

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SCRUTINY SUB-PANEL

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham.

Date: Wednesday, 20 September 2006

Time: 2.00 p.m.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies.
2. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
3. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
4. Declarations of Interest.
5. Questions from Members of Press and Public

FOR MONITORING

6. Services for Care Leavers - Update (reports herewith) (Pages 1 - 4)

Peter Clayton (Job Centre Plus) and David Morley (Revenues and Benefits)

7. Complaints - Looked After Children (reports herewith) (Pages 5 - 35)

Claire Bailey

8. Profile of Looked After Children (report herewith) (Pages 36 - 41)

Katy Hawkins

9. Regulation 33 Visits (report herewith) (Pages 42 - 45)

Katy Hawkins to report

10. Meeting with Right to Rights Group and Members - Update on Progress (reports herewith) (Pages 46 - 50)

Lynne Grice- Saddington

MINUTES

11. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 12th July 2006 (herewith). (Pages 51 - 55)

Membership:-

Chairman – Councillor G. A. Russell.

Vice-Chairman Councillor McNeely.

Councillors Burke, Dodson, Jackson, P. A. Russell, Sangster, St. John, Thirlwall and Whelbourn.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. Meeting:	Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel
2. Date:	20th September, 2006
3. Title:	Update – access to housing benefits for care leavers
4. Programme Area:	Corporate Services All wards

5. Summary

Following a discussion on services to care leavers and access to benefits at its last meeting held on July 12th, 2006, the Panel requested further information be brought back for consideration.

6. Recommendations

- a. That Members receive the briefing and note the suggested actions**
- b. That a progress report be brought back to the Panel in 12 months time**

7. Proposals and Details

At its meeting held on 12th July, the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel discussed services to care leavers. Access to benefits was highlighted and the Panel requested that further information be brought back to the panel for their consideration. The attached briefing note outlines the discussion between officers from Revenues and Benefits Service and NCH Bridges Leaving Care Project and emerging actions to improve how housing benefit is processed for care leavers.

8. Finance

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report as the proposed actions can be met through existing resources.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

It is important to ensure that Council services meet the needs of its vulnerable clients. Failure to implement the proposed actions may lead to delays in payment of housing benefits to care leavers.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The issues raised in this paper are linked to the themes of Rotherham Safe and Achieving and the cross-cutting theme of fairness and to the Every Child Matters themes of Stay Safe and Achieve Economic Well-Being

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Minute 3(3) Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel – July 12th, 2006

Contact Name: Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser Tel: (82)2765
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Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel – Briefing paper.
20 September, 2006

Purpose of meeting.

A meeting was held 09/08/06 between Kate Wright and Cheryl Blackett (Revenues and Benefits), Caroline Webb (Scrutiny Services, Chief Execs Office) and Sue May and Lynn Booth (NCH) to discuss 'perceived' delays in processing Housing Benefit claims for care leavers and whether anything could be changed to alleviate the 'perceived' delays.

Discussions held.

It was discussed that the delays in processing Housing Benefit seem to stem from the processing of Jobseeker's Allowance [JSA] claims. In the main, once a young person's JSA claim had been sorted out, Housing Benefit payments were made quickly. Further discussions are planned with relevant colleagues about JSA and care leavers.

It was also discussed that there seem to be inconsistencies in the decisions being received from the Rent Service, both when comparing different claims or following breaks in the same claim. It was confirmed that the Rent Service had recently undergone a major re-structure and new Rent Officers were now dealing with our area. These new officers were not familiar with this area and it had been noticed in the Benefit Service that some of the decisions were inconsistent. This will be raised with the Rent Service at the next the liaison meetings and we will provide examples for them to look at.

Agreed.

In order to speed up the processing of HB claims/payments the Benefit Service will look at a way of awarding HB whilst a JSA claim is still being assessed by Jobcentre Plus. It was agreed that the best method will be to channel 'leaving care' customers through the Customer Service Centre either via an appointment or on a 'drop in' basis. The Benefit Service will find a method of identifying 'leaving care' customers and these claims can be verified at the point of contact so that complete claims can be referred to the back office and swiftly processed.

It was also agreed that additional information would be supplied to the Benefit Service around the issues regarding decisions from the Rent Service and this information would be further analysed by the Benefit Service in line with analysis already being carried out following the re-structure of the Rent Service. This could then be taken forward at the next liaison meeting where appropriate.

How the service will improve.

The changes to be made will lead to 'leaving care' customers not having to wait until their JSA claim has been processed in order to receive their Housing

Benefit payments. Also where a complete claim is made via the Customer Service Centre, the Benefit Service will be able to identify these claims quickly and be able to 'fast-track' them so that payments can be made swiftly and thus avoid any delays.

Analysis of the Rent Service decisions should lead to more consistent decisions being made by Rent Officers and lead to more consistent levels of Housing Benefit being made to 'leaving care' customers.

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ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1	Meeting:	Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel
2	Date:	20th September, 2006
3	Title:	Complaints and Representations made by Children and Young People of Rotherham from 1st April, 2005 to 31st July, 2006.
4	Programme Area:	Children and Young People's Services

5 Summary

The attached information provides further details on the complaints from children and young people during 2005/2006.

The Themes that have arisen from the complaints and representations made by children and young people on a repeated basis are as follows:

- The level of disruption within a child's placement associated with the behaviour of their peers this also includes a child being the subject of bullying.
- The attitude and conduct of staff members within Residential Services.
- The quality and conduct of foster carers during a young person's placement.
- The increase of post looked after children seeking support when undergoing a family assessment for their child.
- The increase in support and advice provided to children and young people who are placed out of Authority.

6 Recommendations

The Members receive and note the contents of the first detailed report outlining the complaints and representations made by the children and young people of Rotherham.

7 Proposals and Details

Following on from the presentation of the comments, complaints and representations annual report in July 2006, Members requested that a more comprehensive report detailing the complaints made by children and young people be submitted.

The attached report sets out the date when a complaint was received, the age, gender and placement category of the complainant. The basis and outcome of each complaint is commented upon and includes if personal contact was established between the Designated Children and Young People's Complaints Officer and the young person.

8 Finance

At Stage One of the process the complaints are generally investigated by the relevant Team Manager. Throughout the investigation of the complaint the role of the Children's Complaints Officer is to provide support to the young person and ensure their concerns are thoroughly examined and the outcome is one which meets with their satisfaction. The financial implications are primarily associated with the time officers invest advocating on the young person's behalf and in resolving the complaint.

9 Risks and Uncertainties

On 1st September, 2006 the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure, Regulations 2006 came into force. This piece of legislation opens up other areas of the service about which children and young people can complain, for example, Special Guardianship support and Adoption Services.

This piece of legislation combined with opening up the complaints service for all the children and young people of Rotherham will have resource implications.

