start to embed good practice in terms of the review planning process for children and the presence of IRO's within those link teams at times of the month will strengthen the communication between IRO's and social workers and team managers ensuring that there is better resolution of issues when they arise and the development of the role of the IRO as a critical friend.

16. Challenges ahead:

16.1 Based on the data and issues raised from the IRO's, the main issues for Corporate Parents in the coming year are the following:

- i) Rising numbers of looked after children. At the time of writing Rotherham Council is corporate parent to 650 children and young people.
- ii) The efficiency of Early Help services, including the Edge of Care team in preventing the movement of children into Children's Services.
- iii) The effectiveness of the Duty Service within Children's Services, to anchor threshold for legal proceedings and to embed front loading into practice in terms of working family genograms.
- iv) Placement pressures. The stock of foster carers needs to increase. This has two unintended consequences; the increased use of placing children within residential units when their care plan is foster care and the adjournment of court proceedings at the initial hearing if a placement cannot be guaranteed.
- v) The reduction and eradication of residential placements for children under the age of 12 years old.
- vi) The development of cultural changes within the Local Authority in terms of the IRO role to a place where they are viewed as the critical friend and advocate footprint for the child or young person.
- vii) The movement of our young people into semi-independent living, the support which is provided and the planning which is needed to enable our young people to thrive in independent living. How can we replicate the family support for our young people, which we would provide for our own children?

17. Annual work programme and areas for development for the IRO service between April 2018 and March 2019:

17.1 There are a number of priorities for the IRO service over the next 12 months.

- **To continue to build on the performance framework for IRO's to provide a clearer oversight of the challenge that the IRO service offers and to link this into the LAC performance meetings. Timescale – implemented.**

A performance framework has been developed and set up for the IRO service. This is based on the model of performance meetings which is prominent and key within other areas of Children's services. Performance meetings are held monthly and IRO's produce a report on a monthly basis which feeds into that meeting which focuses on the performance data including reports within timescales, escalations raised with social care,

themes from quality and compliance forms completed before each review and minutes undertaken within timescales. Over the next 12 months, this will be embedded to ensure that each IRO owns their own performance data and is more able therefore to address gaps within children's care planning.

- **To continue to develop the role of the IRO service to prioritise the timely Permanence Planning for children by ensuring that this is explicit in their responsibilities.**

Timescale – 8 weeks

The development of themed supervision to ensure that each child with a plan of permanency is formulated at the first review and grip and pace becomes embedded practice within this area. This will ensure that our children are moved onto permanency in a more timely way.

- **To enable children and young people to chair and co participate in their own reviews.**

Timescales – 2 months

- **To formulate and embed the Signs of Safety agenda within children and young people's reviews.**

Timescales – 2months

- **Progression of Link teams.**

Timescales – implemented.

To ensure that good practice and standards are consistently evident within Looked after and locality teams, the Link Teams format ensures that each team within Children's Services has a named IRO who will drive good practice based on the IRO handbook.

- **To embed the Challenge and Escalation process in Liquid Logic to ensure that disputes and challenges to children's care plans are managed with grip and pace.**

Timescales – 3 months

- **Further embed the IRO footprint onto child's files. This includes visits to children prior to their review, midway reviews to ensure that children and young people's care plans have clear trajectory and pace and clear, concise case recordings of IRO activity which relates to impact analysis and better outcomes for our children.**

- **Working collaboratively with social work locality and Looked after children's teams to ensure that the "Right Child, Right care" agenda is embedded. This will ensure that the right permanency plan is progressed with the right oversight by the IRO service.**

- **Working with social work teams to reduce the need to place children within residential establishments unless there is a sound impact/outcomes based rationale.**

- **Work to ensure that the basics are done right and done well including ensuring that reviews are undertaken within timescales, maximise the contribution of parents and carers in reviews, that quality audits are undertaken prior to each review and team managers and social workers act upon those audits and minutes are distributed within 20 working days of the review.**

Tracey Arnold,
Service Manager,
IRO and Advocacy Service.
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
September 2018.

Summary Sheet

Report Title

Rights To Rights Annual Report 2018.

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jon Stonehouse – Director – CYPS.

Report Author(s)

Tracey Arnold, Service Manager IRO and Advocacy Service.

Ward(s) Affected

All

List of Appendices Included

Rights to Rights Annual Report 2018.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Senior manager team and Corporate Parenting Panel.

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Annual LADO Report April 2017 – March 2018

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 DLT and Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to consider the content of the report that offers an overview of the function from 2017-2018, and offer feedback around the key messages and action plan to confirm if these are agreed.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Annual Rights2rights Report reflects the progress and contribution the R2R service has made to the outcomes for Looked after Children in Rotherham through the provision of the advocacy service and Independent visitors (IV's) scheme. The criteria for the IV's scheme is clearly set out in the Children and Young Persons Act (2008) which places a duty on us to make Independent Visitors available to all children in care if this is deemed to be in their best interests.

The advocacy offer for all young people looked after in Rotherham is that every child over the age of 5 who becomes looked after by the Local Authority, will have the opportunity of a visit by one of the three Rights to Rights Advocates. This should take place within 20 days of the date the child becomes looked after. They will also have the opportunity to have an Independent Visitor if this is their wish.

The length of time the Rights to Rights Advocate and the Independent Visitor remains involved with the young person is very much led by the young person. Following the initial visit a young person can self-refer or be referred by any professional parent /carer involved with the child. This service continues to be offered after they have ceased to be looked after and whatever their age.

3. Key Issues

In the reporting period until April 2018, the key reasons why a young person would want an Advocate are the following:

- Support to make a complaint,
- Issues in relation to their placement/accommodation,
- To have their wishes and feelings heard in relation to contact,
- Issues with their social worker,
- Help with financial entitlement,
- Issues with a change of their school.

The main areas for development for the service are:

- Balancing the visibility of the Advocates, alongside offering the young person confidentiality. An area of focus is being able to evidence outcomes for our children due to our involvement. The service needs a more sophisticated suite of data in order to track the outcomes of the services involvement and

answer the question; what difference do we make to those young people we are involved with?

- The profile of the service needs to become embedded within the organisation beyond the Looked after children service. After the establishment of link teams within the IRO and CP chair service, a similar approach within the Advocacy service will ensure that as soon as a child becomes LAC, an advocate becomes an integral part of their network.
- A third key issue is to address the Advocacy services and IV involvement with those of our looked after children who are not White British in culture and ethnicity. Advocates and IV's are predominantly involved with White British young people and therefore our children of diverse cultures may not be receiving the help and support they need. Overcoming the barriers to this issue is one of the service priorities over the coming year and has already started within the recruitment of number of IV's from diverse cultures.
- Links with the children's disability services are a key issue in terms of priorities. Children with disabilities are underrepresented within the Advocacy service and therefore forging links with the service and having a link team member attached to that service will ensure that some of our most vulnerable children and young people have an independent voice.
- At the present time, the complaints process remains the only avenue which children and young people can access in order to escalate their concerns. The introduction of an Escalation process akin to that of the IRO does will give a formal structure to concerns that are raised to ensure minimal delay and drift for our young people.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 DLT and Corporate Parenting panel are asked to consider the contents of the report which includes the proposals for the improvement plan over the next twelve months.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 N/A

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 The action plan identifies a number of system and performance data changes which need to be embedded and developed over the next 6 months.

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 N/A

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 Rebecca Pyle, Team Manager has been sent the report for approval.

9. Human Resources Implications

9.1 Amy Leach has had sight of the report and has no comments regarding the contents

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 The report offers a clear focus around RMBC’s statutory duty to provide an Advocacy function.

11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 Advocates are conscious of and take into account Human Rights implications in all of their interactions with children, young people and their carers and parents.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 Within the attached report

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Within the attached report

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Rebecca Wall, HoS Safeguarding, Quality and Learning.
Tracey Arnold, Service Manager IRO and Advocacy Service.

Approvals Obtained from:-

	Named Officer	Date
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services	Neil Hardwick.	Approved on 4 th December 2018
Assistant Director of Legal Services	Sent to Rebecca Pyle, Team manager on 4 th December 2018 .	
Head of Procurement (if appropriate)	N/A	
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)	Amy Leach	Approved on 4 th December 2018.

Report Author: Tracey Arnold, Service Manager IRO and Advocacy Service.

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

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

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

Right2Rights's (R2R's)

ANNUAL REPORT 2017- 2018

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This Annual Rights2rights Report reflects the progress and contribution the R2R service has made to the outcomes for Looked after Children in Rotherham through the provision of the advocacy service and Independent visitors (IV's) scheme. The criteria for the IV's scheme is clearly set out in the Children and Young Persons Act (2008) which places a duty on us to make Independent Visitors available to all children in care if this is deemed to be in their best interests. In relation to Advocacy this is offered to any child or young person who is or has ever been looked after no matter their age or the length of time they were looked after. This report includes quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the R2R's service for the period of April 2017 to March 2018.

2.0 Purpose and context of the Service

2.1 The Children's Rights Service within RMBC commenced in 1999 with the introduction of the Children's Rights Officer post which has gradually evolved into the current Right 2 Rights Service. We provide services for children and young people who are, or who have been, looked after by the local Authority. The demand for the service of the Rights to Rights workers has grown with the increase in the number of children and young people who have become looked after. At the end of March 2016 there were 432 children in Rotherham's care, at the end of March 2017 there were 490 and at the end of March 2018 the number had risen to 628. At the time of writing, the figure as at October 2018 is 648.

2.2 Ofsted commented on the Rights to Rights service in both their reports in 2014 and again in 2018. The Ofsted Inspection in October, 2014 highlighted:

"The Right 2 Rights Service provides independent visitors and advocacy services, which children like"

Ofsted noted the following in their inspection report in 2017-2018:

“All children looked after have the opportunity to access a comprehensive advocacy offer. The independent visitor scheme is well promoted and take-up is good. Independent visitors have extensive training to ensure that they give children consistent support. Children are well supported to make complaints.”

– Ofsted 2017 para 39.

2.3 The 3 main elements of the Rights to Rights service within Rotherham are as follows;

- **Advocacy** - Advocacy provides; information, advice, representation and support. Looked after children and young people are empowered to express their views, wishes, feelings and needs in creative and informative ways. If they are struggling to or are unable or unwilling to share their views with professionals or carers the aim of the service is to empower, support and assist them, to have their voice and views heard and taken into account.
- **Independent Visitor Service** - Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council is duty bound by legislation to provide a Volunteer Independent Visitor Service for looked after children and young. The Children and Young Persons Act (2008) places a duty on us to make Independent Visitors available to all children in care if this is deemed to be in their best interests.
- **Rights and raising awareness for young people looked after** – to support young people to know their rights and entitlements and provide support where need to challenge the Local Authority on a case by case basis, in line with these rights and entitlements. The service also plays a key role in escalating cases where there are barriers to young people having full access and offering thematic feedback to ensure that services are improved and the voice for children is heard through service and practice development.

3.0 Profile of the Rights to Rights Service

3.1 The Rotherham R2R's Service is situated within the Safeguarding Unit. Other teams and services within the Unit include Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's), Foster Care IRO, Child Protection Conference Chairs, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the Public Law Outline Manager. Being managed within the Safeguarding Unit offers a level of independence from the case management function for Children in care (CIC), but also provides positive link with the independent function of the IRO and LADO, with whom the service regularly works to raise and resolve issues that have been raised by young people in relation to being looked after.

3.2 In addition to the core function of the role of providing advocacy and independent visitor service the Rights2Rights service is also at times engaged as a 'the voice of the child' and brings this knowledge to:

- Meetings on individual cases such as strategy meetings, planning meetings, meetings under LADO procedures and TAP meetings.
- Training and development, including inputting to the training of Independent Visitors and Volunteers.
- Assisting with addressing of complaints and investigations.
- Supporting staff induction and awareness rising across the service.
- Highlighting good practice (by workers/partner agencies/carers), as well as feeding back evidence of poor practice, concerns about placements or safeguarding issues

4.0 Developing a Stable and Permanent Team

4.1 The Right 2 Rights Service is made up of the following staff:

- Rebecca Wall - Head of Service for Safeguarding.
- Tracey Arnold – Service Manager for the IRO and Advocacy Service.
- Annette Marshall – Advocate and Independent Visitor co-ordinator, (Full Time).
- Peter Storer – Advocate, (Full time).
- Sally Ann Fisher – Advocate, (30 hours).
- Team manager – long term absence
- Anna Wells – Business Support.

5.0 In relation to measuring impact we have asked ourselves?

What are our children and young people saying about the Rights 2 Rights service? How effective are we at promoting change for our young people in terms of the things that matter to them? What impact are we having on the lives of our individual children?

Here are some of the comments from our young people:

"I knew you would help me Sally, you always do, you sort things out when I need them, proper mint advocate".

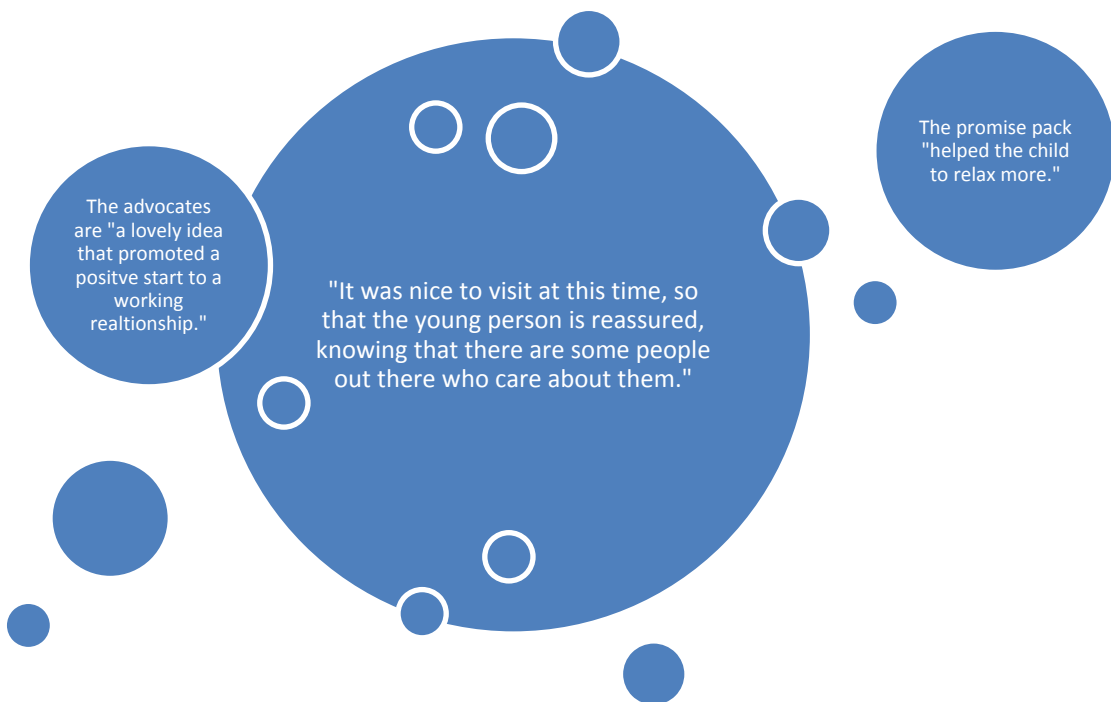
"Well, you are really good at your job. You are great and hard working".

"Guess what, passport has arrived. Phew!! Thank you so much for your help. You have been brilliant".