10 Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The introduction of the new statutory legislation governing the management of children and young people's complaints will require all the complaints literature to be re-designed. It is the intention of the Children's Complaints Officer to involve the children and young people of Rotherham in this initiative and information is attached relating to this.

There will also be a requirement to provide training for staff across Children and Young People's Services.

11 Background Papers and Consultation

Examples letters issued to the children and young people relating to their complaints are attached for information.

Contact Name: Maureen Connolly, Children's Complaints Officer,
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ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Mapping Grid of Complaints and Representations Made by Children and Young People from 1st April, 2005 to 31st July, 2006

The complaints detailed in the grid were by the child or young person directly to the Complaints Officer during personal interviews or by the completion of the complaints literature or via the Children's Rights to Rights Service.

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
1.4.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding the conduct of Residential Manager, i.e. choice of diction used in a discussion with the young person.	Paperwork relating to this complaint is still outstanding. However, due to the involvement of the Service Manager into complaints made by other young people in this Child Care Unit, the overall issues were addressed.	Yes
11.4.05	F 19 Years (Residential Care)	Failure by Social Worker to actually identify a long term placement for a young person with a learning disability.	On 31st August D.D. was transferred to her long term placement. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
12.4.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding the Level of disruption within a Child Care Unit and negative impact this was having upon her quality of home life.	The Manager of the home and Service Manager introduced strategies to reduce disruption with the unit. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
12.4.05	M 9 Years (Respite Care)	A child with a disability was unable to read the literature provided by the Children's Rights to Rights Service, provided on size A3 paper.	Children's Rights Officer and the Manager of Bramley House with the young people at the centre evaluated the quality of literature on display and in accordance with the Children's requirements the information is being redesigned. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
12.4.05	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Made a complaint alleging that the Manager had visited the Unit while under the influence of alcohol.	Complaint investigated by Service Manager and was not upheld. The young person acknowledged making false allegation. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
12.4.05	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	The complaint related to being bullied in the unit by another a young person residing at the home...	The Manger called a residents meeting to discuss general concerns and implemented the anti-bullying policy. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
12.4.05	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Complainant requested that the behaviour of another young person in the Unit who presented as beg under the influence of drugs and be investigated under the Complaints Procedure.	The matter was investigated by the Manager of the home and the Service Manager. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
13.4.05	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint made regarding the alleged behaviour of a member of staff toward the young person. The allegation related to use of inappropriate diction and the techniques used to physically manoeuvre S.W.	Complaint investigated by Service Manager and was not upheld. The young person acknowledged making false allegation. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
13.4.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint made regarding the alleged behaviour of a member of staff toward the young person. The allegation related to use of inappropriate diction and the techniques used to physically manoeuvre C.Y.	Complaint investigated by Service Manager and was not upheld. The young person acknowledged making false allegation. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
13.4.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding the conduct of a Residential Manager alleging that she was under the influence of alcohol when visiting the Unit.	Complaint investigated by Service Manager and was not upheld. The young person acknowledged making false allegation. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
13.4.06	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Representation regarding a young person with a learning disability being treated in a more preferential manner than the resident group.	The Manager after discussion with S.W. enabled her to develop a greater awareness of the needs of service users with a disability. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
13.4.05	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint about being bullied in the Child Care Unit by another resident.	The Manager called a residents meeting to discuss general concerns and implemented the anti-bullying policy. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
13.4.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint about the culture of bullying within the Child Care Unit and the staff team not responding in fair and equitable manner in their handling of the situation.	The Manager called a residents meeting to discuss general concerns and implemented the anti-bullying policy. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
13.4.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint related to how she perceived the staff team to treat a client differently based on their learning disability.	Discussion between the young person and the Manager to develop more understanding of individual packages of care. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
15.4.05	F 17 Years (Previously looked after)	Complained that she was not having regular contact with her Social Worker and the difficulties this was presenting.	Team Manager organised for the Social Worker to draw up a schedule of visits to the young person. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
20.4.05	F 16 Years (Foster Care)	Complaint about being bullied in H.P.M. and being transferred to another wing.	After discussion between the Complaints Officer and Wetherby Prison, the young man was returned to his preferred section 'Benbow Unit'. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
29.4.05	M 9 Years (Respite Care)	Not being allowed to have his bedroom door open at night and the anxiety this caused in case he needed physical assistance.	The manager organised for the door to remain open without breaching fire regulations. Complaint resolved to young person's satisfaction.	No
12.5.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding the conduct of a member of staff. Issues involved inappropriate diction and threats to terminate her long term placement.	Management investigation and disciplinary procedures invoked. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
17.5.05	F 17 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding the conduct of a member of staff and their inappropriate use of diction and a lack of child care focus during communication.	Management investigation and disciplinary procedures invoked. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
19.5.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	The manner in which a member of staff spoke to the young person.	The management organised for a three way meeting and resolved the difficulties, including the removal of the staff member from the Key Work Team. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
26.5.05	F 15 Years (Out of Authority Placement)	Concerns regarding the care planning process in her out of authority placement and a request to have a new social worker allocated.	<p>The complaints office has been involved with this young person since 2003. This young person has been through Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the complaints process.</p> <p>Concerns regarding this placement remained ongoing throughout its duration and came to a close when the placement was terminated in July 2006.</p> <p>The role of the complaints office was to support the young person and the newly allocated social worker to ensure her welfare was safeguarded and her needs were met. Support included telephone contact, visits to the home and the attendance by the Complaints Officer at statutory reviews and case planning meetings. Contact with this young person remains ongoing.</p> <p>Satisfactory outcome for the young person.</p>	Yes
8.6.05	M 15 Years (Foster Care)	Requesting a change of allocated Social Worker, requesting contact with birth parent and dissatisfaction at the Department's intention to remove his Care Order.	<p>The complaint was investigated by the Team Manager and supported by the Children's Rights Officer. A new Social Worker was allocated. Birth mother was informed of future contact arrangements and the Care Order status was retained.</p> <p>Satisfactory outcome for the young person.</p>	No

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
10.6.05	M 16 Years (Residential Care)	The decision by the Local Authority to place the young man at Nomad. The young person believes he was not given sufficient time or preparation for the move.	Paperwork relating to this complaint remains outstanding.	Yes
16.6.05	M 11 Years (Foster Care)	The representation related to this young person's Social Worker not processing the paperwork relating to his passport in time for L.E. to travel abroad on a school trip.	The complaint was investigated by the Team Manager. She apologised for the distress this caused him and organised finance for a holiday for the foster family to Butlins and in addition he was provided with fifty pounds spending money. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
4.7.05	F 16 Years (Respite Care)	Complained about her sleep being disrupted due to the behaviour of another young person.	The young person was allocated to have an overnight stay at Bramley House when the other young person causing the disturbance was not present. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
1.7.05	F 19 Years (Residential Care)	Being bullied by other young people residing at the Children's Unit.	The Manager, Complaints Officer and all the Social Workers allocated to the young person met with the resident group to discuss anti-bullying strategies. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
1.7.05	M 13 Years (Residential Care)	About being bullied by other young people at the Child Care Unit.	The young man decided to withdraw his complaint.	No

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
12.7.05	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Regarding being bullied by other young people at the Child Care Unit.	Support provided by the Unit Manager and the staff team and the matter was resolved. Complaint resolved to young person's satisfaction.	Yes
6.7.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complained about the staff members and the techniques they used to remove the young people from the kitchen area by grabbing their clothes.	The paperwork relating to this complaint remains outstanding.	Yes
18.7.05	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Complained about the techniques used by a member of staff to retrain him.	The paperwork relating to this complaint remains outstanding.	Yes
19.7.05	F 19 Years (Residential Care)	Concern regarding being bullied by other young people residing at the home.	The manager, Complaints Officer and Locality Social Worker met with all the young people to discuss the bullying culture. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
19.7.05	F 14 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding not being able to have overnight stays with her grandmother.	The Team Manager investigated the complaint and apologised for the delay in processing the paperwork and actioned all outstanding matters. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
2.8.05	F 19 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding being bullied by two other young people residing at the Child Care Unit.	The unit Manager, Complaints Officer and Social Workers for the young people met with the client group and discussed anti-bullying strategies. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
2.8.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint made about the manner in which the staff undertook a search of her bedroom area.	The manager investigated the complaint and she was satisfied with the explanation as to why, the search was undertaken. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
2.8.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint about the practice of two members of staff working at the Child Care Unit.	A child protection meeting was convened and an action plan developed including additional training for the staff members involved. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
8.8.05	M 12 Years (Respite Care)	Complaint regarding the disruptive behaviour of another resident.	The Manager investigated the complaint and with the young persons consent purchased him a pair of head phones to reduce the noise. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
25.8.05	F 13 Years (Foster Care)	Complaint made in connection with the practice of her Social Worker for failing to integrate her into the foster placement on a gradual basis.	The Team Manager investigated the complaint and a letter of apology was issued by the Social Worker. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
2.9.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Representation relating to the financial sanction imposed for damage caused to a table fabric.	Complaint investigated by the Manager and financial sanction remained unchanged. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
16.9.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Young people within the Child Care Unit stealing her independent food stock.	This complaint was investigated by the Manager and missing items replaced. Satisfactory outcome for	No

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
19.9.05	M 14 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint about being bullied by other young people residing at the Child Care Unit and having his mobile phone stolen by them.	the young person. Manager investigated the complaint and replaced his mobile phone. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
26.9.05	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding being bullied by another resident.	Paperwork still outstanding.	No
29.9.05	M 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint about the care practices of his previous foster carers regarding physical chastisement.	Complaint investigated under the child protection procedures. The allegations made could not be substantiated. Feedback was provided to A.F. by his Independent Reviewing Officer. Level of satisfaction unknown.	Yes
3.10.05	F 12 Years (Foster Care)	Request via the Complaints Officer to support H.W. in converting the foster placement to the category of long term.	Through the case planning meeting process agreement was reached to secure H.W.'s placement to that of long term. Co-working on this issue was with the Manager of the Fostering Service, Foster Carer and the Social Worker. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
4.10.05	M 17 Years (Reunification with Family)	Complaints concerning not being allocated his full clothing allowance after being discharged back home.	Through negotiations with the Team Manager he received £100 of outstanding monies. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
4.10.05	F 16 Years (Foster Care)	Complaint regarding the routines with her foster placement.	Young person decided not to pursue her complaint following the placement breakdown.	No

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
4.10.05	M 17 Years (Reunification with Family)	Request for a review of his allowances post leaving care.	Review undertaken by the Team Manager and a commitment made to repay any outstanding finances. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
7.10.05	F 17 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding the disruption within the semi-independent unit and the problem this caused to her young child.	The Manager issued written notification to the resident concerned to reduce his music system. Complaint not resolved with young person's satisfaction but did not pursue the matter due to other complications in her personal circumstances.	Yes
11.11.05	M 14 Years (Foster Care)	Complaint about the conduct of a foster carer and the type of physical restraint he deployed.	This complaint was investigated under the child protection procedures. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
11.11.05	F 13 Years (Foster Care)	Complaint about the conduct of a foster carer and the type of physical restraint he deployed.	This complaint was investigated under the child protection procedures. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
11.11.05	F 19 Years (Residing at home)	Complaint about the family assessment process in relation to herself and new born child.	Complaint officer co-worked the case to agree how the process should be managed through to accommodate her views and aspirations. This complaint was investigated under the child protection procedures. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
5.12.05	M 12 Years (Residential Care)	The lack of available monies to finance activities within the Child Care Unit due to the petty cash impress being reduced	Manager profiled the complaint with senior management. The young person will await management's decision before he will state if he is satisfied.	No
5.12.05	M 13 Years (Residential Care)	The lack of available monies to finance activities within the Child Care Unit due to the petty cash impress being reduced	Manager profiled the complaint with senior management. He will await management's decision before he will state if he is satisfied.	No
8.12.05	M 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding being bullied in a Child Care Unit.	The Manager implemented anti-bullying strategies as per the agreement with the complaints officer.	Yes
12.12.05	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint that the Child Care Unit's washing machine being broken and the problems this created for the home.	The matter was brought to the attention of senior management by the Complaints Officer and authorisation was given that day to purchase a new washing machine. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
14.12.05	F 15 Years (Out of Authority)	Request for support to receive the same Christmas present allowance as those young people who are looked after in Rotherham	Complaint investigated by the Social Worker and she received the full allowance. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
2.2.06	F 18 Years (Reunification with Family)	Complaint about the care practices of her previous foster carer.	Complaint along with other matters investigated under the child protection procedures. Foster carer de-registered by the Fostering Panel. The young persons satisfaction with how this complaint was resolved is	No