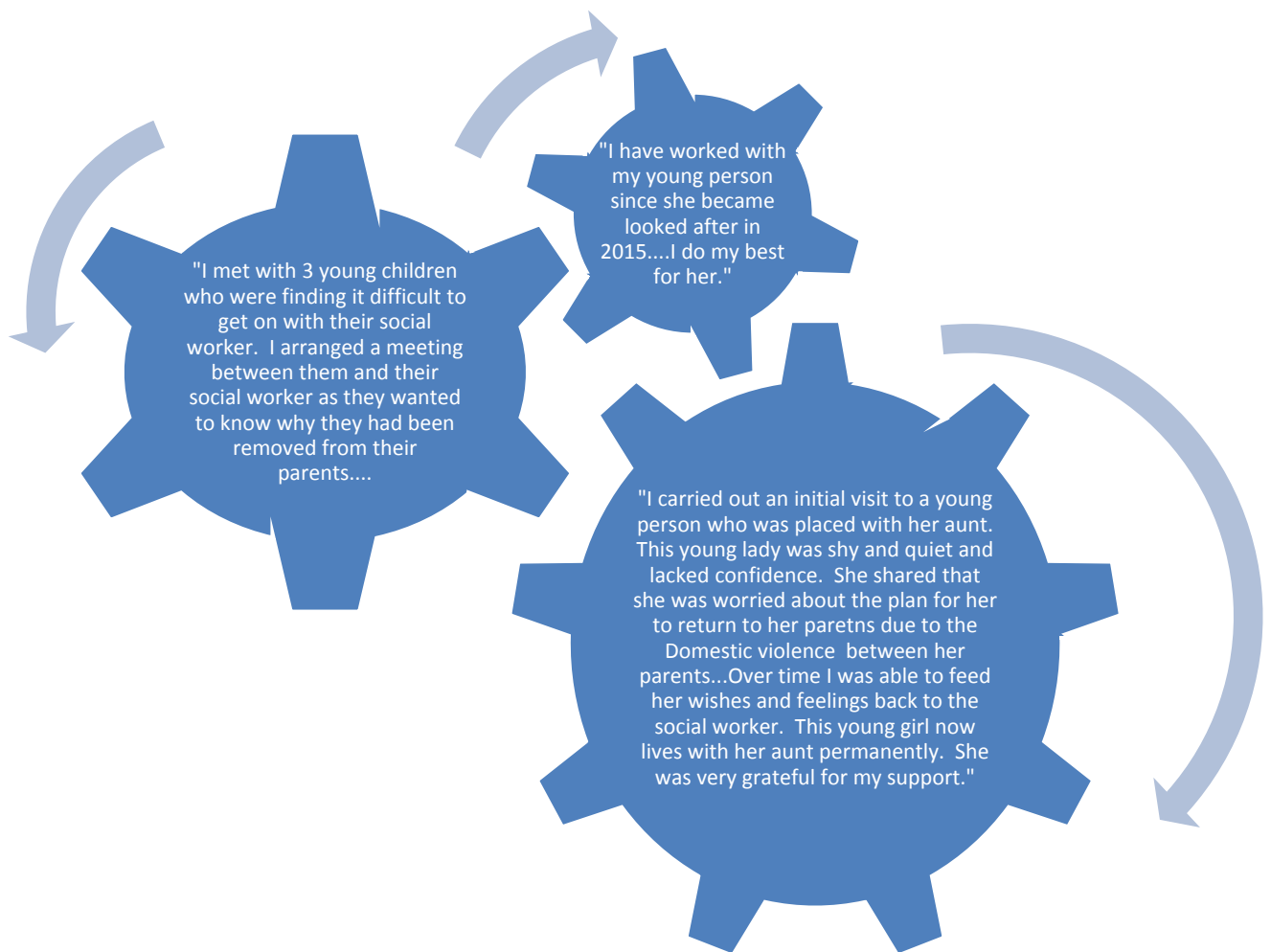
"The promise pack is a good idea as it tells me what I am entitled to and helps me to understand why I am in this situation."

"Pete introduced me to the LAC council and organised for me to attend, I was scared at first but its great and gave me lots of new friends."

In terms of the impact highlighted in feedback from the foster carers for our young people;



It's the little things that matter and make a difference. For our Looked after Children, it's exactly the same. The following are some of the ways in which the Advocacy service has made a difference and an impact to our children and the quotes are taken from our advocates:





6.0 Key areas of work and Impact.

6.1 In order that our Looked After children are afforded the opportunity to have an Advocate, every child over the age of 5 will have an initial visit from an Advocate within the 6 weeks of becoming Looked after. A Promise Pack is given to them which has all the information they need in order to ensure they understand their rights in terms of their Looked after status. Their foster carers are encouraged to explore the information with the children.

6.2 From the 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018, the Advocacy service undertook 115 initial visits to our children and saw 148 children in total. Only 3 children refused a visit by the service.

6.3 In terms of those children and young people who go on to have an Advocacy service, where do our referrals come from:

Source of Advocacy Referrals	Numbers
Made by the Young person after the Advocates initial visit.	19
From Social Workers.	14
From IRO's.	13
From foster carers.	16
From PA's,	1
From parents,	1
From NHS professionals,	2
From the Children's Commissioners Office,	2 – This figure is from the website "Help at Hand."

6.4 The vast majority of our referrals come from four different sources. We work closely to maintain these working relationships with these groups. We need to consider further awareness raising with the other groups so that more of our children have access to the Advocacy service to enable their voices to influence their plans and agreed outcomes.

6.5 The following table gives a snap shot of the working figures for the Advocacy Service within the reporting period:

Advocacy Referrals from April 2017 to March 2018.	Numbers
New referrals received.	68
Referrals closed.	50
Young person declined following referral or wanted referral withdrawn.	9
Ongoing Advocacy over 1 year.	33
Cases carried forward from the previous reporting year.	73
Active Advocacy cases year ending March 2018.	82

6.6 Whilst the number of referrals received for the year ending March 2018 totalled 68, in the 6 months to October 2018, there have been a further 35 referrals for Advocacy made. The number of advocacy referrals has increased overall from a total of 39 in 2014, 56 in 2015, and 46 in 2016.

6.7 There has been an increase in the duration that advocacy cases have been open. This has increased from 13 in the last reporting period, to 33 in 2017-2018. There are a number of factors which contribute towards this; the complexity of some of the complaints and advocacy issues and that complex needs of some of our young people who do feel that Advocacy supports them to have their voice heard.

6.8 We can only help develop the service across the LAC, IRO and Advocacy service when we know the nature of the issues which our children and

young people want an Advocate to help address. The following are the themes over the last reporting period:

Themes and issues from Referrals for the Advocacy Service.	Numbers
To be supported to make a complaint.	19
To be listened to around concerns about their accommodation/placement.	14
To have their wishes and feelings heard around issues of contact with their birth family.	12
Issues with their social worker or change of social worker.	9
To be able to change school or go to a school of their choice.	8
To be supported to access legal advice.	4
Help in accessing financial entitlements.	4
Other issues.	9

6.9 The main focus of the issues which our advocates represent for the young people are primarily around the child or young person having their voice heard sufficiently enough to make a difference to their lives and what matters to them. Having their voices heard around contact is a consistent theme from the previous reporting period. Young people sharing concerns about their accommodation and placement is also another expected reoccurring theme.

6.10 The basic building blocks to ensure that our young people mature into well rounded and emotionally intelligent adults is to have their voice heard and for that voice to make a difference when at all possible. Advocates are therefore fundamental in supporting our children and young people on their journey to adulthood.

7.0 Independent Visitor Service

7.1 The Independent Visitor (IV) role is that of a befriender. Once trained and matched with a child or young person they will agree a plan of visiting with the young person. Given the nature of their befriending role they do not have a work plan; the focus of the work is to build the young person's support network outside of the professional world. They are expected to attend support sessions at six weekly intervals and an annual review is completed by the IV coordinator. Where there are any worries or concerns they would link with the Rights to Rights service to discuss. If they have immediate safeguarding concerns out of hours, they would link with the carer if appropriate and or Out of Hours to ensure action is taken if needed to keep a young person safe.

7.2 The relationship is a confidential one and information is only shared if the child or young person agrees, dependent on age and understanding, or if safeguarding issues arise. The volunteers receive no payment, only

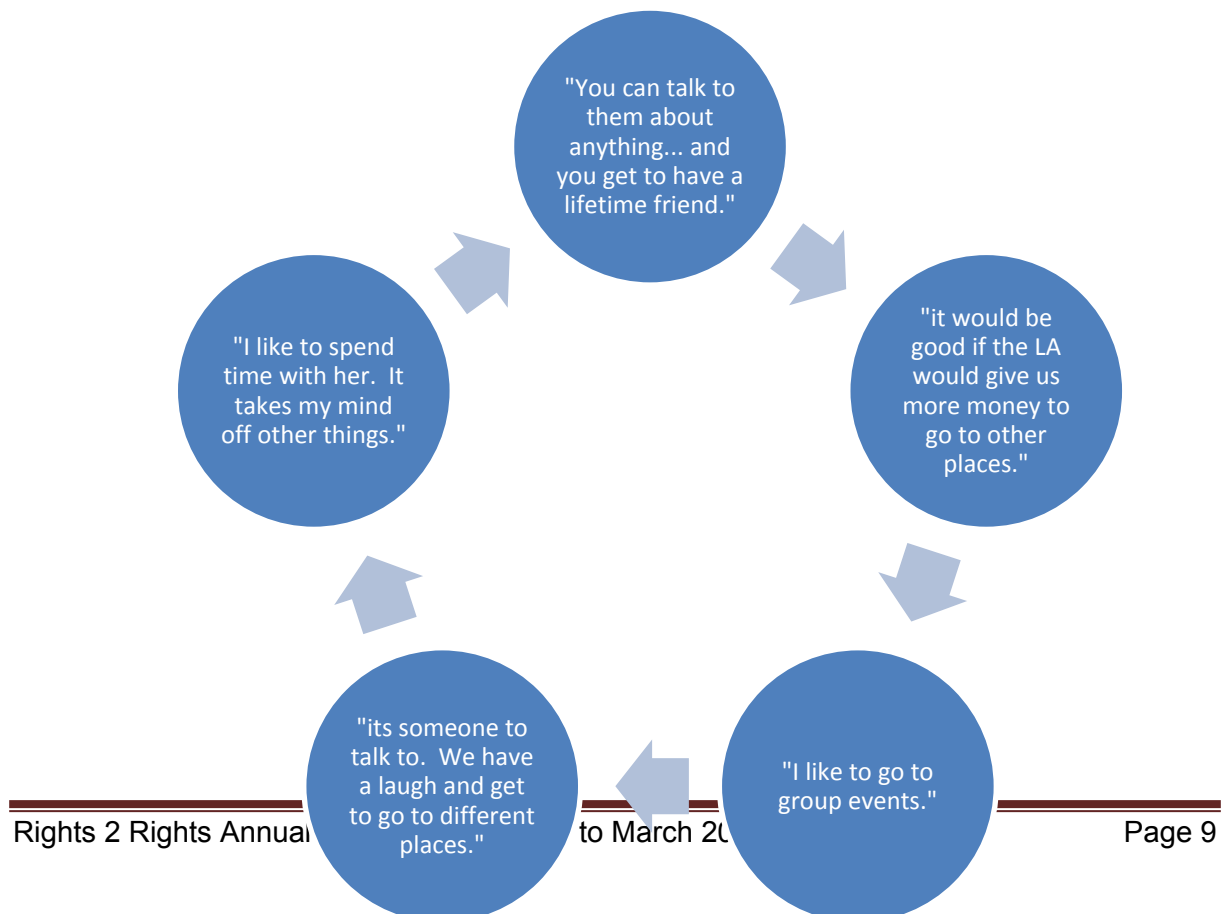
expenses around travel and activities that are agreed with the young person, as part of their plan.

7.3 Independent visitors within RMBC are recruited on the basis of a making a long term commitment to a child of at least 2 years. Generally we support the young people having time with their IV fortnightly for approximately two hours, although this can vary as once the relationship is established the service is child-led. Distance can also be a barrier.

7.4 Support and advice is offered and available to the IV's is via the Rights to Rights service through the week and if they have any safeguarding concerns at any other time they will discuss with the carer (if appropriate) and with Out of hours if advice or action is needed. They are also expected to attend one of the 6 weekly support groups that offer a time and place for the IV's to meet and confidentially seek additional support. The sessions also support further training and awareness rising around key issues such as complaints, transitions and leaving care issues.

7.5 While the service is in place until the age of 18 we do not automatically cease the contact. For some of your young vulnerable people, especially those with a high level of additional needs, this is a difficult time, so we seek to reduce the contact slowly and are in discussion with Adults to see if this support can and should continue for some.

8.0 What did our young people say about having an independent visitor and what was the impact on their lives?



9.0 What did our Independent Visitors say about their role with our Young People:



10.0 What does the IV service look like within Rotherham?

10.1 The IV service is coordinated via a senior advocate in the Rights to Rights Team with the support of the Business officer and the Service manager for IRO's and Advocacy.

10.2 There are currently thirteen independent visitors who are fully trained within Rotherham. There are currently five adults who have been successful at interview who are in the process of being matched and there are a further sixteen children waiting to have an Independent Visitor allocated to them. Of those 16 children, the vast majority are of White/British ethnicity, only 3 coming from an ethnic minority and 1 dual heritage young person. In terms of ages, the overwhelming majority are aged between 9 and 17.

11.0 Recruitment of Independent Visitors

11.1 There are currently 16 children on the waiting list for an independent visitor.

11.2 The training programme consists of 10 weekly sessions of 2 hours each, plus First Aid training, safeguarding training and Attachment Theory and DBS checks. The training is comprehensive and the sessions comprise of the following elements:

Week	Subject
1	Introduction to the role of volunteer independent visitor
2	Journey through care / adoption / out of authority
3	Social worker role
4	Rotherham Right2Rights Advocacy Services
5	Independent reviewing officer role / supporting the process
6	Health & wellbeing of LAC
7	Residential services
8	Fostering service
9	The virtual school
10	Independent visitor and young person

11.3 The process previously included a follow-up interview midway through the course, but the last programme utilised a questionnaire. This provides feedback to ensure the course is meeting the needs of attendees. Ongoing feedback is sought after each session with attendees completing an evaluation sheet; the following sessions are amended where necessary based on this information.

11.4 At the end of the 10 week course, a final interview is held to ensure that the requirements have been met and that the IV is happy to progress and to start discussing their matching requirements and preferences. Following this the Volunteer Co-ordinator will consider these preferences with the children on the waiting list and a follow up meeting will be arranged to discuss potential matches with the visitor.

11.5 It is understood that some Local Authorities have briefer courses than RMBC, but one of the aims of the course is to ensure that there is a testing of their commitment, given that we want to ensure they are serious about

the role, have some knowledge of the world they looked after young people experience and to have a support group around them that they feel invested in. The aim is that any person who drops out does this during the training process rather than at the matching stage.

12.0 Improvement Plan

12.1 The Rights2Rights Service Plan prioritised eight points to concentrate on between April 2017 to March 2018, which incorporated the following:

- a) To continue to improve the awareness of all children and young people who become looked after of their right to Advocacy and how to access this.
- b) To continue to improve the awareness of all children and young people in who are already in care of their right to Advocacy and how to access this.
- c) To develop an agreed protocol with Advocates around what can and should be recorded on a child's file; to ensure their voice is heard, while respecting they may want issues to be confidential.
- d) To continue to improve the recording of outcomes achieved, through robust recording of themes and issues, what is achieved and ensuring effective closure of cases.
- e) To increase the visibility of the IV service and progress matches.
- f) To seek feedback at the point of each case being closed about the Young persons' experience of the service. To ensure that the young people's voice is seen to drive service delivery forward.
- g) To ensure there are links developed with other advocacy and children's advocacy services both in and out of the borough to ensure a coordinated service, and build on strengths or agreed areas of need.
- h) To review the current staffing in the team to ensure it is sufficient to support the above areas of development.

13.0 Progress of the Improvement Plan Incorporating Signs of Safety

13.1 What is going well?

13.1.1 The Advocacy service are visiting children over 5 years old and young people who become looked after within 6 weeks. This reflects the demand and increase in looked after children.

13.1.2 We have had some great feedback from our young people about the impact the service has on their lives.

13.1.3 We know our children well.

13.1.4 We are working with more children year on year.

13.1.5 We are introducing group supervision for the Advocates which will be signs of safety focused.

13.2 What are we worried about?

13.2.1 Although there is a high number of looked after children, there is only a relatively small amount taking up Advocacy services. We need to increase our sphere of influence and this means going back to basics and developing our relationships with social workers, IRO's, foster carers and links with other professionals who work with looked after children.

13.2.2 We are working with a disproportionate number of White/British children and young people and ethnic minorities are under-represented within the ongoing Advocacy and Independent visitor services. Our recording data does not easily identify the specifics of young people's cultural identity therefore we have difficulty targeting those young people from different backgrounds that may want a service.

13.2.3 The number of children and young people within the Roma Slovak and Eastern European community who have become looked after has increased and they are not represented within the ongoing Advocacy and Independent figures.

13.2.4 There is a real lack of Independent Visitors from the diverse cultural backgrounds found in Rotherham and therefore how are we promoting their voices?

13.2.5 How do we record the impact of the Advocates work? At the present time, there is a separate recording system in place to record such work. This will need to change.

13.2.6 The offer of the Advocacy service is well known within the looked after service, but less so within locality teams.

13.2.7 At the present time, the complaints process remains the only avenue which children and young people can access in order to escalate their concerns. The introduction of an Escalation process akin to that of the IRO and conference chair process will give a formal structure to concerns that are raised so ensure minimal drift and delay.

13.3 What needs to happen?

13.3.1 Review the recording process for the Advocacy service so that the voice of the young person is captured.

- 13.3.2 Develop an Escalation process in line with the IRO and conference chair protocol to ensure that issues are formally monitored in terms of timescales.
- 13.3.3 Ensure advocacy records can be seen in the Liquid Logic journey recording system to ensure that we are able to target those young people who have a diverse cultural background to ensure their voices are heard.
- 13.3.4 Develop our links with the Roma/Slovak and Muslim communities in order to widen our scope in relation to Advocates and Independent visitors.
- 13.3.5 Develop our links with the Children's disability team in order that our most vulnerable children have access to Advocacy. We recognise this may need to include a close working relationship with the allocated workers / practitioners that know these children well
- 13.3.7 To increase the visibility of the Advocacy service by introducing Link Teams to the looked after service, locality and disability services. This is in line with the introduction of Link teams within the IRO service.
- 13.3.8 We need to agree our footprint and ensure that the outcomes for children that we work with are recorded and improvements measured.