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
16.3.06	M 10 Years (Out of Authority Placement)	Quality Assurance by the Complaints Officer of an out of Authority placement.	not know. This is due to issues associated with her mental health and having moved out of the Rotherham area. Complaints Officer provided support to the Social Worker in the assessment of care practices at out of Authority placement. To ensure his welfare was being promoted and safeguards were in place to protect his rights being upheld based on his level of vulnerability and age. Contact remains ongoing between the young person and the Complaints Officer, Social Worker and young people satisfied with C.O's. involvement.	Yes
5.4.06	F 15 Years (Out of Authority Placement)	Complaint regarding the inconsistent care practices of her out of Authority placement.	Case planning convened in which the Complaints Officer assisted the Social Worker in challenging the care regime. The outcome of which was a more considered approach to her care and in sustaining contact with the extended family Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
6.4.06	M 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding the bullying culture within the Child Care Unit.	Manager implemented anti-bullying strategy. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
6.4.06	F 15 Years	Complaint related to the restrictions being imposed on the young people's access to the kitchen area.	Complaint Officer and the Manager of the unit agreed a more child centred approach to the unit's	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
13.4.06	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Bullying by another resident at the Child Care Unit.	implementation of routines. Satisfactory outcome for the young person. Due to the nature of the allegations the complaint was investigated under the child protection procedures. Complaints Officer requested additions/support be provided to her by the looked after nurse. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
19.4.06	M 14 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint related to being bullied within the Child Care Unit.	Anti-bullying strategy developed by the Manager. The young person returned home and no response was received to Complaint Officer's correspondence regarding his level of satisfaction to the outcome of his complaint.	No
21.4.06	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding the staff teams inconsistent approach to the implementation of the 'missing from home protocol'.	The Complaints Officer and Manager met with the young person and were able to resolve the complaint by ensuring staff were fully conversant with the policy. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
21.4.06	F 15 Years (Respite Care)	Complaint regarding disruption during the night by another young person resulting in her having a loss of sleep.	The manager apologised for the disruption and would monitor the situation. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
26.4.06	M 13 Years (Residential Care)	Support of Complaints Officer requested at time of her visit to the Child Care Unit.	Through negotiations with the Manager, Complaints Officer and the young person agreement was	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
27.4.06	F 14 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint about being bullied in the Child Care Unit by another resident.	reached to jointly fund purchase of new trainers by him contributing a fee to the overall costs. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
5.5.06	F 14 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding a staff member's practice in managing challenging behaviour resulting in marks to her arm.	Complaint investigated by the Service Manager and Manager of the home. At the close of the investigation the young person although having signed the complaints form still remained unconvinced regarding the conduct of the staff member concerned. However, she did not want to pursue the matter any further.	Yes
5.5.06	F 14 Years (Residential Care)	Being bullied by another resident in the home.	Complaints Officer advised the young person of her right to involve the Police due to having been physically assaulted. The Manager also intervened to provide supporting statement to the Police. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
9.5.06	F	The complaint relates to staff members practice when imposing	The complaint was investigated by the Manager and she accepted the	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
	13 Years (Residential Care)	external controls. This resulted in SR receiving marks to her back.	outcome of the investigation. Complaint resolved to young person's satisfaction.	
11.5.06	M 13 Years (Residential Care)	The decision by the Child Care Unit to withdraw aromatherapy.	The Provided Manager and Unit Manager are to review the policy regarding practicing aromatherapy in the unit. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
11.5.06	M 12 years (Residential Care)	The decision by the Child Care Unit to withdraw aromatherapy.	The Provided Manager and Unit Manager are to review the policy regarding practicing aromatherapy in the unit. Complaint resolved to young person's satisfaction.	No
11.5.06	M 12 Years (Residential Care)	The decision by the Child Care Unit to withdraw aromatherapy.	The Provided Manager and Unit Manager are to review the policy regarding practicing aromatherapy in the unit. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
11.5.06	F 17 Years (Residential Care)	The decision by the Child Care Unit to withdraw aromatherapy.	The Provided Manager and Unit Manager are to review the policy regarding practicing aromatherapy in the unit. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
18.5.06	F	Being bullied in a Child Care Unit by	Paperwork is still outstanding on this	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
18.5.06	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding inappropriate contact by another male resident.	The Manager increased staffing levels to ensure S.H's. welfare was safeguarded and all Social Workers spoke independently with the young people for whom they were responsible. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
19.5.06	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint about her school attendance record being used as an incentive to receive family contact.	Immediately following the complaint being received family contact was re-established. N.K. did not pursue her complaint.	No
22.5.06	F 17 Years (Residential Care) Semi-Independent Accommodation	Support requested from the Complaints Officer regarding the difficulties W.B. was experiencing in the transition from a residential child care unit to semi-independent living accommodation.	Through consistent attendance and making representations on the behalf of the young person by the Complaints Officer professionals realised the placement was not meeting her needs. Additional support was also organised by the Complaint's Officer by the services of the 'looked after nurse', the general practitioner and a clinical psychologist. Support to this young person has been ongoing since 2004 and continues to date. She is satisfied with the involvement of the Complaints Officer.	Yes
24.5.06	F 16 Years	The conduct of a member of staff regarding her attitude and choice of diction when speaking to the young	Paperwork on this complaint is outstanding.	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
	(Residential Care)	person.		
24.5.06	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	The conduct of a member of staff regarding her attitude and choice of diction when speaking to the young person.	Paperwork on this complaint is outstanding.	Yes
26.5.06	M 17 Years Semi-Independent Accommodation	Complaint was in connection with the length of delay regarding the internment of his parent's ashes.	The complaint was investigated by the Team Manager and the delay was attributed to a number of factors relating to the family dynamics, discord between the two siblings and a delay on the part of the Social Worker. The Complaints Officer is still seeking to establish a satisfactory resolution for The young man.	Yes
30.5.06	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint about the delay in her access to records being approved by her Social Worker.	The Team Manager investigated the complaint and the Social Worker is currently supporting her through reading the file. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	Yes
7.6.06	F 20 Years Semi-Independent	Request for support regarding the assessment process in relation to herself and her new born child.	Complaints Officer attends meeting with the young woman to support her through the process and ensure her views and representations are listened to and taken into account in the care planning process for herself and the child. Support for this young woman is still ongoing as the assessment progresses.	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
20.6.06	F 14 Years (Foster Care)	Complaint about the care practices of her previous foster carer.	The young woman and Social Worker are satisfied with the ongoing support of the Complaints Officer. The young person of her own volition decided not to pursue the complaint.	No
22.6.06	F 17 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint concerning staff members working in the office and not spending time with the young people.	The Manage investigated the complaint and requested she returns to the unit at a reasonable time in order for staff to spend time with her. In addition to the above the staff team have been provided with an explicit instruction regarding their duty of care to the young people. Satisfactory outcome for the young person.	No
22.6.06	M 14 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint concerning staff members working in the office and not spending time with the young people.	Staff team have been provided with an explicit instruction regarding their duty of care to the young people. Complaint resolved to young person's satisfaction.	No
22.6.06	F 16 Years (Residential Care)	The complaint relates to the lack of consultation by locality staff to place K.B. in an out of authority placement.	A meeting was convened at which the Complaints Officer and other officers involved in her care plan made representations on her behalf. The decision of the meeting was to twin track her care package. The Team Manager also wrote to her regarding her complaint. The young person is satisfied with how the complaints process has been managed but is awaiting the decision	Yes

Date	Gender/Age and Placement Category	Complaint	Outcome	Personal Contact with Complaints Office
27.6.06	M 19 Years	Complaint relates to the delay in his access to records request.	of the Court on her placement. Support is ongoing. Paperwork relating to this complaint is still outstanding.	Yes
6.7.06	F 14 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding a staff members practice and the attitude she adopts when speaking to the young people.	The complaint has been referred to the Safeguarding Board in order for the issues raised to be considered under the child protection procedures and is still ongoing.	Yes
6.7.06	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint regarding a staff members practice and the attitude she adopts when speaking to the young people.	The complaint has been referred to the Safeguarding Board in order for the issues raised to be considered under the child protection procedures and is still ongoing.	Yes
18.7.06	F 13 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint refers to the reduction in the petty cash impress resulting in limited funds being available to finance social activities for the resident group.	Investigation ongoing.	No
18.7.05	F 14 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint refers to the reduction in the petty cash impress resulting in limited funds being available to finance social activities for the resident group.	Investigation ongoing.	No
24.7.06	M 14 Years (Residential Care)	Complaint about the social work practice of an agency worker working in the Child Care Unit.	Investigation ongoing.	
24.7.06	F 17 Years (Residential Care)	The conduct and social work practice of two members of staff who were working in the Child Care Unit.	Investigation ongoing.	Yes

Total number of complaints and representations received for this period are	94
The number of complaints which were satisfactorily resolved	68
The number of complaints which were not satisfactorily resolved	1
The number of complaints in which the level of satisfaction is unknown	4
The number of complaints in which were withdrawn	4
The number of complaints for which the paperwork is still outstanding	7
The number of complaints which are still ongoing	10
The number of complaints which progressed from Stage 1 to Stage 2	0

Welcome to Rotherham's Children and Young People's Complaints Service

Name of the Children
and Young People's

Complaints Officer: Maureen Connolly

Telephone Number: 01709 823738 (please note that shortly
there will be no phone charges for making a call)

Location: Crinoline House, Near the Bus Station

Who Can Complain

Any young person who is assessed as being in need.

Any young person who is looked after.

Any young person who lives with their family and is on an Order
made by Court.



All young people in Rotherham can talk with the Complaints Service about anything which concerns them. The staff will try to suggest who's best to talk with to sort out their problems.

How do I Make a Complaint

You can talk in person or by phone to the Children's Complaint Officer.

You can ask your carer to contact the Complaints Officer on your behalf.

You can talk to the Right 2 Rights Service.

You can complete a complaints leaflet.

You can write your own letter.

You can go on the Right 2 Rights web-site www.rotherham-r2r.co.uk



Who Can Support me in Making the Complaint and during the time it is being Investigated

- The Children's Complaints Officer.
- The Right 2 Rights Service.
- An Independent Advocate.
- Someone of your choice.



How Long does it take to Look into my Complaint

10 days at Stage One

and

25 Days at Stage Two.



You have a right to know what is happening and can talk with the Children's Complaints Officer or the Right 2 Rights Service to make sure you are kept up-to-date.

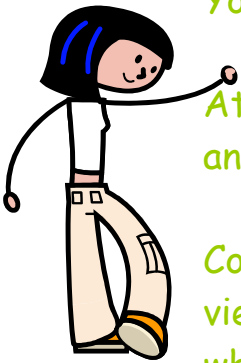
What Sort of things can I Complain About

Below are just some ideas about the types of complaints children and young people make but remember any concerns you may have about the services you receive, **good or bad** are important to us all.

- Being bullied by another child in placement.
- Not seeing your social worker.
- Not having contact with your family as set out in your care plan.
- Changes in your placement.
- How staff treat you.



What difference does my Complaint make in how Services are run for the Children and Young People of Rotherham



Your complaint is listened to and acted on straight away.

At the earliest opportunity the complaint is sorted out and this can make a difference to you.

Complaints made by children and young people ensure their views help to shape how services are developed based on what works best for them.



What if I am Unhappy with the Outcome to my Complaint

You can talk to the Children's Complaint's Officer.

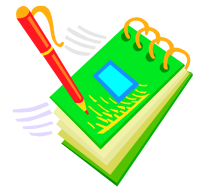
You can talk to the Right 2 Rights Service.



You have the right to have your complaint investigated by an Independent Person and an Investigating Officer at Stage Two.



Complain: Why bother?



Hi there,

Are you interested in helping to re-design the new complaints leaflets and posters for the children and young people of Rotherham?

If so, could you please write you name, telephone number and address below and tick one of the boxes which describes how you would like to help.

Name:

Telephone Number:

Address:

I would like to help by:	Please Tick		
	Post	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Telephone Contact	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	In Group Work	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	On a One to One	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Are there any comments you would like to make now in how the Complaints Service can be improved?

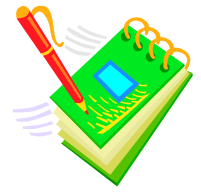
Comments:
.....
.....

Your help is really appreciated.

Maureen Connolly, Children and Young People's Complaints Officer.
Date: 4th September, 2006



Complain: Why bother?



Hi there,

Are you interested in being part of a group of children and young people who can make sure the complaints you make improve the services the children and young people of Rotherham receive.

If so, please write you name, telephone number and address below.

Name:

Telephone Number:

Address:

.....

Your help is really appreciated.



Maureen Connolly, Children and Young People's Complaints Officer.

Date: 4th September, 2006

WORRIED OR UNHAPPY?

Complaints make sure
you are listened to.



Complaints Officer

Partnership in Caring · Children and Families

It's not as scary as you think!

Are you living away from home?
Have you any problems about
being there? Do you feel forgotten
or miserable? Are people doing
things you are not happy about?
Do you need **HELP?**
HERE'S what you can do.



You may be
living at...
*Foster Carers
*Residential or
*Community Home
*Your own home



TALK
TO SOMEONE . You can talk
to parents ...
foster carers ... friends ...
residential social workers
... social workers
**TALKING CAN HELP! IT
CAN STOP THE
PROBLEM GETTING
BIGGER**

BUT what if you can't talk to anyone?
OR you don't feel that talking has solved your problem?

THE NEXT STEP.



PHONE

Rotherham 823937 and ask for the Complaints Officer in Social Services.

If you want then the Officer will fix a time to talk with you. It's safe, OK!

OR if you can't talk to anyone, or you've tried and don't seem to be getting anywhere you can fill in the **CONTACT CARD** which you can find at the end of this guide. The card will go to the Complaints Officer who will make sure you are listened to.



Step 1



THE COMPLAINTS OFFICER (CO) is a person who can give you help and advice about complaining. You can see the CO on your own or with a friend.

ONCE YOU HAVE SEEN THE CO

EITHER

The problem is sorted out and you are happy with the result




OR

The CO and you may, after talking agree that the best way to sort things out is to complain.