Tracey Arnold
Service Manager for IRO and Advocacy Service,
Safeguarding Unit.
October 2018



Virtual School Rotherham
Belong, believe, achieve

Priorities
18-19

Attainment and progress – To raise attainment and progress across all key stages.

Key Development points:

- Improve data analysis to support early identification and intervention planning for those children and young people who are not on track to reach attainment targets and or those who are not making expected progress.
- Quality assurance and support provided to class teachers and intervention leads to improve the learning experiences of all our young people.
- Improve the quality of evidence provided by the school to demonstrate implementation of the personal education plan and its positive impact on progress and attainment.

What does this look like for children and young people?

- I will make lots progress in my learning.
- I will get the right help when I need it.
- I will know what areas of learning I need to work on and who will be helping me.
- I will find learning challenging, fun and exciting.
- I will achieve.

What does this look like for schools?

- All staff will know and be working from the education plans in place for all our children and young people.
- Staff will have a better understanding of the needs of our children and young people.
- Virtual School will support staff to meet the needs of our children and young people in their classes.
- There will be stronger links between class/subject teachers and the intervention and support staff who work with our children and young people.

What does this look like for Carers?

- My child will be supported with their learning.
- I will understand my child's progress and what I can do to support this.
- My child will be ready for the next stages of their learning journey.

Our vision:

"All our young people achieve well, both academically and socially, and reach their full potential."

Health and well-being – To remove barriers and promote positive emotional health and well-being.

Key Development points:

- More schools will know the support they can access from the Virtual School
- More schools are actively engaged with developing attachment aware and trauma-informed practices
- Early identification of emotional wellbeing and mental health needs is increased for our children and young people.
- Early identification of speech, language and communication needs.

What does this look like for young people?

- I will be part of a school community that know me and understand how to support me.
- I will have an adult/s in school that I can approach for support
- I believe my teachers understand me and will support me to feel safe, calm, happy and included in the life of my school
- I feel safe, secure and able to achieve

What does this look like for schools?

- Through training and support, staff will feel confident they understand and can meet the needs of our children and young people
- Schools will be able to implement appropriate and effective interventions to support the emotional health and well-being of young people

What does this look like for Carers?

- Carers will develop strategies to support the emotional needs of children in their care
- Carers will have increased confidence that schools understand the needs of the children in their care

Our vision:

"All our young people are confident, have a strong sense of identity and are empowered to be independent, enjoy learning and have fun."

...above all we want all our young people to be proud of who they are, who they are becoming and to own their own story.

Stability in education – Improve attendance and reduce persistent absence, exclusions and mid-year school moves

Key Development points:

- Improved data analysis and early intervention to increase attendance for our children and young particularly those where attendance is a concern.
- Attendance protocol in place so that all stakeholders know their roles and responsibilities in supporting our children and young people to attend school.
- Agreed "right child, right school" protocol in place to make sure that all our children and young people access the right school without delay.
- To establish the prevalence of 'alternative exclusions' used by schools and monitor and report on their impact upon children and yp.
- Continue to develop and improve the offer of specialised training and support available to schools to reduce the risk of exclusion and the use of 'alternative' exclusions.

What does this look like for young people?

- I will be in a school that knows me and understand how to support me.
- My team will make sure I am in school and not missing out on any of my learning.
- My teachers will understand and support me to feel safe, calm, happy and included in the life of my school.
- I will know I belong to my school.

What does this look like for schools?

- Through training and support, staff will feel confident they understand and can meet the needs of our children and young people.
- Schools will be supported by the team around the young person in making sure they are in school and learning

What does this look like for Carers?

- Carers will understand the importance of attendance and their roles and responsibilities around this.
- Carers will understand the reasons behind Virtual School choosing the right school for their child.

Our vision:

"All our young people experience stability and feel safe, cared for, supported

Developing leaders – Ensure inspirational and strong leadership and governance throughout Rotherham Virtual school.

Key Development points:

- Virtual School team to work as part of focus groups that will: analyse data, action plan, develop policy and procedures, implement change and drive improvement across the Virtual School.
- Increase the membership of the Virtual School governing body to reflect the range of services involved in meeting the needs of our young people and provide high level of support and challenge to the Virtual School.
- Virtual School Head teachers to develop links with, and establish clear boundaries between, multi-agency leaders and ensure they prioritise meeting the education needs of looked after and previously looked after children.
- To continue to develop the role of DTs in leading and championing the attainment of all LAC, through high quality PEPs.

What does this look like for young people?

- My school will be able to meet my needs.
- I will make lots of progress.
- I will know I am important.
- I will have a team who works with me to help me achieve.

What does this look like for schools?

- Leaders will drive a culture shift in the school with a focus on understanding and meeting the needs of our learners.
- Schools will work together with other agencies for the good of our children.
- School staff will know the Virtual School is part of their team.

What does this look like for Carers?

- Carers will understand how the Virtual School supports their children.
- Carers will understand how important they are as a member of the team around their child.

Our vision:

"Rotherham Virtual School will work together, with all partners, to ensure we are the team of champions our young people deserve. Providing support and encouragement to all our young people"

BRIEFING	TO:	CPP
	DATE:	18.12.2018
	LEAD OFFICER <i>(Full name, title and Directorate)</i>	Peter Douglas/Tina Hohn Virtual School Head teachers C&YPS
	TITLE:	Virtual School priorities and actions
Background		
1.	<p>1.1 The Virtual School Headteacher's report 2017-18 outlined the progress made by the Virtual School and the academic achievements of this year's cohort of young people.</p> <p>1.2 The Virtual School was restructured in Sep 2018 with the appointment of two Virtual Head teachers; Tina Hohn (Early Years and Primary) and Peter Douglas (Secondary and Post 16).</p> <p>1.3 This report outlines the key priorities and actions based on the data and analysis contained in the Virtual Headteacher's report and the trajectory the Virtual School is working towards over the coming year.</p> <p>1.4 These priorities are detailed within the Virtual School Development plan which will be presented to the Virtual School Governing body at its next meeting Nov 21st 2018.</p>	
Key Issues		
2.	<p>2.1 Attainment and progress at GCSE is below expected.</p> <p>2.2 10 young people who achieved a level 4, English and Maths, at the end of KS2 did not achieve GCSE Level 4+ in English and Maths.</p> <p>2.3 Persistent Absence has increased and was raised as a concern in the previous OFSTED.</p> <p>2.4 Exclusions of our young people are still a concern, particularly for those in key stage 4 who are placed out of authority; this was raised as a concern in the previous OFSTED.</p> <p>2.5 Placement stability across all key stages is a concern with an increasing number of care placement moves resulting in the need to change school. The issue is exacerbated as the time it takes to successfully organise admission to new setting is increasing. This leads to young people being out of education for prolonged periods of time. There is a growing body of evidence that stability in care and education has a clear link to academic progress and attainment, we have seen the negative impact of an increased number of moves on our young people's outcomes.</p>	
Key Actions and Relevant Timelines		
3.	<p>3.1 Develop the attainment reporting through ePEP to allow for more detailed analysis of progress, allowing Virtual School Advisers to identify those groups who need specific intervention to support progress.</p> <p>(Termly reports to start in Jan 2019)</p>	

	<p>3.2 Improve links with Head teachers in and out of authority to investigate more effective use of PP+ to support pupil emotional health and accelerate academic progress.</p> <p>(To start in Nov 2018 on going throughout the year).</p> <p>3.3 Weekly attendance and exclusion reports to be monitored by Virtual School Advisers and a policy to be developed around intervention response for those whose attendance is a concern.</p> <p>(Attendance and exclusions report is in place. Policy in place by Dec 2018)</p> <p>3.4 Attendance and exclusion reports to be shared with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual School Governing body for scrutiny, support and challenge • Social Care service/Team Managers to raise awareness. • Other interested parties <p>(Attendance and exclusions report is in place. Policy in place and distribution list agreed by Dec 2018)</p> <p>3.5 Increased focus and support for those young people placed out of authority to enable OOA schools to access, to improve stability, increase attendance, raise attainment and reduce the risk of exclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solution focussed staff meetings to support transition into new settings. • Emotion coaching training to school staff, social workers and foster carers to enable them to effectively meet the needs of young people. • Whole school attachment training to increase the understanding and empathy of staff toward those young people impacted by trauma and attachment difficulties. • Training at least another 30 Emotional Literacy Support Assistants to deliver specific support to our learners, places to be offered to OOA school staff. • Increase the network of Creative Mentors and in the second round of intervention work with those young people who are more disengaged. • Develop our approach to become increasingly person centred and have trained at least 15 staff to support PATH planning for our young people. <p>(Already in progress and developing links with OOA schools).</p> <p>3.6 Placement policy agreed with Social Care, Virtual School, Commissioning and EHCP teams (See additional briefing report – OOA placement policy and recharging update). Training delivered to Social Worker and Foster Carers on the importance of stability in education.</p> <p>(Policy in place by Dec 2018, training to be delivered once policy agreed and in place and start no later than Jan 2019)</p> <p>3.7 Track, monitor and update the VS improvement plan. Share the improvement plan on a page with key partner stakeholders once agreed by governors and CPP (See Appendix 1)</p>
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Recommendations

<p>4.</p>	<p>CPP receive this report and note the actions above</p> <p>Agree improvement plan on a page or advise any specific alterations required before sharing with stakeholders.</p>
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BRIEFING	TO:	CPP
	DATE:	18.12.2018
	LEAD OFFICER <i>(Full name, title and Directorate)</i>	Peter Douglas/Tina Hohn Virtual School Head teachers C&YPS
	TITLE:	Virtual School - CLA 2017-18 GCSE progress update

Background

1. 1.1 The Virtual Headteacher report 2017-18 outlined that 10 GCSE students who achieved level 4 in English and Maths at KS2 did not achieve a pass at Level 4+ in GCSE English and Maths (see table):

LAC achieving level 4+ in English and Maths at KS2 achieving neither grade 4 + in English or maths

Gender	Ethnicity	School Type	SEN	Placement Type	No. Placement	Exclusions	Persistent Absence	Time in care	Eng GCSE	Maths GCSE
F	WBRI	MS	E	U6	4	YES	NO	5+	2	2
M	WBRI	NMS	K	P1	4	NO	YES	7+	No quals	
M	WBRI	MS	N	P1	2	NO	NO	5+	U	1
F	WBRI	MS	N	U6	1	NO	YES	1+	2	2
F	WBRI	NMS	K	H5	9	NO	YES	4+	0	0
M	WBRI	NMS	E	K2	6	NO	YES	4+	1	3
F	WBRI	MS	K	K2	5	YES	YES	2+	0	2
F	WBRI	MS	E	P2	15	NO	YES	9+	0	0
F	WBRI	NMS	E	K2	4	NO	NO	2+	D	3
F	WBRI	NIE	E	P2	5	NO	YES	3+	0	3

7/10 female
5/10 EHCPs

10/10 WBRI

5/10 non-mainstream school

4/10 residential
2/10 foster care

2/10 with parents

2/10 living independently

6/10 with 4+ placement moves
4 years in care

7/10 persistent absentees

6/10 <

(Key for the table is included in appendix 1).

- 1.2 This report seeks to analyse any further support that could have been made available and interventions that might have had a mitigating effect on these young people.

	<p>1.3 The Virtual School has been restructured and there are now two Virtual Head teachers and an additional two Advisers. This has increased the capacity of the Secondary team and will allow a more strategic approach for swifter response in supporting schools to meet the needs of our young people and work towards improving progress and attainment.</p> <p>1.5 During the academic year 2017-18, the Virtual School has been developing its support and training offer to schools, through our advisers and the work of the VS Education Psychologists. This has already had a positive impact on exclusions of CLA, within authority. There is evidence in the VHT report that exclusions within Rotherham have decreased this year, and there have been no off rolling incidents this last academic year. However, 60% of the YP in this list suffered school placement breakdown. In most cases this was due to behaviour related to attachment and trauma issues. However, for the list of 10 young people:</p> <p>1) At least 70% of the YP would have been offered a Solution Focussed staff meeting. A solution focussed staff meeting is a training opportunity, for those staff working closely with the young person, to increase staff empathy and develop a bespoke plan to prevent, connect and deescalate. These were not available when required for these YP.</p> <p>2) 70% of the YP would have been referred for Creative Mentoring had it been available. The Creative Mentoring programme provides creative/artistic professionals who work alongside the young people on a creative project to build positive relationship skills and self-confidence. The focus is learning through the process.</p> <p>3) Attachment Friendly Schools training offered by the Virtual School would have had an impact on schools' ability to contain and support the YP, reducing education placement breakdowns.</p>
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Key Issues

<p>2.</p>	<p>2.1 The group of 10 young people who did not make progress shared a number of similar characteristics which will have reduced their stability, both in terms of care and education. It is clear, from those who made the most progress, that stability is a key factor in academic success.</p> <p>2.2 The impact of instability on our more able learners appears to be greater than for those who did not achieve key stage 2 benchmarks.</p> <p>2.3 The level of support available to the 10 young people was below that which is now in place (see 1.5 above) and as such they will not have benefited from the developments in the same way as future cohorts.</p> <p>2.4 Sufficiency to support the SEMH needs of our more able learners has been an issue in a number of the 10 cases. Providing appropriate education to meet need and allow for formal assessment of need was not always possible as provision was not available for these young people.</p>
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Key Actions and Relevant Timelines

<p>3.</p>	<p>3.1 With the restructure of the Virtual School team, the Virtual Headteacher for Secondary and Post 16 has been given more capacity to undertake the following:</p> <p>1) Virtual Headteacher to analyse the data for all Y10 and Y11 to ensure that schools and advisers are clear on the KS2 attainment data and this is used to ensure appropriate interventions are in place.</p> <p>(From Dec 2018 then ongoing termly)</p> <p>2) Virtual Headteacher to discuss pupil outcomes, with RMBC Secondary Head teachers,</p>
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	<p>with a focus on the disparity between the achieved grade and subject teacher prediction.</p> <p>(Starting Dec 2018)</p> <p>3) Improve data collection through ePEP changes to ensure more effective monitoring of progress against benchmarks.</p> <p>(From Jan 2019)</p> <p>4) Virtual Headteacher to work more closely with RMBC SEMH provision and LA service managers to ensure transitions are swift and carefully planned.</p> <p>(From Nov 2018)</p> <p>5) Virtual Headteacher to support advisers in seeking appropriate and timely placements when young people are moved OOA.</p> <p>(From Sep 2018)</p> <p>3.2 Both care and education placement choice and stability are predictors of future outcomes. With this in mind the following challenges need to be considered:</p> <p>1) Improved communication between Social Workers and Virtual School, particularly at entry to care would ensure improved placement stability in terms of education and care.</p> <p>(Briefing paper submitted Oct 2018)</p> <p>2) Improvements to attachment, loss and trauma training to foster carers and Residential care staff are vital in improving placement stability and the ability of carers to contain and support YP in emotional regulation.</p> <p>(Ongoing 2018-19)</p> <p>3) Impact of moves on those YP who have high levels of SEMH but no EHCP. Often this causes dramatic delays in accessing appropriate education provision. Formal discussions with EHCP team to agree policy for RMBC LAC placed OOA.</p> <p>(Jan 2019)</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>CPP receive this report and note the actions above.</p>

Appendix 1:

Key for table 1.1:

Code	Placement Type
A5	Placed for Adoption With Placement Order (current Foster Carer)
A6	Placed for Adoption With Placement Order (not current Foster Carer)
U1	Foster placement with relative or friend- long term fostering
U3	Foster placement with relative or friend- not long term or FFA
U6	Placement with other foster carer - not long term or FFA
P1	Placed with parents or other with Parental Resp
K2	Children's Home
H5	Resid. Accom. not subject to Children's Homes Regulations.
P2	Independent living (flat/lodgings/friends/B&B)
Z1	Z1 - Other Placement

Council Report

Corporate Parenting Performance

Title

Corporate Parenting Performance Report – October 2018

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan? No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Report Author(s)

Cathryn Woodward (Performance and Data Officer – Social Care)
Ian Walker (Head of Service Children in Care)

Ward(s) Affected

All

Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of performance for key performance indicators across Looked After Children (LAC) services. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying performance data report at Appendix A which provides trend data, graphical analysis and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages where possible.

Recommendations

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to receive the report and accompanying dataset (Appendix A) and consider issues arising.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix A – Corporate Parenting Monthly Performance Report (October 2018)

Background Papers

Ofsted Improvement Letter
Children's Social Care Monthly Performance Reports

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
No

Council Approval Required No

Exempt from the Press and Public No

Title: Corporate Parenting Performance Report – October 2018

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to receive the report and accompanying dataset (Appendix A) and consider issues arising.