A manager will try to sort out the problem.

The CO can also arrange for someone, a supporter to help you with your complaint.



Now turn over 

Step 2

IF YOU ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THE RESULT AN INVESTIGATOR AND AN INDEPENDENT PERSON WILL GET INVOLVED.



WHO is an Independent Person?

The Independent Person is appointed if a complaint is official and will look into the problem with the investigator. They will visit everyone who is involved and look at all points of view – including **YOURS** of course – and try to decide the **BEST** way of solving the problem

OK!



Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Children and Young People's Services

Report for Looked After Scrutiny Panel

Profile of Numbers of Looked After Children, Current Placements and School Attendance.

As of 31st August 2006 Rotherham currently has 338 children in our Care, of these children and young people 19 are allocated to the Children's Disability Team.

Types of Care

Type of Care	Age 0-5	Age 6-10	Age 11-15	Age 16+	Total
Placed For Adoption	5	3	1	0	9
In Foster Care	62	63	95	31	251
Independent Living	0	0	0	3	3
Residential In Rotherham	0	0	13	2	15
Residential Outside Rotherham	0	1	2	3	6
Residential School	0	0	2	2	4
Other Residential	1	0	2	6	9
Placed With Parents	6	8	12	9	35
Secure unit	0	0	1	0	1
Other Placement	3	2	0	0	5
TOTALS	77	77	128	56	338

Gender Breakdown

Type Of Care	Female	Male	Unknown	Total
Placed For Adoption	3	6	0	9
In Foster Care	116	134	1	251
Independent Living	2	1	0	3
Residential In Rotherham	11	4	0	15
Residential Outside Rotherham	3	3	0	6
Residential School	1	3	0	4
Other Residential	2	7	0	9
Placed With Parents	8	27	0	35
Secure unit	1	0	0	1
Other Placement	2	3	0	5
TOTALS	149	188	1	338

Ethnicity Breakdown

Type Of Care	White British	White Irish	White Other	Asian Pakistani	Black African	Dual Heritage White & Asian	Dual Heritage White & Black Caribbean	Other any	Not Recorded	Total
Placed For Adoption	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	9
In Foster Care	232	3	2	1	2	5	3	2	1	251

Independent Living	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Residential In Rotherham	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Residential Outside Rotherham	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Residential School	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Other Residential	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9
Placed With Parents	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35
Secure unit	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other Placement	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
TOTALS	316	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	338

School Attendance for Looked After Children

Up to the end of Term 5 (26.05.06) twenty one Looked After Children and Young People have had 25 days or more absence for any reason. The Target on this performance indicator is 13.5%. Current performance is at 10.2%.

Child	Year Group	Type of Care	Number of Days	Commentary
A	7	With Parent	33	Assessment undertaken. Lack of routine. Failure to get up in a morning. Mum was depressed at home following birth of new baby.
B	8	Foster Care	27	Family bereavement combined with skin disorder increased absence. Assessment undertaken. 100% in Term 5
C	8	Residential	82.5	Permanent excluded from his secondary school due to violent behaviour. Now attending Pupil Referral Unit.
D	8	With Parent	63.5	Family advised by Police not to attend previous school due to risk of attack from neighbours. Child did not attend school until family allocated a property in another area.
E	8	With Parent	64.5	Family advised by Police not to attend previous school due to risk of attack from neighbours. Child did not attend school until family allocated a property in another area.
F	8	With Parent	53.5	Refused to attend, partly due to older sibling also refusing to attend education.
G	9	Out of Authority Residential School/With Parent	59.5	Child was placed in an out of authority residential placement which she refused to return to.
H	9	Secure Accommodation/Residential	111.5	Recently returned to Rotherham from Secure accommodation. GRT support in place until school can accommodate.
I	9	Residential	51.5	Various fixed term exclusions due to disruptive behaviour. During World Cup refused to attend school if conflicted with preferred matches.

J	10	Foster Care	42.5	Major psychological issues with attending school. Child engaged with Titans Project supported by GRT and work placement provided by School.
K	10	Residential/Foster Care	65	Various fixed term exclusions and periods where child has been asked not to attend school to prevent permanent exclusion.
L	11	Residential	42.5	A large number of absences were due to internal truancy and difficulty in school tracking his attendance. Originally with relative, placement broke down and child went into residential. School set up a work placement for child, two days per week, from which he disengaged due to placement not being career of his choice. Attendance improved once part time timetable introduced.
M	11	With Parent	137	Did not attend school at all this academic year. Liaison with Education Welfare Services.
N	11	With Parent	60	Pupil attended Special Education Unit after school hours (3.30pm onwards) Pupil became distracted and did not attend all sessions offered.
O	11	Foster Care	29	Pupil was excluded or sent home from school for disruptive behaviour. Often disengaged from education. In addition to this pupil was charged with indecent exposure in March 06
P	11	Foster Care	30.5	Child attends out of an authority special school.
Q	11	With Parent	123.5	Pupil reached 16 years and refused to attend school. Referred to Bridges.

R	11	Foster Care	75.5	Attended school sporadically but engaged successfully with GRT teaching sessions.
S	11	Out of Authority Residential School	82.5	
T	11	Foster Care	33	Young person had a boyfriend out of authority who she went to see from time to time, refusing on occasion to return in time to attend school.
U	11	Foster Care	71.5	Attended sporadically, with both school and GRT teaching sessions.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel
2.	Date:	Wednesday 29th September 2006
3.	Title:	Regulation 33 inspections in Residential Children's Homes
4.	Programme Area:	Children & Young People's Services

5. Summary

The Care Standards Act 2000 sets minimum standards of Care to be provided to children and Young People, and provides a set of standards which form the basis for judgements made by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI).

This paper outlines the Function of Purpose for each of the unit and themes which have arisen from Regulation 33 visits.

5. Recommendations

- 1. That Members receive this report.**
- 2. That further reports are provided on key themes emerging from future regulation 33 visits.**

6. Proposals and Details

6.1 Creswick Road - Statement of Purpose and Function

Creswick Road Children's Unit provides placements for a maximum of 5 young people between the ages of 12 to 18 Years old who are admitted for the purposes of initial/reception, frequently this is the first point of entry into the Care System

Themes Arising and Recommendations

1. Statement of Purpose and function must be reviewed annually. This is overdue and needs attending to by the manager and senior managers.
2. The Children's Guide must be reviewed annually. This is overdue and needs attending to by the manager, members of staff and young people.
3. Placements of two young people had gone beyond the agreed timescale, however, CSCI notified that we do not want to move them out as they were due to sit school exams. This was a positive decision.
4. The involvement of young people within the home is not always evident. Systems should be incorporated to ensure that there are records of where and when young people have been consulted, exercised choices, etc.
5. National Minimum Standards requires that a qualified first-aider is on duty at all times, this is not always met and the manager needs to ensure that all senior staff receive the necessary training as soon as possible.