2. Background

- 2.1 This report provides evidence to the council's commitment to improvement and providing performance information to enable scrutiny of the improvements and the impact on the outcomes for children and young people in care. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying performance data report which provides trend data, graphical analysis and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages.
- 2.2 Targets, including associated 'RAG' (red, amber, green rating) tolerances, are included. These have been set in consideration of available national and statistical neighbour benchmarking data, recent performance levels and, importantly, Rotherham's improvement journey.
- 2.4 Please note that all benchmarking data is as at the latest data release by the DfE and relates to 2016/17 outturn
- 2.5 The narrative supplied within the report has been informed by the Deputy Director for Children's Services and the Head of Looked After Children Services.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 Service Overview and Context
 - 3.1.1 The performance within the LAC teams has remained reasonably consistent despite the significantly increasing caseloads. Where performance has dipped (health needs assessments, dental checks, up to date care plans and statutory visits) the underlying narrative sometimes is one of delays in inputting rather than the work not being completed. These 4 issues will be the main focus of attention in the remaining performance clinics of 2018.
 - 3.1.2 The continuing improved performance in respect of placement stability and LAC in family based settings is probably the most reassuring aspect of this report as these are the most reliable indicators of successful outcomes being achieved for our looked after children and of the impact of social work interventions.

3.1.3 The LAC Service underwent its third peer review undertaken by our Improvement Partner, Lincolnshire County Council, on the 5th to the 7th November. On this visit they reported that our social work staff had “blown them away.” They also stated that we knew ourselves very well and they agreed with our judgement on all of the cases we provided for them to track. They stated that the service was unrecognisable from the one they saw when they first came to review LAC in 2016. They were impressed by the significant changes they have seen, the atmosphere in the teams was extremely positive and the co-location had helped relationship building. They did, however, make some useful challenges especially in respect of the Fostering Recruitment processes. These will be incorporated into an action plan that will be developed at the next LAC Service Development day in December.

3.2 Looked After Children Profile

- 3.2.1 There continues to be an increasing LAC profile. At the end of March 2018, we had 627 children and at the end of October this had increased to 658, a rate of 116 per 10,000 population. This is significantly high when compared to the statistical neighbour average of 81.3.
- 3.2.2 In October we had 26 admissions to care. 16 of the children were in sibling groups and the average age was 6.4 years.
- 3.2.3 Discharges were also strong in October with 22 children leaving care, giving us a net increase of 4 LAC. Over the course of 2018, this monthly net increase has started to slow down, although the desired monthly net reduction is yet to be achieved on a consistent basis.
- 3.2.4 Table 1 provides a breakdown by age of the LAC population at the month end by age group against the latest national comparator data. This shows that overall Rotherham’s LAC age profile follows a similar distribution to the national. The most notable difference being the lower proportion aged over sixteen (17% compared to 24%).

Table 1 – Age distribution of Looked After Children at the end of the month

Age Band	Number	% of total	Latest National comparative data (Mar-17)
Under 1	55	8%	5%
1 – 4	98	15%	13%
5 - 9	140	21%	19%
10 - 15	250	38%	39%
16+	112	17%	24%
Total	658		

3.2.5 The percentage distribution by legal status remains a consistent picture with 51% of children subject to full care orders, 32% on an Interim Care Order, 11% are on Placement Orders with Care Order and 5% under Section 20. There is no clear national data to benchmark this distribution against.

3.3 LAC Plans

3.3.1 There has been a decrease in the proportion of LAC who have up to date care plans. Compliance at the end of March was 89% and slowly increased through the year to 91.7% in September. This went back down to 87.6% in October. Team managers have been directed to address the shortfalls and this will be a focus at performance meetings over the coming month.

3.4 Reviews

3.4.1 The timeliness of statutory reviews has improved from 81.3% in August to 89.9% in October (133 out of 148). Increased capacity within the IRO service has supported this improvement.

3.5 Visits

3.5.1 Performance in respect of statutory visits has dipped slightly this month to 95%. This is only 1.6% less than April when we had 32 less children.

3.6 Placements

3.6.1 As is evidenced by research the best indicator of a positive outcome for looked after children is the extent to which they have been supported to remain living in the same placement or with as few placement disruptions as possible. Placement stability is most likely to be achieved by good matching processes; high levels of support provided to foster carers; and strong relationships being developed by social workers with their young people to ensure they are best placed to address any issues as and when they arise.

3.6.2 The proportion of children placed in a family based setting remains stable at 82.7% at the end of October (family based settings include internal fostering, independent fostering, pre-adoption placements and those placed with parent/family/friends).

3.6.3 There has been a positive reduction in the number of LAC experiencing multiple placement moves in the last 12 months from the highest point this year of 14.8% at the end of May to 12.1% at the end of October. In real terms, this is a reduction from 94 to 79 children experiencing multiple placement moves. This represents the best performance of the year so far.

- 3.6.4 October was the highest proportion ever for Rotherham with 69.2% of long term LAC remaining in the same placement for at least 2 years (101 out of 146 children). This is an improvement of 8% compared to the end of March 2018, and is higher than the statistical neighbour average of 68.2%.
- 3.6.5 Projecting forward, the 'Right Child Right Care' project drive to secure greater permanence via SGO/CAO may impact on this performance measure in the coming months as those stable placements come to an end as the young person leaves care for SGO/CAO. However, for those children where the plan is to remain in care, all placements of more than 18 months, where the young person and the carers agree, have been given a set Panel date (within the first 6 months of 2019) to present the case for a formal match. This and the continued impact of the Intensive Intervention Programme and the introduction of the Life-Long Links project, should assist in the drive for even greater placement stability.

3.7 Looked After Children Health and Dental

- 3.7.1 Please note there are known delays in the data input for both Health and Dental information and that figures reported by the LAC Health Team are higher than those recorded in local systems. Therefore we know that recent performance will change when statistics are rerun in future reports.
- 3.7.2 Initial Health Assessments in October currently shows as 57.9%, with the year to date figure at 43.9%. This is below last year's performance of 55%. In order to address this, a joint agency process review was held on the 10th September where a number of actions were agreed with the objective of improving engagement and timeliness. A follow up review has been scheduled for 10th December to assess the impact of those actions.
- 3.7.3 Health Reviews performance at the end of October decreased from the previous month to 86.6% but still slightly higher than 83.7% at the end of March 2018. Dental performance has dipped to 67.2% from a high of 76% in August. Again, these remain a key focus at performance meetings.

3.8 LAC Education

- 3.8.1 Rotherham has a local standard to ensure that each PEP is of good quality and refreshed every term (rather than the annual minimum standard). 97.4% of eligible LAC had a PEP in the summer term, with most of the shortfall being due to children being admitted too late in the term for a PEP meeting to be arranged. The next termly update will be the autumn term reported at the end of December.
- 3.8.2 At the end of October, 92.2% of eligible LAC population had a Personal Education Plan.

3.9 Care Leavers

- 3.9.1 The number of young people receiving a Care Leavers service at the end of October was 242, which is a reduction on the 2017/18 year end position of 256.
- 3.9.2 Performance has stayed relatively stable in respect of care leavers with a pathway plan and up to date pathway plan. They remain virtually unchanged at 95% and 94.2% respectively. The Peer Review in November also identified one pathway plan that was of 'Outstanding' quality. This will be used as a template of best practice.
- 3.9.3 The proportion of care leavers in suitable accommodation remains strong at 95.5% at the end of October.
- 3.9.4 The number of care leavers who are in Education, Employment or Training has again slightly improved at the end of October to 63.6% and places Rotherham in the top quartile.

3.10 Fostering

- 3.10.1 Up to the end of October, we had approved 10 new foster and had 11 assessments ongoing. There are 3 IFA carers who are expressing a strong interest in becoming carers for Rotherham.
- 3.10.2 There have been 20 Expressions of Interest made over the course of October which is higher than usual. Given that 5 of these look to be viable options, this is a positive sign for improved recruitment over the course of the next 4 months.
- 3.10.3 Effective retention is already an increasing concern and this is going to be an ongoing pressure given the increasingly aging demography of our foster carers. Over the course of the financial year there have been 15 foster carers who have resigned or have been de-registered. Although 3 of these foster carers had not provided any placement since the summer of 2017 so the impact of their withdrawal from the fostering role will be less significant than would appear on face value. In summary, 6 of the carers resigned due to practice/safeguarding issues, 2 were deregistered due to safeguarding concerns, 2 resigned following successful application for SGO and the remaining 5 were resignations due to personal issues, changes in circumstances or retirement when placements came to a natural end.

3.11 Adoptions

- 3.11.1 Rotherham's policy is to persevere in seeking adoptive placements for all children for as long as it is reasonable to do so. Whilst this can impact on performance figures, this practice does give the necessary reassurance that the adoption service is 'doing the right thing' by its children by doing everything it can to secure permanent family placements. The significant number of children in the adoption process will also, in time, alleviate some of the concerns regarding the overall numbers of looked after children.
- 3.11.2 So far this financial year, 14 children have been adopted. At the end of October, we had 25 children in adoptive placements, of which 11 have court dates for their adoption hearings. The projected number of adoptions for 2018-19 is 31-34. This would be an improvement on the 2017-18 figure.
- 3.11.3 In addition, there are 21 children matched with adoptive parents but yet to be placed and family finding continues for a further 19 children.
- 3.11.4 The A1 measure for 'number of days between becoming LAC and having an adoption placement' for the 14 adopted children is currently an average of 351.4 days. This is lower than the national target of 426 days.
- 3.11.5 The A2 measure for 'number of days between placement order and being matched with an adoptive family' for the 14 adopted children is currently an average of 185.7 days. This is higher than the national target of 121 days.
- 3.11.6 In terms of recruitment of adoptive families, there have been 13 sets of adoptive parents fully approved so far this year with 7 more at stage 1, and six at stage 2. Once again last year's performance looks likely to be surpassed with the forecast of 23/24 over the year compared to 14 approvals last year.

3.12 Caseloads

- 3.12.1 The increase in LAC numbers has impacted on caseloads within the LAC Service. Average caseloads for LAC teams 1-3 are at a high of 14.6 and the average caseload for LAC Teams 4-5 is 13.8. The calculation for average caseloads does not take into account the reduced caseloads of social workers on a phased return to work, 'Assessed and Supported Year in Employment' social workers and 'Advanced Practitioners'. This would increase the average caseloads for LAC teams to 17.25. The Court and Permanence teams have similarly increased caseloads which was an average of 15.75, although each case in proceedings presents a disproportionate level of work. Both of these are part of an on-going rising trend and they are beginning to impact on performance and

quality of interventions with direct work and life-story work being increasingly difficult to accommodate.

3.12.2 The on-going demand for social workers to supervise contact continues to be a significant pressure on the LAC Service, with the time demands being the equivalent of an additional 3 cases per social worker across the service. Recruitment of the additional contact worker resource continues but is likely to be a few months before these workers are in post. As a result the impact on social worker capacity and ability to sustain timeliness in stat visits is likely to be an on-going challenge for a few months yet.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

4.1 The full corporate parenting performance report attached at Appendix A represents a summary of performance across a range of key national and local indicators with detailed commentary provided by the service director. Commissioners are therefore recommended to consider and review this information.

5. Consultation

5.1 Not applicable

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

6.1 Not applicable

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report. The relevant Service Director and Budget Holder will identify any implications arising from associated improvement actions and Members and Commissioners will be consulted where appropriate.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 There are no direct legal implications to this report.

9. Human Resources Implications

9.1 There are no direct human resource implications to this report. The relevant Service Director and Managers will identify any implications arising from associated improvement actions and Members and Commissioners will be consulted where appropriate.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 The performance report relates to services and outcomes for children in care.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 11.1 There are no direct implications within this report.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 12.1 Partners and other directorates are engaged in improving the performance and quality of services to children, young people and their families via the Rotherham Local Children's Safeguarding Board (RLSCB). The RLSCB Performance and Quality Assurance Sub Group receive this performance report within the wider social care performance report on a regular basis.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Inability and lack of engagement in performance management arrangements by managers and staff could lead to poor and deteriorating services for children and young people. Strong management oversight by Directorship Leadership Team and the ongoing weekly performance meetings mitigate this risk by holding managers and workers to account for any dips in performance both at a team and at an individual child level.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Ian Walker, Head of Service Looked After Children and Care Leavers
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Ailsa Barr Interim Assistant Director Safeguarding Children
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Corporate Parenting Monthly Performance Report

As at Month End: October 2018

***Please note:** Data reports are not dynamic. Although care is taken to ensure data is as accurate as possible every month, delays in data input can result in changes in figures when reports are re-run retrospectively. To combat this at least two individual months data is rerun for each indicator.*

Document Details

Status: Issue 1

Date Created: 21/11/18

Created by: Performance & Quality Team

Performance Summary

As at Month End: October 2018

*DOT - Direction of travel represents the direction of 'performance' since the previous month with reference to the polarity of 'good' performance for that measure. Colours have been added to help distinguish better and worse performance. Key Below:-

- ↑ - improvement in performance / increase in numbers
- - no movement - numbers stable with last month
- ↓ - decline in performance, not on target / decrease in numbers

NO.	INDICATOR	GOOD PERF IS	DATA NOTE (Monthly)	2018 / 19					DOT (Month on Month)	RAG (in month)	Target and Tolerances			YR ON YR TREND				LATEST BENCHMARKING						
				Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	YTD 2018/19	DATA NOTE			Red	Amber	Target Green	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	STAT NEIGH AVE	BEST STAT NEIGH	NAT AVE	NAT TOP QTILE THRESHOL			
LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN	6.1	Number of Looked After Children	Info	Count	655	651	658	-	As at mth end	↑			n/a	407	432	488	627							
	6.2	Rate of Looked After Children per 10,000 population aged under 18 (Council Plan Indicator)	Low	Rate per 10,000	115.7	115.0	116.3	-	As at mth end	↓			99.1	70	76.6	86.6	110.8	81.3	58.0	62.0	-			
	6.3	Admissions of Looked After Children	Info	Count	22	16	26	170	Financial Year	↑			n/a	175	208	262	330							
	6.4	Number of children who have ceased to be Looked After Children	High	Count	19	20	22	141	Financial Year	↑			n/a	160	192	215	194							
	6.5	Percentage of LAC who have ceased to be looked after due to permanence (Special Guardianship Order, Residence Order, Adoption)	High	Percentage	15.8%	5.0%	13.6%	23.4%	Financial Year	↑			<33%	33%>	35%+	37.5%	40.1%	27.9%	27.3%					
	6.6	Number of SGOs started (all)	High	Count	1	6	4	22	Financial Year	↓			range to be set											
	6.7	Percentage of LAC who have ceased to be looked after due to a Special Guardianship Order	High	Percentage	5.3%	5.0%	0.0%	10.5%	Financial Year	↓			range to be set	-	-	9.8%	8.2%	12.3%	22.0%	12.0%	17.0%			
	6.8	LAC cases reviewed within timescales	High	Percentage	81.3%	87.8%	89.9%	86.4%	Financial Year	↑			<90%	90%>	95%+	94.9%	83.3%	91.3%	90.6%					
	6.9	% of children adopted	High	Percentage	10.5%	0.0%	9.1%	9.9%	Financial Year	↑			YTD	<20%	20%>	22.7%+	26.3%	22.4%	14.4%	13.9%	18.9%	30.0%	14.0%	20.0%
	6.10	Health of Looked After Children - up to date Health Assessments	High	Percentage	92.8%	90.0%	86.6%	-	As at mth end	↓			<90%	90%>	95%+	81.4%	92.8%	89.5%	83.7%					
	6.11	Health of Looked After Children - up to date Dental Assessments	High	Percentage	76.0%	69.9%	67.2%	-	As at mth end	↓			<90%	90%>	95%+	58.8%	95.0%	57.3%	72.5%					
	6.12	Health of Looked After Children - Initial Health Assessments carried out within 20 working days	High	Percentage	31.3%	30.4%	57.9%	43.9%	Financial Year	↑			range to be set	20.0%	8.4%	18.2%	55.7%							
	6.13	% of LAC with a PEP	High	Percentage	93.4%	93.4%	92.2%	-	As at mth end	↓			<90%	90%>	95%+	76.0%	97.8%	97.0%	93.6%					
	6.14	% of LAC with up to date PEPs (Report Termly - End Jul, Dec, Mar)	High	Percentage	-	-	-	-	As at mth end	-			<90%	90%>	95%+	-	-	98.9%	(Summer 2018)					
	6.15	% of eligible LAC with an up to date plan	High	Percentage	91.3%	91.7%	87.6%	-	As at mth end	↓			<93%	93%>	95%+	98.8%	98.4%	79.1%	89.5%					
	6.16	% LAC visits up to date & completed within timescale of National Minimum standard	High	Percentage	98.2%	96.0%	95.0%	-	As at mth end	↓			<95%	95%>	98%+	95.2%	98.1%	74.0%	97.5%					
CARE LEAVERS	7.1	Number of care leavers	Info	Count	243	245	242	-	As at mth end	↓			n/a	183	197	223	256							
	7.2	% of eligible LAC & Care Leavers with a pathway plan	High	Percentage	95.4%	95.0%	95.0%	-	As at mth end	→			<93%	93%>	95%+	-	69.8%	99.3%	93.9%					
	7.3	% of eligible LAC & Care Leavers with an up to date pathway plan	High	Percentage	95.0%	94.6%	94.2%	-	As at mth end	↓				-	-	-	70.3%							
	7.4	% of care leavers in suitable accommodation	High	Percentage	95.1%	95.5%	95.5%	-	As at mth end	→			<95%	95%>	98%+	97.8%	96.5%	97.8%	96.1%	91.0%	100.0%	84.0%	91.0%	
	7.5	% of care leavers in employment, education or training	High	Percentage	61.7%	61.6%	63.6%	-	As at mth end	↑			<70%	70%>	72%+	71.0%	68.0%	62.9%	64.1%	52.2%	65.0%	50.0%	57.0%	
PLACEMENTS	8.1	% of long term LAC in placements which have been stable for at least 2 years	High	Percentage	65.8%	66.0%	69.2%	-	As at mth end	↑			<68%	68%>	70%+	71.9%	72.7%	66.2%	61.2%	68.2%	85.0%	70.0%	74.0%	
	8.2	% of LAC who have had 3 or more placements - rolling 12 months (Council Plan Indicator)	Low	Percentage	12.1%	12.7%	12.1%	-	Rolling Year	↑			13%+	13%<	10.8%<	12.0%	13.0%	11.9%	13.4%	10.1%	7.0%	10.0%	8.0%	
	8.3	% of LAC in a family Based setting (Council Plan Indicator)	High	Percentage	82.9%	82.3%	82.7%	-	As at mth end	↑			range to be set	85%>	-	-	81.1%	81.0%						
	8.4	% of LAC placed with parents or other with parental responsibility (P1)	Low	Percentage	6.0%	5.5%	5.8%	-	As at mth end	↓			range to be set	-	-	5.3%	4.3%							
	8.5	% of LAC in a Commissioned Placement	Low	Percentage	51.9%	52.5%	52.0%	-	As at mth end	↑			range to be set	-	43.6%	43.2%	50.5%							