6.2 Goodwin Crescent - Statement of Purpose and Function

Goodwin Crescent is a long stay residential unit which can accommodate up to 5 young people of either gender aged between 12 and 18 years.

Themes Arising and Recommendations

1. Statement of Purpose and function must be reviewed annually. This is overdue and needs attending to by the manager and senior managers.
2. The Children's Guide must be reviewed annually. This is overdue and needs attending to by the manager, members of staff and young people.
3. National Minimum Standards require that young people are able to easily access a telephone in order to make and receive calls from family and friends. The location of the phone should provide convenient and private access. The phone at Goodwin did not provide a good standard of service and has since been replaced with a more appropriate one that does provide privacy, etc.
4. Risk assessments are undertaken at the home, however, this is an area for improvement and is being addressed by all children's homes managers.
5. The involvement of young people within the home is not always evident. Systems should be incorporated to ensure that there are records of where and when young people have been consulted, exercised choices, etc.
6. There is good evidence of multi-agency collaboration. Representatives from Get Real Team, Teenagers to work, Bridges have all been working with young people at Goodwin and helping toward positive outcomes.
7. The premises are in need of major refurbishment.

6.3 St Edmunds Avenue - Statement of Purpose and Function

St Edmunds Avenue is a long stay residential unit which can accommodate up to 5 young women aged between 12 and 18 years.

Themes Arising and Recommendations

1. The Children's Guide must be reviewed annually. This is overdue and needs attending to by the manager, members of staff and young people.
2. Looked After Children's forms remain outstanding in respect of one young person, parents refusing to sign, CSCI made aware.
3. The involvement of young people within the home is not always evident. Systems should be incorporated to ensure that there are records of where and when young people have been consulted, exercised choices, etc. It should be noted, however, that one young person has enjoyed re-decorating the training kitchen.
4. The manager has worked particularly well in ensuring that all staff at the home achieve the required NVQ qualification. Only new employees have yet to achieve this qualification.
5. Staff at the home have taken advantage of specific training around sexual exploitation of young people, this is in the light of concerns expressed regarding some of the young people at the home.

6.4 Studmoor Road - Statement of Purpose and Function

Studmoor Road is a shared care facility which delivers packages of shared care and outreach work to young people aged between 10 and 17 years to prevent family breakdown and the need for reception into full time care.

Themes Arising and Recommendations

1. The statement of Purpose and Function has very recently been reviewed and CSCI made aware.
2. The Children's Guide requires review.
3. The involvement of young people within the home is not always evident. Systems should be incorporated to ensure that there are records of where and when young people have been consulted, exercised choices, etc.
4. The home has had a new kitchen fitted including new fridge/freezer, this is to comply with health and safety regulations that were identified through the reg. 33 visit in January 2006.

8. Finance

Finance is met within the existing budgets from Children and Young People's Services to undertake Regulation 33 visits.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The risks to not maintaining the minimum standards required are associated with a Closure Notice that can be served to the Local Authority by C.S.C.i. They can also impose a legal penalty in the event of failing to comply.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

National Minimum Standards S23(1) of the Care Standards Act 2000

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- National Minimum Standards (Children's Homes Regulations)
- Children Act 1989
- Care Standards Act 2000

Contact Name : Katy Hawkins Service Manager Looked After Children's Resources

katy.hawkins@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel
2.	Date:	20th September 2006
3.	Title:	Corporate Parenting Leaflet and Corporate Parenting Promise
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young Peoples Service

5. Summary

Looked After Children and Young People were part of the Scrutiny Review “The Role of Councilors as Corporate Parents” conducted May 2005. One of the recommendations following this was that Rotherham’s Right 2 Rights Service and Young Rights Representatives would work with a small group of Elected Members to design a leaflet in respect of Corporate Parenting and a Corporate Parenting Pledge/Promise for the Looked After Children & Young People of Rotherham.

6. Recommendations

That members receive the report and

- a) Note the progress of the work.**
- b) Endorse our plans for the work and promotion of the Corporate Parenting Promise.**

7. Proposals and Details

The Leaflet and Corporate Parenting Promise to be distributed and promoted during the Liquid Event which is a party/promotional event being arranged by Rotherham's Right 2 Rights service for Looked After Children and Young People and the birth children of foster carers on 27th September, 2006.

We will also promote and distribute the leaflet and Corporate Parenting Promise at the Get Real Book Event, which is to be held in October.

A more in-depth, 'child friendly' document is being produced which will be sent out on request and also published on our website along with this leaflet and the Corporate Parenting Promise. We are also developing ways in which Young People can comment on how well we are holding up the promise and suggest ways to improve our Service. This process will commence during the liquid event where children and young people will be encouraged to comment.

8. Finance

Financial costs are yet to be determined. Awaiting figures from the design studio but this will be available by 20th September.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Considerations need to be given to the development of a document/ information for adults and professionals.

Young people were clear to identify that corporate parenting will be a difficult area for some of the target audience and a minimalist approach which is colourful and active was requested by the group. I therefore ask it is read with this in mind.

10. Policy and performance Agenda Implications

Our performance in respect of our Corporate Parenting Role is assessed and inspected by processes such as; Joint Area Reviews, Fostering and Adoption Inspections and CSCI's Inspection and regulatory functions within our Children's Residential Services.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Work undertaken between Elected Members and Looked After Children and Young People.

Scrutiny Report, "The Role of Councilors as Corporate Parents".

"If This Were My Child", A councilors guide to being a good Corporate Parent.

Contact:

Lynne Grice Saddington – Children's Rights Officer

Telephone: 01709 382121 ext 3765

Email: lynne.grice-saddington@rotherham.gov.uk



What's Corporate Parenting?

(A guide for Looked After Children & Young People in Rotherham)

Rotherham Borough Council as a whole is the Corporate Parent. This means that people who are part of the council are responsible for making sure that you are O.K. and that you have a good and healthy life just like their own children.

READ ON

What's a Looked after Child or Young Person?

Children and young people are looked after for lots of different reasons. It could be because;

- There were problems at home.
- A parent was too sick to care for them or had died.
- They were harmed in some way and needed to be protected.

Some children and young people are looked after for a short time but others stay looked after for much longer and it is important that we make sure that you are all ok.

Who can be a Corporate Parent?

A Corporate Parent can be people like;

- A teacher, their assistant, school nurse or anyone else in education
- Social Care Workers, like Social Workers and their bosses
- Children's Rights Officer
- Looked After Nurse
- Get Real Team Workers
- Foster carers and Residential Workers
- The people who run the council like; the leader of the council and the 'top' bosses
- Children's Complaints Officer
- Police, Connexions worker, Youth worker etc....

What about our Elected Members?