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NO.	INDICATOR	GOOD PERF IS	DATA NOTE (Monthly)	2018 / 19					DOT (Month on Month)	RAG (in month)	Target and Tolerances			YR ON YR TREND				LATEST BENCHMARKING				
				Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	YTD 2018/19	DATA NOTE			Red	Amber	Target Green	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	STAT NEIGH AVE	BEST STAT NEIGH	NAT AVE	NAT TOP QTILE THRESHOL	
FOSTERING	9.1	Number of LAC in a Fostering Placement (excludes family/friend carers)	High	Count	439	437	443	-	As at mth end	↑		range to be set			-	-	353	414				
	9.2	% of LAC in a Fostering Placement (excludes family/friend carers)	High	Percentage	67.0%	67.1%	67.3%	-	As at mth end	↑		range to be set			-	-	72.3%	66.0%				
	9.3	Number of Foster Carers (Households)	High	Count	152	152	149	-	As at mth end	↓		range to be set			-	156	161	154				
	9.4	Number of Foster Carers Recruited	High	Count	1	0	1	7	Financial Year	↑		range to be set			-	13	32	16				
	9.5	Number of Foster Carers Deregistered	Info	Count	2	0	4	16	Financial Year	↑		range to be set			-	16	22	25				
ADOPTIONS	10.1	Number of adoptions	High	Count	2	0	2	14	Financial Year	↑				n/a	-	43	31	27				
	10.2	Number of adoptions completed within 12 months of SHOBPA	High	Count	0	0	0	5	Financial Year	→				n/a	-	23	12	16				
	10.3	% of adoptions completed within 12 months of SHOBPA	High	Percentage	0.0%	-	0.0%	35.7%	Financial Year	→	-	<83%	83%>	85%+	37.0%	53.5%	38.7%	59.3%				
	10.4	Average number of days between a child becoming Looked After and having a adoption placement (A1)	Low	YTD Average	353.9	353.9	351.4	-	Financial Year	↑		511+	511<	487<	393.0	296.0	404.0	325.3	511.6	337.0	558.0	501.1
	10.5	Average number of days between a placement order and being matched with an adoptive family (A2)	Low	YTD Average	196.6	196.6	185.7	-	Financial Year	↑		127+	127<	121<	169	136	232.9	124.8	214.7	73.0	226.0	183.6
WORKFORCE & CASELOAD	11.4	Maximum caseload of social workers in LAC	Low	Average count	23	23	23	-	As at mth end	→		21+	20<	18<	-	19.2	17.0	18.0				
	11.5	Average number of cases per qualified social worker in LAC Teams 1-3	Within Limits	Average count	13.8	15	14.6	-	As at mth end	↓		over 1% above range	1% above range	14-20	-	-	-	12.6				
		Average number of cases per qualified social worker in LAC Teams 4 - 5	Within Limits	Average count	14.1	14.3	13.8	-	As at mth end	↓		over 1% above range	1% above range	14-20	-	-	-	11.8				

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

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

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

As Chair of the Public Law Outline (PLO) Panel had identified in last month's performance report it was evident that there would be a relatively high number of admissions to care over the course of October, although it also has to be noted that of the 26 children admitted to care, 16 were in sibling groups. In addition there were 22 discharges making a net increase of only 4 children and the average age of those admitted to care fell once again from 6.9 years to 6.4 years. There are also 22 children already in the legal process for the discharge of their Care Order but court availability will impact on the timeliness of this process and unnecessarily delay the discharge and this issue is to be taken up in the Family Court User Forum.

There is growing evidence that the range of interventions is having a discernible impact on this issue. In comparing months 1 to 4 with months 8 to 12 over the past twelve months it can be evidenced that the admissions to care reduced from 121 to 92 while the discharges increased from 46 to 79. As a result the net increase reduced from 75 to 13 over the course of the year. The Edge of Care Service is making a significant contribution to this and of the 98 children allocated within the team only 14% have stepped up in terms of intervention (e.g.. from CiN to CP) with the remaining 86% being no closer or further away from becoming looked after than they were at the start of the intervention.

As a recent addition to the LAC Service the team are currently reporting on their agreed performance measures and so there will be a more comprehensive report available to next month's Performance Board. However, there is already a discernible shortfall in the service in that a lack of capacity is creating a 'waiting list' for longer-term therapeutic interventions.

Data Note: An issue has arisen within the Liquid Logic system which is impacting on the reporting LAC children. For some children who have left care and have had previous care episodes, the same 'end date' is copying into the previous episodes within the system. This has been reported, however, until this is rectified we will be unable to accurately report on measures regarding children ceasing care.

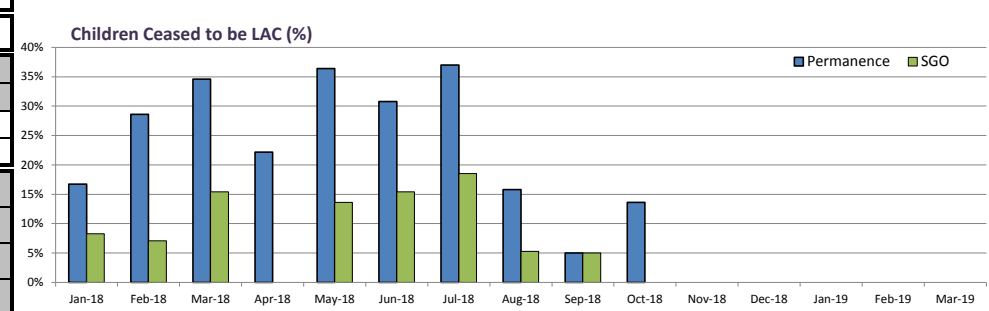
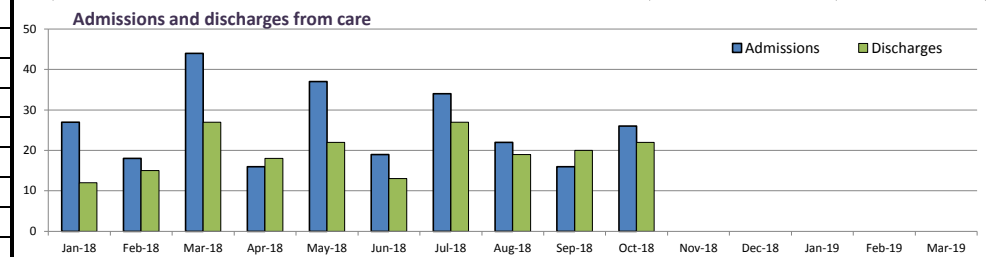
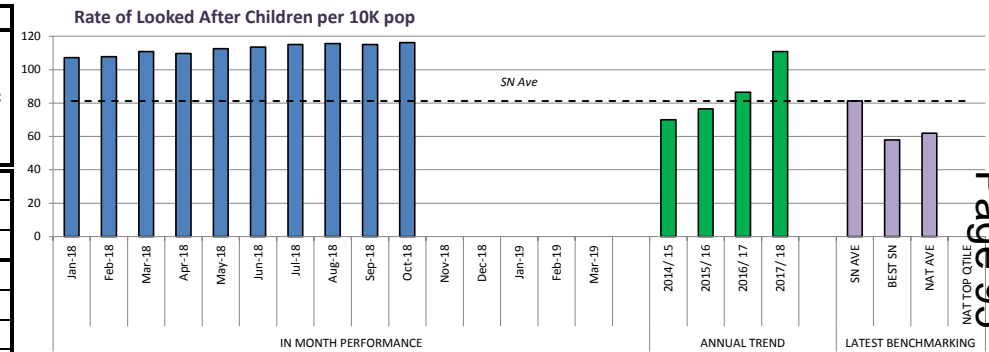
	6.2	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7
	Rate of children looked after per 10K pop	Number of LAC	Admissions of children looked after	No. of children who have ceased to be LAC	% of children ceased to be LAC due to permanence	Number of SGOs started (all)	% of children ceased to be LAC due to an SGO

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Jan-18	107.3	607	27	12	16.7%	4	8.3%
	Feb-18	107.8	610	18	15	28.6%	4	7.1%
	Mar-18	110.8	627	44	27	34.6%	16	15.4%
	Apr-18	109.7	621	16	18	22.2%	0	0.0%
	May-18	112.6	637	37	22	36.4%	4	13.6%
	Jun-18	113.6	643	19	13	30.8%	3	15.4%
	Jul-18	115.0	651	34	27	37.0%	4	18.5%
	Aug-18	115.7	655	22	19	15.8%	1	5.3%
	Sep-18	115.0	651	16	20	5.0%	6	5.0%
	Oct-18	116.3	658	26	22	13.6%	4	0.0%
	Nov-18							
	Dec-18							
	Jan-19							
	Feb-19							
	Mar-19							

YTD	2018/19	-	-	170	141	23.4%	22	10.5%
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ANNUAL TREND	2014/ 15	70.0	407	175	160	37.5%	-	-
	2015/ 16	76.6	432	208	192	40.1%	-	-
	2016/ 17	86.6	488	262	215	27.9%	-	9.8%
	2017/ 18	110.8	627	330	194	27.3%	67	8.2%

LATEST BENCHMARKING	SN AVE	81.3						
	BEST SN	58.0						
	NAT AVE	62.0						
	NAT TOP QTILE	-						



LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - REVIEWS, PLANS & VISITS

DEFINITION

The purpose of LAC review meeting is to consider the plan for the welfare of the looked after child and achieve Permanence for them within a timescale that meets their needs. The review is chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

The LA is also responsible for appointing a representative to visit the child wherever he or she is living to ensure that his/her welfare continues to be safeguarded and promoted. The minimum national timescales for visits is within one week of placement, then six weekly until the child has been in placement for a year and the 12 weekly thereafter. Rotherham have set a higher standard of within first week then four weekly thereafter until the child has been permanently matched to the placement.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

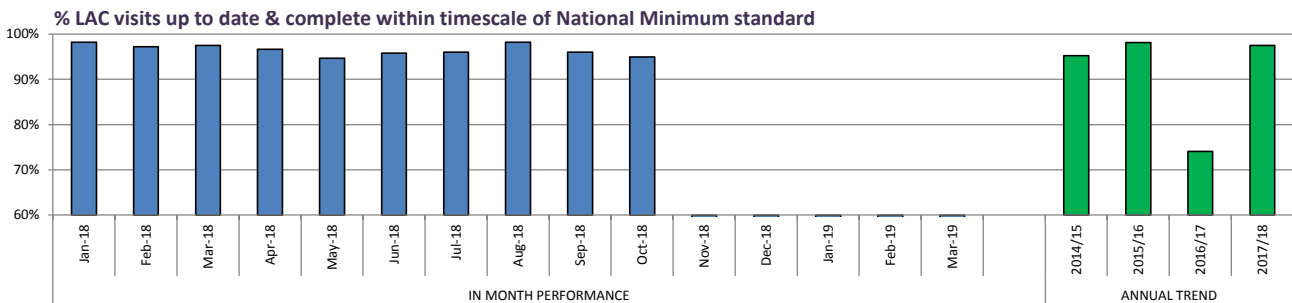
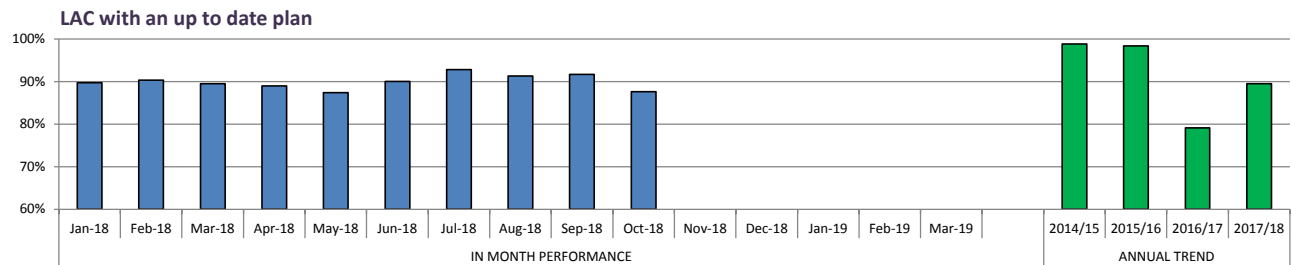
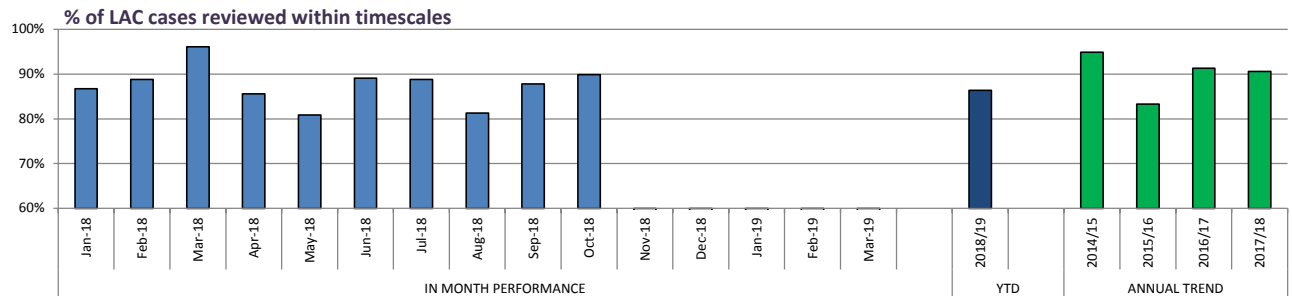
The timeliness of Statutory Reviews has improved once again this month to 133 out of 148 (89.9% up from a low of 80.9% in May) which seems primarily due to increased capacity within the IRO service.

Performance in respect of Statutory Visits has declined slightly to 95% but when the report is re-run this figure tends to improve indicating that these visits are taking place but that pressures on social work capacity impact on their ability to record these visits in a timely way. The timeliness of up to date Care Plans has dipped more significantly to only 87.6% and this will be a focus of management attention over the coming month.

The on-going demand for social workers to supervise contact continues to be a significant pressure on the LAC Service with the time demands being the equivalent of an additional 3 cases per social worker across the service. Recruitment of the additional contact worker resource continues but is likely to be a few months before these workers are in post and as a result the impact on social worker capacity and ability to sustain timeliness in stat visits is likely to be an on-going challenge for a few months yet.

6.8	6.14	6.16
% of LAC cases reviewed within timescales	LAC with an up to date plan	% LAC visits up to date & complete within timescale of National Minimum standard

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Jan-18	150 of 173	86.7%	89.7%	597 of 608	98.2%
	Feb-18	119 of 134	88.8%	90.3%	590 of 607	97.2%
	Mar-18	148 of 154	96.1%	89.5%	614 of 630	97.5%
	Apr-18	119 of 139	85.6%	89.0%	602 of 623	96.6%
	May-18	131 of 162	80.9%	87.4%	604 of 638	94.7%
	Jun-18	131 of 147	89.1%	90.0%	615 of 642	95.8%
	Jul-18	167 of 188	88.8%	92.8%	631 of 657	96.0%
	Aug-18	100 of 123	81.3%	91.3%	646 of 658	98.2%
	Sep-18	130 of 148	87.8%	91.7%	628 of 654	96.0%
	Oct-18	133 of 148	89.9%	87.6%	622 of 655	95.0%
	Nov-18					
	Dec-18					
Jan-19						
Feb-19						
Mar-19						
YTD	2018/19	911 of 1055	86.4%	-		-
ANNUAL TREND	2014/15		94.9%	98.8%		95.2%
	2015/16		83.3%	98.4%		98.1%
	2016/17	652 of 714	91.3%	79.1%		74.0%
	2017/18	1502 of 1658	90.6%	89.5%		97.5%



LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - HEALTH

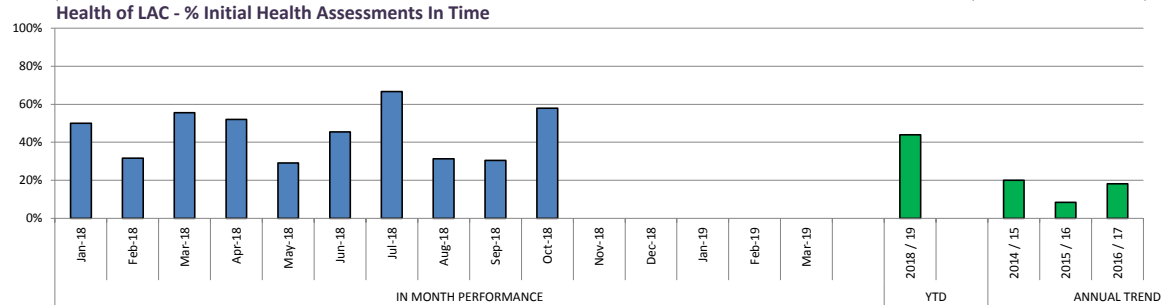
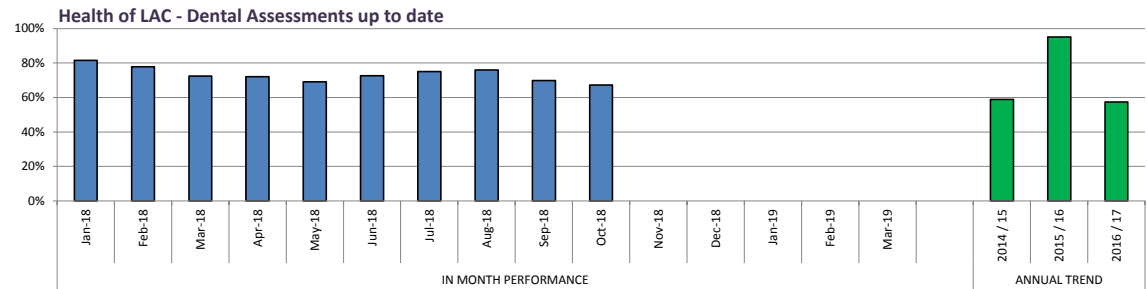
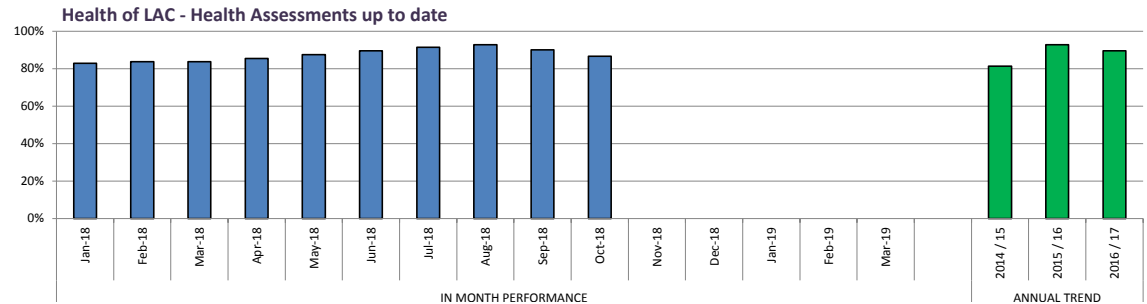
DEFINITION Local authorities have a duty to safeguard and to promote the welfare of the children they look after, therefore the local authority should make arrangements to ensure that every child who is looked after has his/her health needs fully assessed and a health plan clearly set out.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

On average when the report is rerun the performance in respect of health assessments improves by 6% from that reported at month end and the dental checks improve by an average of 10%. However, the trend in all Health measures is demonstrating a decline in performance although past experience evidences that this is more likely to be an issue with inputting data rather than health and dental checks not taking place.

There was an improvement of the % of IHAs undertaken in 20 working days to 57.9% and a follow up Review of the IHA process has now been convened, with a meeting scheduled for 10th December to assess the impact of the review held in September.

		6.10	6.11	6.12	
		Health of LAC - Health Assessments up to date	Health of LAC - Dental Assessments up to date	Health of LAC - No. Initial Health Assessments In Time	Health of LAC - % Initial Health Assessments In Time
IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Jan-18	82.9%	81.5%	9 of 18	50.0%
	Feb-18	83.7%	77.8%	6 of 19	31.6%
	Mar-18	83.7%	72.5%	10 of 18	55.6%
	Apr-18	85.5%	72.1%	13 of 25	52.0%
	May-18	87.5%	69.0%	7 of 24	29.2%
	Jun-18	89.6%	72.6%	15 of 33	45.5%
	Jul-18	91.4%	75.0%	10 of 15	66.7%
	Aug-18	92.8%	76.0%	5 of 16	31.3%
	Sep-18	90.0%	69.9%	7 of 23	30.4%
	Oct-18	86.6%	67.2%	11 of 19	57.9%
	Nov-18				
	Dec-18				
	Jan-19				
Feb-19					
Mar-19					
YTD	2018 / 19	-	-	68 of 155	43.9%
ANNUAL TREND	2014 / 15	81.4%	58.8%		20.0%
	2015 / 16	92.8%	95.0%		8.4%
	2016 / 17	89.5%	57.3%		18.2%
	2017 / 18	83.7%	72.5%	132 of 237	55.7%
LATEST BENCHMARKING	SN AVE				
	BEST SN				
	NAT AVE				
	NAT TOP QTILE				



LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS

DEFINITION

A personal education plan (PEP) is a school based meeting to plan for the education of a child in care. The government have made PEPs a statutory requirement for children in care to help track and promote their achievements. Prior to September 2015 PEPs were in place for compulsory school-age children only. PEPs are now in place for LAC aged two to their 18th birthday.

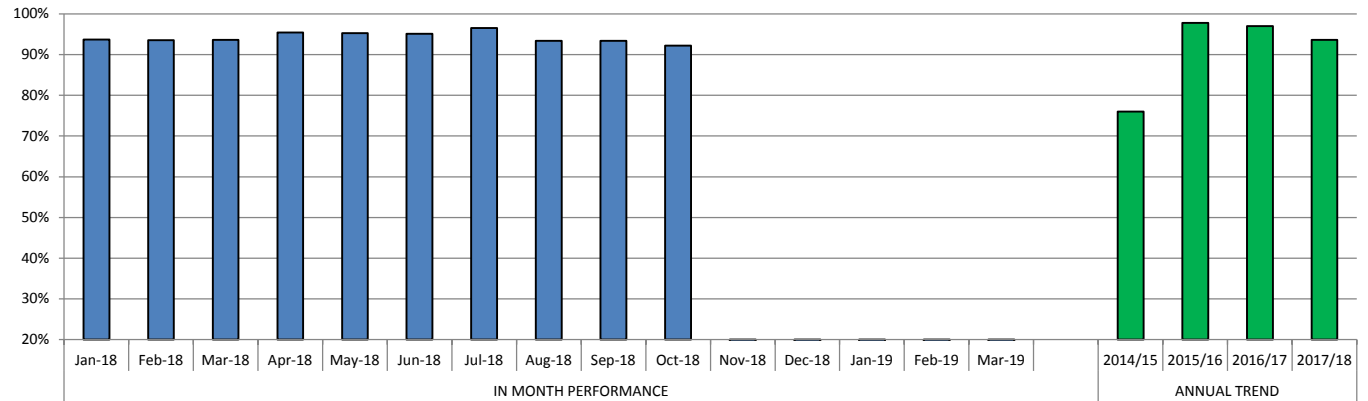
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

This is a termly report and the Virtual School reports that there are no known issues that would indicate any decline in performance.

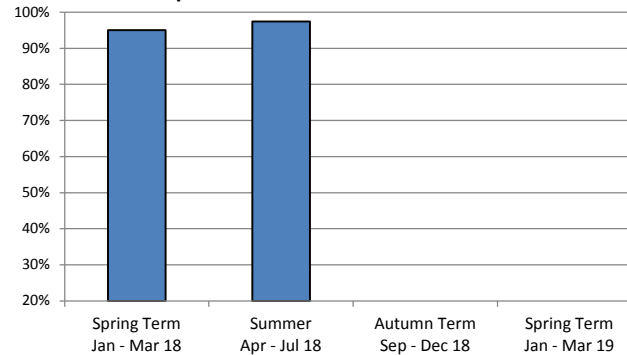
6.13		6.14
Number of Eligible LAC with a Personal Education Plan	% LAC with a Personal Education Plan	% LAC with up to date Personal Education Plan (Termly)

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Jan-18	446 of 476	93.7%	
	Feb-18	446 of 477	93.5%	
	Mar-18	454 of 485	93.6%	95.0% (Spring Term)
	Apr-18	461 of 483	95.4%	
	May-18	467 of 490	95.3%	
	Jun-18	470 of 494	95.1%	
	Jul-18	476 of 493	96.6%	97.4% (Summer Term)
	Aug-18	468 of 501	93.4%	
	Sep-18	480 of 514	93.4%	
	Oct-18	475 of 515	92.2%	
	Nov-18			
	Dec-18			(Autumn Term)
	Jan-19			
	Feb-19			
Mar-19			(Spring Term)	
YTD	2018/19	-	-	-
ANNUAL TREND	2014/15		76.0%	-
	2015/16		97.8%	-
	2016/17		97.0%	98.9% (Summer 2017)
	2017/18		93.6%	(Summer 2018) (Summer 2018)

% LAC with a Personal Education Plan



% LAC with up to date PEP



CARE LEAVERS

DEFINITION A care leaver is defined as a person aged 25 or under, who has been looked after away from home by a local authority for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14; and who was looked after away from home by the local authority at school-leaving age or after that date. Suitable accommodation is defined as any that is not prison or bed and breakfast.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS Performance has stayed relatively stable in respect of care leavers with a Pathway Plan and up to date Pathway Plan which remain virtually unchanged at 95% and 94% respectively. The Peer Review in November also identified one Pathway Plan that was of 'Outstanding' quality and this will be used as a template of best practice especially for the LAC social workers who are less skilled in writing these plans.

Pressures on capacity remain a growing concern mainly due to the delays in securing agreement for recruitment via the Workforce Management Board but in addition, retention is becoming an issue given that RMBC pays its Personal Advisers a lower rate than many local authorities in the region. Despite this the number of care leavers in suitable accommodation has remained unchanged at 95.5% and the number of care leavers who are EET has risen from 61.6% to 63.6%.

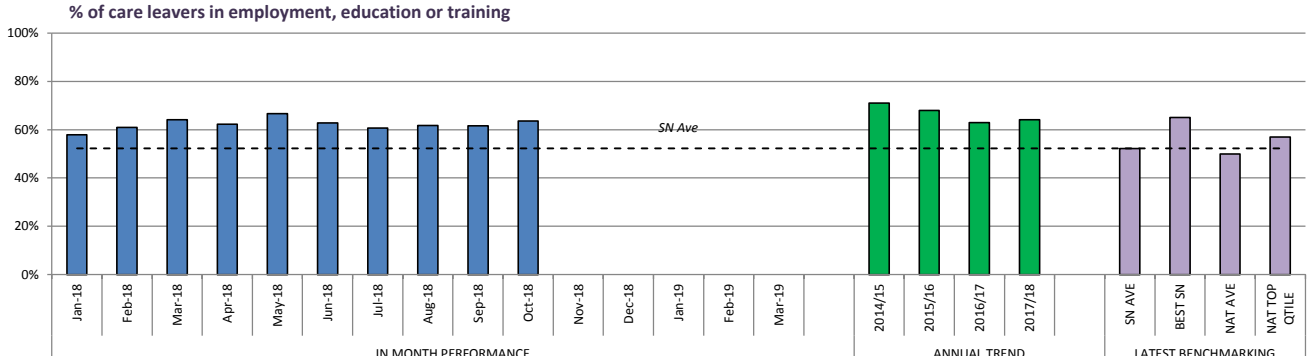
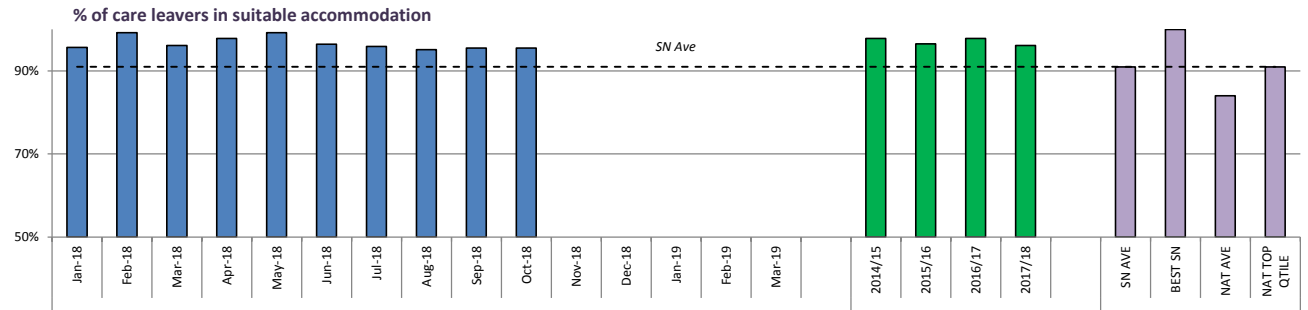
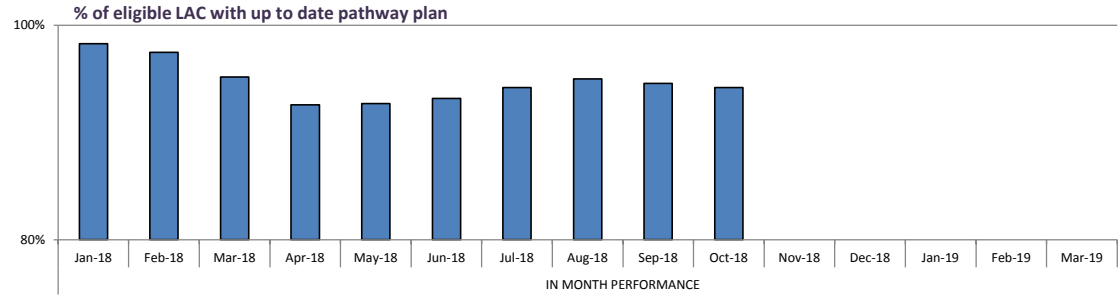
	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5
	Number of care leavers	% of eligible Care Leavers with a pathway plan	% of eligible Care Leavers with up to date pathway plan	% of care leavers in suitable accommodation	% of care leavers in employment, education or training

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Jan-18	238	94.5%	98.3%	95.6%	57.9%
	Feb-18	246	93.9%	97.5%	99.2%	60.9%
	Mar-18	256	93.9%	95.2%	96.1%	64.1%
	Apr-18	267	93.4%	92.6%	97.8%	62.2%
	May-18	249	93.5%	92.7%	99.2%	66.7%
	Jun-18	247	93.6%	93.2%	96.4%	62.8%
	Jul-18	244	94.7%	94.2%	95.9%	60.7%
	Aug-18	243	95.4%	95.0%	95.1%	61.7%
	Sep-18	245	95.0%	94.6%	95.5%	61.6%
	Oct-18	242	95.0%	94.2%	95.5%	63.6%
	Nov-18					
	Dec-18					
	Jan-19					
Feb-19						
Mar-19						

YTD	2018/19	-	-	-	-	-
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ANNUAL TREND	2014/15	183	-	-	97.8%	71.0%
	2015/16	197	69.8%	-	96.5%	68.0%
	2016/17	223	99.3%	-	97.8%	62.9%
	2017/18	256	93.9%	70.3%	96.1%	64.1%

LATEST BENCHMARKING	SN AVE				91.0%	52.2%
	BEST SN				100.0%	65.0%
	NAT AVE				84.0%	50.0%
	NAT TOP QTILE				91.0%	57.0%



LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - PLACEMENTS

DEFINITION

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

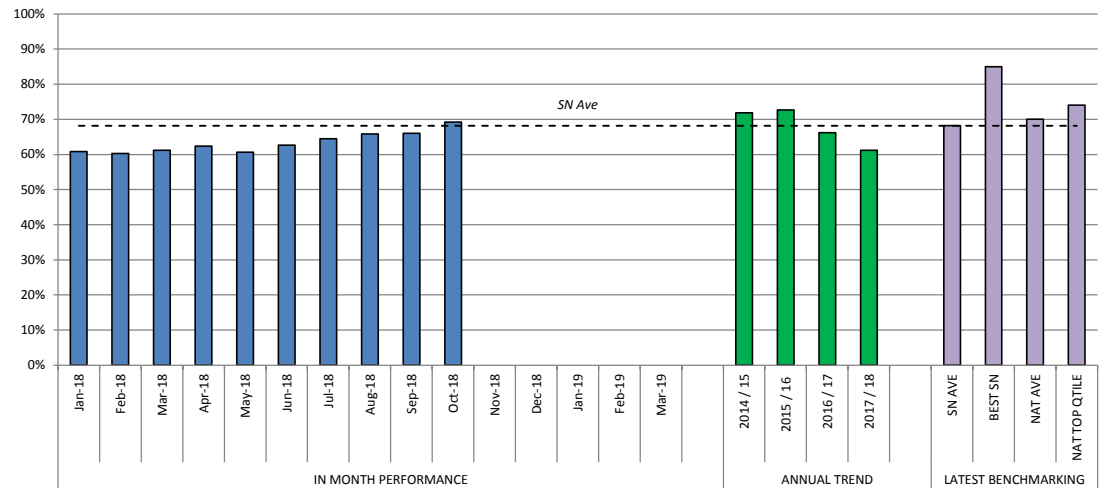
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Placement stability has improved yet again in both measures and as a measure of the impact of social work interventions it could be argued that this is the most revealing. The children in the same placement for 2+ years now stands at 69.2%, the highest it has ever been. The number of children with 3 or more placements in the past 12 months is down to 12.1%, a generally downward trend as from May but also the joint lowest figure for the past 12 months.