Elected Members are also known as Councillors and they are Corporate Parents too. They have a special role to play in making sure that you are getting good care and services. They make sure;

- They know how many looked after children and young people we have in Rotherham.
- You are being looked after well and that you are safe and happy.
- You get good health and education services.
- That you are properly supported while you are looked after and that you get good leaving care services when you are older.
- That you have the opportunity to explore and keep your spiritual and cultural interests.

For further information you can either contact us on 01709 382121 ext 3764 or visit our website www.rotherham-r2r.co.uk

You get help to achieve
the best you can in
school or college

You get good
Health Care

You get help to explore and
prepare for work opportunities

We listen to what
you have to say and
make sure it makes a
difference

That you are helped to
get ready for
independence and learn
new skills

You get the chance
to keep or explore
your spiritual and
cultural interests

You live in a safe
place where you
are protected
from harm

We fully involve
you in plans and
decisions about
you and your
future

You have the
opportunity to be
involved in hobbies
and leisure activities

Our **Corporate Parenting Promise** to
Rotherham's looked after children and young
people is

If you are growing up in Rotherham or
somewhere else

We will make sure:

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SCRUTINY SUB-PANEL
12th July, 2006

Present:- Councillor G. A. Russell (in the Chair); Councillors Barron, Gosling, Jack, Jackson, McNeely and Whysall.

Also in attendance were Alison Wilde and Malcolm Gabbitas (Foster Carers), Cath Wright (Co-optee) and Sue May along with other members of the NCH Bridges Project.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Hamilton, P. Russell and R. Russell.

2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

Agreed:- That councillor G.A. Russell be appointed Chairman of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel and Councillor McSweeney be appointed Vice-Chairman.

3. SERVICES TO CARE LEAVERS IN ROTHERHAM - NCH ROTHERHAM BRIDGES AND ACCOMMODATION PROJECTS

The Project Manager of NCH Rotherham Bridges gave a report, with the support of young people involved with the Project, which informed the meeting of :-

- the background to the NCH Rotherham Bridges Project, and that it provides support to young people looked after and care leavers, between the ages of 16 and 21, within the requirements of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000;
- the NCH Rotherham Accommodation Project which provides support to care leavers within their own tenancies and is developing Supported Lodging provision;
- the requirements of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000;
- staffing and service requirements of the two Projects;
- current service provision and issues arising such as :-
 - o education, training and employment
 - o accommodation provision
 - o health
 - o financial/funding aspects

Particular issues were highlighted such as one to one work with care

leavers, support available for young people, the drop-in service, group work undertaken, courses available to young people and links with the Prince's Trust.

Reference was also made to accommodation issues and the adaptation situation for persons with a handicap. Concerns around accommodation were discussed.

Subsequent comments and queries were in respect of :-

(a) project workers, their role and working arrangements;

(b) how activities for young people were paid for, the benefits situation and how it could possibly be improved;

(c) the number of looked after children in work placements and job schemes.

The work with the Council, Connexions Service and Colleges regarding placements was outlined.

(d) the health care available to looked after children, concerns being expressed about emergency care, and the lack of counselling services especially for emotional issues.

Discussions were ongoing with the Health Services and appropriate agencies as the children in care required professional support and advice.

Agreed:- (i) That the report and information be received, the representatives from NCH Bridges Project being thanked for their contribution.

(ii) That the representatives of NCH Bridges Project return at a future date to report on progress.

(iii) That the concerns raised in respect of benefits for looked after children be addressed at a future meeting.

(iv) That information be obtained from Human Resources on the work placement situation for looked after children.

(v) That the Cabinet Member, Children and Young People's Services be made aware of the concerns raised regarding the health needs of children in care, particularly their requirements which were not being met.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2007 / 07

The Head of Scrutiny Services reminded members of the role of scrutiny, the terms of reference for this Scrutiny Sub-Panel and its work

programme for 2006/07.

With regard to the terms of reference, it was agreed by members that, for continuity purposes, the Chair of Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel should also chair the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel.

On the outline work programme, it was suggested that vocational aspects involving looked after children should be monitored.

Agreed:- (i) That the Terms of Reference for the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel be noted.

(ii) That the work programme as outlined be accepted along with the additional item as suggested.

(iii) That the Chair of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel also be the Chair of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel.

5. PROFILE OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN ROTHERHAM

Katy Hawkins reported that as at 20th June, 2006, Rotherham had 327 children in care.

The details submitted set out :-

- the number of looked after children in the various types of care available
- the gender and ethnicity breakdown of the children in care
- the school attendance record of children in care along with commentary on reasons for them missing school

Katy Hawkins clarified what was classed as secure accommodation for children in care along with the action which can be taken, with parents, to ensure their good attendance at school.

It was noted that the figures submitted included the number of asylum seeker children in care.

Agreed:- (i) That the report be received.

(ii) That arrangements be made for members of this Scrutiny Sub-Panel to visit the Get Real Team in Autumn.

6. REGULATION 33 INSPECTIONS IN RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S HOMES

Katy Hawkins reported that the Care Standards Act 2000 sets minimum

standards of care to be provided for children and young people and provides a set of standards which form the basis for judgements made by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), an independent non-departmental public body.

The report submitted set out the guidelines for registration of Children's Residential Homes, how the homes are inspected in line with the standards, the way in which inspections take place, and the areas covered by Regulation 33 inspections.

Agreed:- (i) That the report be received.

(ii) That further reports are provided on key themes emerging from future Regulation 33 inspections the reports to be submitted on a quarterly basis.

7. FOSTERING AND ADOPTION - CURRENT FIGURES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Alison Wild reported on the current figures and performance indicators in relation to the Fostering and Adoption Teams.

The report submitted set out :-

(a) the situation in respect of fostering services and foster care provision, the types of foster placements, support and training given to foster carers.

Reference was made to the Emergency Foster Care situation which indicated the reasons for some foster carers having too many children in their care at times, particularly if a number of siblings were involved. The recruitment of foster carers was ongoing but it was a long process.

(b) the adoption situation in Rotherham and the performance against LPSA targets, along with those for Looked After Children.

It was noted that potentially Children and Young People's Services will face significantly increased costs in relation to adoption support packages.

Agreed:- (i) That the report be received.

(ii) That a report be submitted to the next meeting on (a) the provision of more support for foster carers and on how advertising for foster carers can be improved and (b) the respite care situation.

8. NOTES OF A MEETING HELD ON THE 4TH FEBRUARY, 2006 BETWEEN MEMBERS AND RIGHT-TO-RIGHTS GROUP

Agreed:- That the minutes of the above group be received and the actions to be taken be noted.

9. MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SCRUTINY SUB-PANEL

Agreed:- That the minutes of this Scrutiny Sub-Panel held on the 23rd March, 2006 be received.

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel would take place on Wednesday 20th September, 2006 at 2.00 p.m.