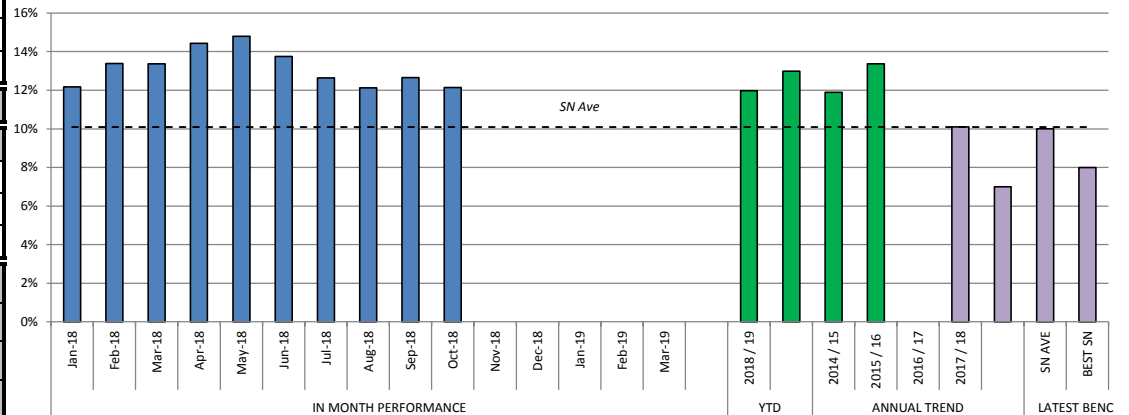
In addition the number of children in Family Based Settings has increased again to 82.7% as has the percentage of LAC living at home although this is likely to be impacted by the delay in Court availability to discharge Care Orders.

		8.1		8.2		8.3		8.4		8.5	
		Long term LAC placements stable for at least 2 years		LAC who have had 3 or more placements - rolling 12 mth		% of LAC in a family Based setting (includes living with parents)		% of LAC placed with parents or other with parental responsibility (P1)		LAC in a Commissioned Placement (Fostering & Residential)	
IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Jan-18	93 of 153	60.8%	73 of 600	12.2%	82.4%	5.5%	293 of 607	48.3%		
	Feb-18	91 of 151	60.3%	81 of 605	13.4%	81.5%	5.0%	302 of 610	49.5%		
	Mar-18	90 of 147	61.2%	83 of 621	13.4%	81.0%	4.3%	315 of 627	50.2%		
	Apr-18	91 of 146	62.3%	89 of 617	14.4%	81.0%	4.7%	317 of 621	51.0%		
	May-18	91 of 150	60.7%	94 of 635	14.8%	80.8%	5.0%	319 of 637	50.1%		
	Jun-18	94 of 150	62.7%	88 of 640	13.8%	81.0%	5.0%	338 of 643	52.6%		
	Jul-18	96 of 149	64.4%	82 of 649	12.6%	82.3%	5.1%	345 of 651	53.0%		
	Aug-18	100 of 152	65.8%	79 of 652	12.1%	82.9%	6.0%	340 of 655	51.9%		
	Sep-18	99 of 150	66.0%	82 of 648	12.7%	82.3%	5.5%	342 of 651	52.5%		
	Oct-18	101 of 146	69.2%	79 of 651	12.1%	82.7%	5.8%	342 of 658	52.0%		
	Nov-18										
	Dec-18										
	Jan-19										
Feb-19											
Mar-19											
YTD	2018 / 19		-		-		-		-		-
ANNUAL TREND	2014 / 15	110 of 153	71.9%	49 of 409	12.0%	-	-	-	-		
	2015 / 16	109 of 150	72.7%	56 of 431	13.0%	-	-	188 of 431	43.6%		
	2016 / 17	96 of 145	66.2%	58 of 488	11.9%	81.1%	5.3%	211 of 488	43.2%		
	2017 / 18	90 of 147	61.2%	83 of 621	13.4%	81.0%	4.3%	315 of 624	50.5%		
LATEST BENCHMARKING	SN AVE		68.2%		10.1%						
	BEST SN		85.0%		7.0%						
	NAT AVE		70.0%		10.0%						
	NAT TOP QTILE		74.0%		8.0%						

% long term LAC placements stable for at least 2 years



% LAC who have had 3 or more placements - rolling 12 months



FOSTERING

DEFINITION

A foster care family provide the best form of care for most Looked after children. Rotherham would like most of its children to be looked after by its own carers so that they remain part of their families and community .

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

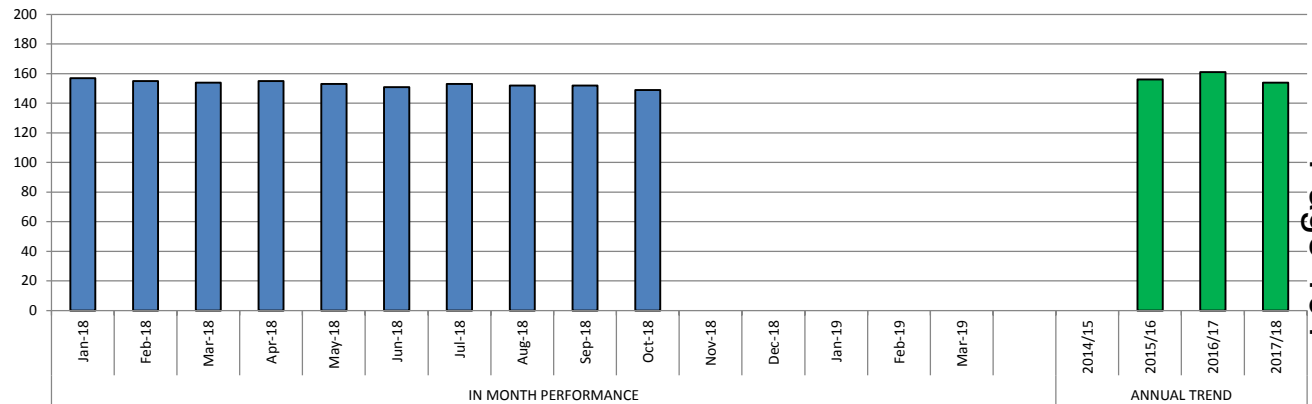
The recruitment of foster carers remains a key priority and significant challenge for the LAC Service and is, at present probably the one aspect of performance within the LAC Service that seems the hardest to shift. The number of de-registrations/resignations is now surpassing recruitment with the number of available foster families reducing to 149 from a high of 157 in January. Within this it has to be recognised that many of the retirees had not offered any placement for several months and so the impact in real terms is less significant than would first appear.

However, effective foster carer recruitment remains a significant concern with the revised Marketing Strategy undergoing further review. This was one area of focus requested from Lincolnshire in the recent Peer Review and a number of recommended actions will be considered in order to boost recruitment. One very positive aspect is that the Muslim Foster Carer project looks to be increasingly likely to deliver a number of foster carers over the course of 2019.

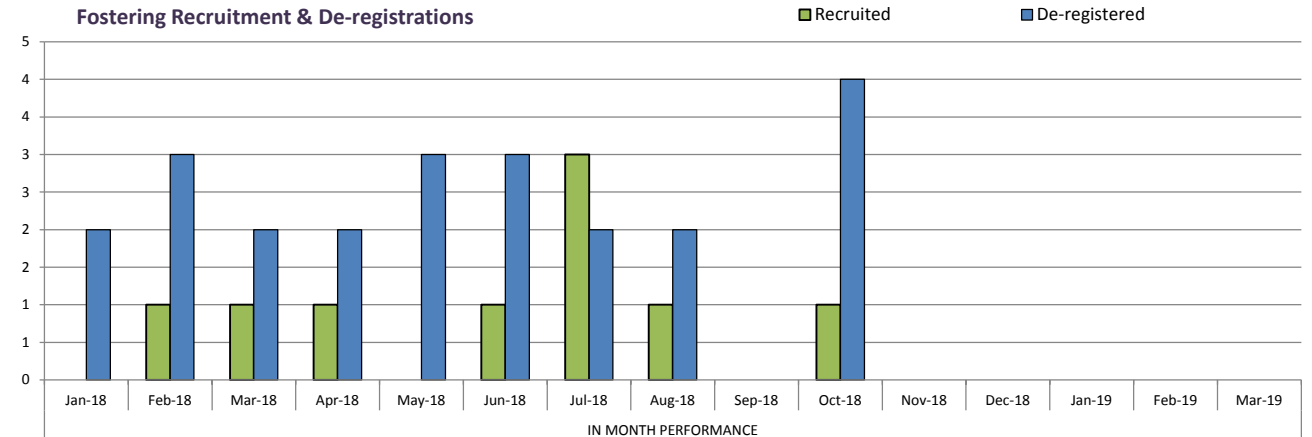
	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5
	Number of LAC in a Fostering Placement (excludes relative/friend)	% of total LAC in a Fostering Placement (excludes relative/friend)	Number of Foster Carers (Households)	Number of Foster Carers Recruited (Households)	Number of Foster Carers De-registered (Households)

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Jan-18	398	65.6%	157	0	2
	Feb-18	399	65.4%	155	1	3
	Mar-18	414	66.0%	154	1	2
	Apr-18	409	65.9%	155	1	2
	May-18	418	65.6%	153	0	3
	Jun-18	427	66.4%	151	1	3
	Jul-18	443	68.0%	153	3	2
	Aug-18	439	67.0%	152	1	2
	Sep-18	437	67.1%	152	0	0
	Oct-18	443	67.3%	149	1	4
	Nov-18					
	Dec-18					
	Jan-19					
	Feb-19					
	Mar-19					
YTD	2018/19	-	-	-	7	16
ANNUAL TREND	2014/15	-	-	-	-	-
	2015/16	-	-	156	13	16
	2016/17	353	72.3%	161	32	22
	2017/18	414	66.0%	154	16	25

Number of Foster Carers



Fostering Recruitment & De-registrations



ADOPTIONS

DEFINITION

Following a child becoming a LAC, it may be deemed suitable for a child to become adopted which is a legal process of becoming a non-biological parent. The date it is agreed that it is in the best interests of the child that they should be placed for adoption is known as their 'SHOBPA'. Following this a family finding process is undertaken to find a suitable match for the child based on the child's needs, they will then be matched with an adopter(s) followed by placement with their adopter(s). This adoption placement is monitored for a minimum of 10 weeks and assessed as stable and secure before the final adoption order is granted by court decision and the adoption order is made .
Targets for measures A1 and A2 are set centrally by government office.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

The 2 adoptions achieved in October slightly improved performance in respect of the A1 scorecard from 353 days to 351 days and in the A2 scorecard from 196 to 185 days.

In addition to the 14 adoptions completed thus far this financial year there are 25 children already in their adoptive placements of which 11 have Court dates set for the Adoption hearing. The year end forecast remains likely to be at 31-34 adoptions which is an improvement on last year.

There have been 13 sets of adoptive parents fully approved so far this year with seven more at stage 1, and six at stage 2 and so once again last year's performance looks likely to be surpassed with the forecast of 23/24 over the year as compared to 14 approvals last year.

Data Note: Taken from manual tracker. Data requires inputting into LCS

	10.1	10.2	10.3	10.4	10.5
Number of adoptions		Number of adoptions completed within 12 months of SHOBPA	% adoptions completed within 12 months of SHOBPA	Av. No. days between a child becoming LAC & having a adoption placement (A1) (ytd. ave)	Av. No. days between placement order & being matched with adoptive family (A2) (ytd. ave)

IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Jan-18	0	0	-	315.0	137.0
	Feb-18	2	1	50.0%	311.9	134.9
	Mar-18	5	4	80.0%	325.3	124.8
	Apr-18	2	1	50.0%	370.0	146.5
	May-18	3	0	0.0%	469.0	260.2
	Jun-18	2	2	100.0%	369.0	201.9
	Jul-18	3	2	66.7%	339.4	163.8
	Aug-18	2	0	0.0%	353.9	196.6
	Sep-18	0	0	-	353.9	196.6
	Oct-18	2	0	0.0%	351.4	185.7
	Nov-18					
	Dec-18					
	Jan-19					
Feb-19						
Mar-19						

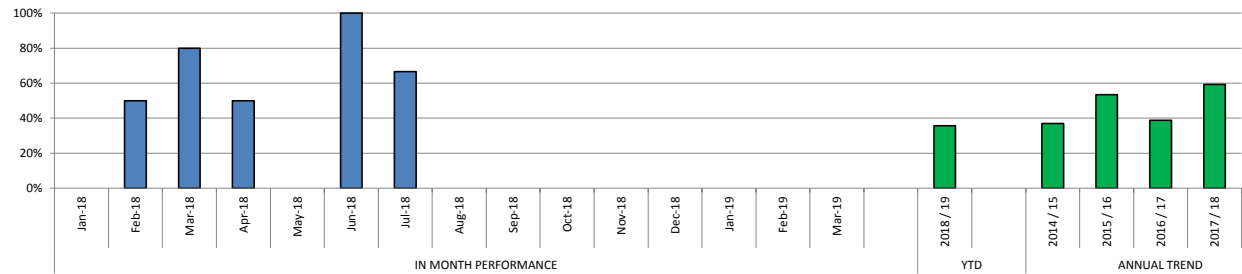
YTD	2018 / 19	14	5	35.7%	-	-
ANNUAL TREND	2014 / 15	-	-	37.0%	393.0	169.0
	2015 / 16	43	23	53.5%	296.0	136.0
	2016 / 17	31	12	38.7%	404.0	232.9
	2017 / 18	27	16	59.3%	325.3	124.8

LATEST BENCHMARKING	SN AVE				511.6	214.7
	BEST SN				337.0	73.0
	NAT AVE				558.0	226.0
	NAT TOP QTILE				501.1	183.6

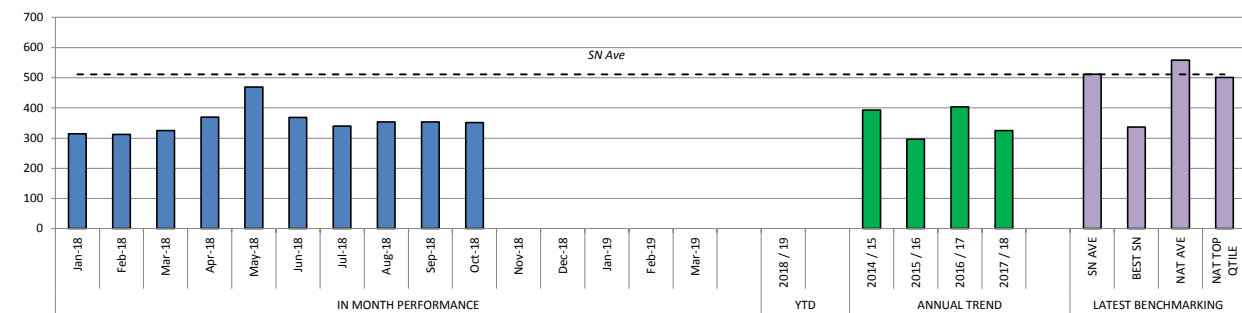
*Annual Trend relates to current reporting year April to Mar - not rolling year

**adoptions have a 28 day appeal period so any children adopted in the last 28 days are still subject to appeal

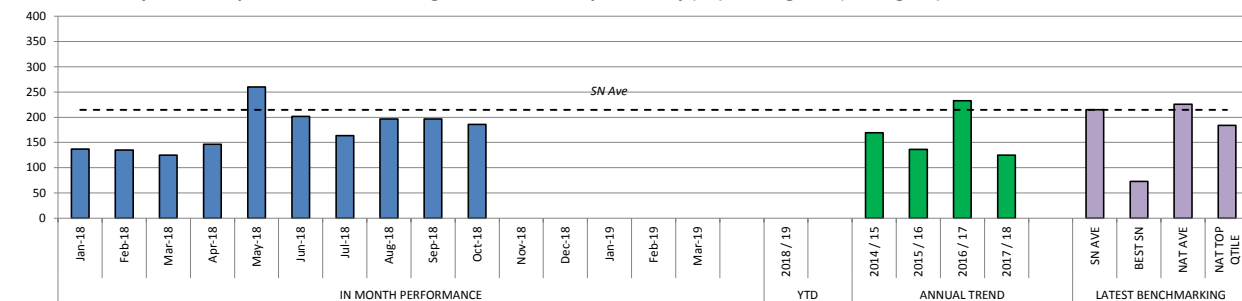
% adoptions completed within 12 months of SHOBPA



Av. No. days between a child becoming LAC & having a adoption placement (A1) - Rolling Year (low is good)



Av. No. days between placement order & being matched with adoptive family (A2) - Rolling Year (low is good)



CASELOADS

DEFINITION

Caseload figures relate to the number of children the social worker is currently the lead key worker. Fieldwork teams relate to frontline social care services including the four Duty Teams, none Long Term CIN Teams, two LAC teams and the CSE Team. All averages are calculated on a full time equivalency basis, based on the number of hours the worker is contracted to work.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

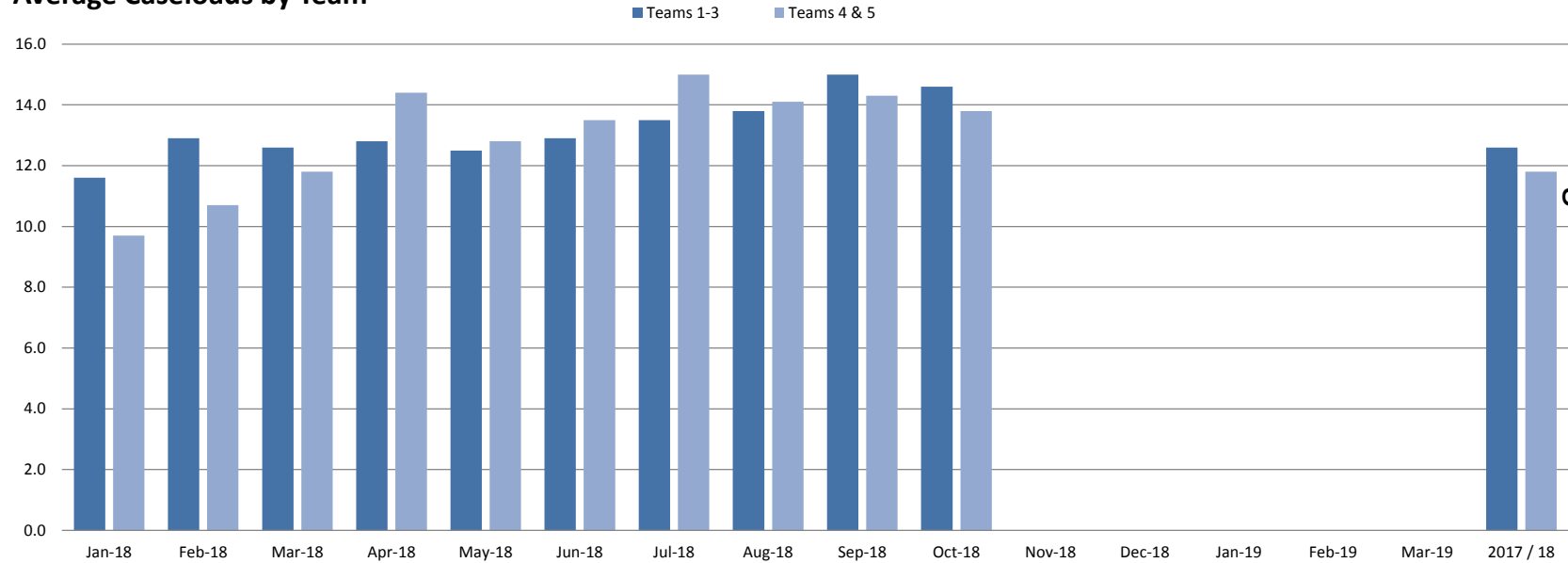
The calculation for average caseloads (below) does not take into account the reduced caseloads of social workers on a phased return to work, 'Assessed and Supported Year in Employment' (ASYE) social workers and 'Advanced Practitioner' (APs), average caseloads for all LAC teams continues to increase was 17.25. The Court and Permanence teams have similarly increased caseloads which was an average of 15.75, although each case in proceedings presents a disproportionate level of work. Both of these are part of an on-going rising trend and they are beginning to impact on performance and quality of interventions with direct work and life-story work being increasingly difficult to accommodate.

As a result of the pressures on the Court and Permanence teams the long-term LAC teams are allocating increasing numbers of care proceedings which once again has a disproportionate impact on overall capacity with this being further aggravated by the on-going pressures of supervising contact at an average of the equivalent of 3 cases per social worker.

The Social Care Pathway Review is on-going but until any recommendations from this group are implemented it is likely that sustaining current levels of performance is going to be an increasing challenge.

	11.3	11.4	
Maximum caseload of social workers in LAC Teams		Av. no. cases in LAC Teams	
		Teams 1-3	Teams 4 & 5

Average Caseloads by Team



IN MONTH PERFORMANCE	Jan-18	17	11.6	9.7
	Feb-18	17	12.9	10.7
	Mar-18	18	12.6	11.8
	Apr-18	22	12.8	14.4
	May-18	22	12.5	12.8
	Jun-18	22	12.9	13.5
	Jul-18	21	13.5	15.0
	Aug-18	23	13.8	14.1
	Sep-18	23	15.0	14.3
	Oct-18	23	14.6	13.8
	Nov-18			
	Dec-18			
	Jan-19			

YTD	2018/19	-	-	-
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ANNUAL TREND	2014/15	-	-
	2015/16	19	14.1
	2016/17	17	11.6
	2017 / 18	18	12.6

Partners in Practice Feedback Rotherham MBC

5th, 6th and 7th November 2018

Areas of Focus

- **Quality of Care Plan and Pathway Plans**
- **IRO's – challenge and monitoring of quality**
- **Fostering Recruitment** – Review of the process at the front end e.g. marketing, expressions of interest
- **Admissions to Care** – review of cases
- **Right Child Right Care Programme** – review to ensure performance Voice of the Child
- **Interface/Transition LAC** – Leaving Care/Adults

Workforce - Strengths

- Children's Services demonstrate a strong commitment to improving outcomes for children. There has been clear improvement within the LAC service since Lincolnshire's visit in 2017.
- There is a strong cultural shift across the organisation, which is clearly evident when meeting all staff.
- Workforce stability in LAC/IRO/LC teams is good, and the workforce are motivated and keen to provide a good service to Looked After Children in Rotherham.
- All social workers reported access to frequent verbal case discussions with their managers, including senior leaders. Senior leaders visible, accessible, staff able to raise concerns/suggestions and feel listened to.
- Continued reduction in agency staff, with agency staff becoming permanent employees.
- All staff know their children well and had high aspirations and hopes for their futures.
- Co-Location seen as a major success, LAC feel integrated into the wider CYPS.
- Therapeutic support, particularly IIP is seen as highly successful.

LAC – Strengths

- LAC and Leaving Care meet regularly to improve integrated working.
- Joint supervisions between teams at transfer.
- Edge of Care Team very well regarded and seen as effective.
- Some positive views re PLO Panel. Staff could see more recent challenge of thresholds, pre proceedings, to divert families away from proceedings or from Children becoming LAC.
- Leaving Care and LAC are proactively working with parents and their networks to support young people with maintaining or re building relationships.
- Improved accommodation for 16/18 year olds.
- Missing episodes for 16/17 year olds has reduced by 60%. Leaving Care are identifying risk, undertaking intense direct work , they know and care for their children and will go the extra mile to ensure their safety.
- Majority of case records viewed are up to date. Children seen and stat visits in most cases within timescale.

IRO- Strengths

- Dispute resolution process is making a difference.
- Major drive on performance within the IRO Service, including a data suite and monthly performance meetings. IRO's striving to evidence their footprint and impact on the child's plan.

Foster Carer Recruitment

Strengths

- The staff are enthusiastic and motivated to provide a good service.
- There is a stable management group.
- There is a specialist team that works with Reg 24 carers, private fostering short breaks and Mocking bird. Team managers have been proactive in ensuring the child's voice is included within fostering network evaluation of hub, and have been creative in how they achieve this with a video.
- Workers feel supported by the management team in developing the service.
- There is a dedicated marketing worker based within the Fostering team, working jointly with the Comms team.
- A PSW has recently been appointed to the team which they are finding invaluable with supporting new carers.
- Managers felt that most of the Reg 24 placements progressed to SGO's and those that did not, did not do so, as this was the right plan for the child.
- The foundations with regards to marketing are strong with a communication and marketing campaign plan for the year. The challenge 63, Muslim foster carer project and star parties appear to have worked well and have resulted in formal applications being received.

Foster Carer Recruitment

Strengths (continued)

- The managers and foster carers were positive about the retention project in place with fostering network.
- There is a dedicated recruitment team. Drop in sessions are regular and facilitated by workers and Foster carers.
- The skills to foster course is bi-monthly, there is flexibility with facilitating the course to avoid drift and delay in assessments. The introduction of Mocking bird has commenced and is now in the process of setting up the 2rd hub with a 3rd identified
- There is a dedicated fostering advisor offering consistency to all new applicants.
- The introduction of the pipeline is proving effective with clear monitoring and tracking of all enquiries including long term enquiries, resulting in 3 that have progressed to assessment.
- There is a positive working relationship between the fostering advisor and the assessing social workers, this has supported the development of the initial visit process, ensuring initial visits are robust. This has also included joint visits with assessing social workers.
- There was a clear sense of a developed fostering community with the foster carers.
- The introduction of the Mocking bird has been welcomed by foster carers who see this a valuable source of support.
- The Mocking bird carers felt that the multi agency training was a real positive and should be extended to all foster carers.
- Foster carers felt that the support that they received from their SSW when in work was excellent, however commented that there have been significant periods of instability within the service.

Workforce – Areas for Future Focus

- Attention to compliance has been robust, however, staff and managers suggest the need to move the focus to outcomes, whilst not diluting compliance.
- A review of transfer points is welcomed by staff, there are still too many transfer points, changes of social workers which is not in line with your relationship based practice framework and restorative practice.

LAC – Areas for Future Focus

- Review of transfer point to LAC is welcomed, by staff, CYP still have too many handover points.
- There is not always adherence to the PLO process and Care planning process where permanence other than adoption is the plan.
- Not effectively using the pre proceedings process for unborn babies. There is no consistently used pre birth assessment template.
- Family finding is not as rigorous as we would expect to see, there is a concern about the robustness of the viability assessments. Need to encourage staff to develop a more systematic approach to exploring networks and family members, both as potential carers but also as key support in safety planning.
- Some misunderstanding and lack of knowledge regarding Reg 24/SGO's placements. Over reliance upon the 2 specialist fostering workers.
- An improving focus on robust permanence planning would assist, with exit planning being in the mind from the outset.
- In some cases planning and decision making about achieving permanence suggested drift and a lack of clarity
- Review planning pathways and streamline panels.
- LAC staff reported that OOB placements, court work and processes are impacting upon their ability to progress permanence plans and undertake life story work.
- Single assessments are not always updated to assist planning or following significant events.

Right Child Right Care Programme

- Growing numbers of LAC presents significant risk to LAC services budget and, consequently, the Borough's budget as a whole.
- Rotherham has undertaken a 'Deep Dive' of the current and recent LAC cohort to ensure children are transitioning to LAC status within appropriate thresholds, to secure permanence via a number of routes and to develop exit plans.
- The RCRCP is yielding results, however in some cases where permanence or revocations of orders had been agreed, there was drift and delay. Staff cite these delays as insufficient Panel availability, court time and capacity due to court work demands. Furthermore LAC staff questioned thresholds within the duty teams and identified cases where they had been able to return child home in a short space of time.

IRO- Areas for Future Focus

- IRO compliance form – Focused on paperwork rather than outcomes. SW's spoke negatively of report and questioned IRO's ability and confidence to navigate the case record system. This form could be developed to be more restorative and include impact and outcomes for the child.
- Managers to ensure robust follow up to escalations from the IRO service.

Care Plans- Areas for Future Focus

- Quality of care plans/Pathway Plans reviewed was inconsistent. However 1 plan sampled was deemed an excellent example and could be used as a best practice example. 1170191.
- Several of the care plans/pathway plans reviewed lacked analysis, defined actions and how progress will be measured.
- Child's voice was not consistently apparent in care plans.
- SW's felt the current care planning form is too process led and not child or family friendly.
- Focus on consistency now in respect of children's care plans and ensuring that these are analytical, SMART and clearly articulate the child's lived experience.

Areas for Future Focus

- Staff know their children well, we would encourage an increased use of direct work (words and pictures etc.) with children and that this is clearly evident on the case records, this will increase the quality of care planning.
- You have a real opportunity with a clear practice framework SOS and Restorative Practice, to place relationships at the heart of all you do. To ensure that this is embedded within CYPS and across partner agencies, this needs to become a shared language and be driven by senior leaders across the organisation. A review of the implementation plan and re-launch of the vision may be necessary.

Foster Carer Recruitment

Areas for future Focus

With the growth in LAC numbers in Rotherham, it is vital for the financial sustainability of the LAC service, that investment in the fostering service ensures sufficient in house placements.

- The marketing campaign would benefit from being strengthened in terms of a focussed and targeted campaign. In addition to the yearly campaign a long term strategy linked to Rotherham's sufficiency strategy, would provide focus and clear direction moving forward.
- Strengthen the analysis of soft intelligence and data, to inform a targeted recruitment strategy. Recruitment needs to reflect the demographics of the current and future Looked after population and increase the growth of in house foster placements.
- Link recruitment campaigns to an umbrella slogan to gain brand recognition.
- The front door appears vulnerable with only one worker who is to go on maternity leave. The service would benefit from being strengthened in terms of staffing capacity. The fostering advisor role works well and is valued by the teams, if capacity were increased this would support growth within the service. The fostering advisor appears to manage all initial expressions of interest, enquiries and visits and holds until stage 1. Additional capacity would allow for reflection and would also ensure timely and quality responses to enquiries. This is a significant part of the process as recruitment and retention of foster carers is key in delivering the service plan.
- There is a retention project being undertaken with fostering network, the offer to foster carers needs to be more explicit and used as part of the marketing campaign.
- Foster carers felt that they were not seen as professionals or valued and commented that they would like the opportunity for their voice to be heard. One comment "please treat me like a professional and be open and honest". Foster carers are keen to be part of the fostering journey, moving to a "done with" culture. As part of a longer term strategy annual surveys and focus groups with existing foster carers would support and inform retention.

Foster Carer Recruitment

Areas for future focus (continued)

- Drop in sessions are in place however consideration as to the facilitation of these events needs to consider all targeted areas including evenings as currently they are excluding a proportion of the market. (applicants who work). A reduction in the frequency from monthly to bi-monthly with a consistent targeted message may want to be considered.
- Foster carers felt that joint training with social workers would provide them with a more holistic picture and would make them feel more valued.
- Foster carers understand the necessity to recruit new carers, however they do not feel they are part of the journey or as involved as they could be.
- Although the managers and the foster carers felt that the IPP was a good resource, there is a significant waiting list.
- Foster carers felt that the investment in the service has reduced in terms of staffing and “cover” for maternity and sickness with a number of part time staff, leaving foster carers feeling unsupported and not valued.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted