

Looked After Children's Sufficiency Strategy Update

November 2025

Strategy Overview and Priorities

- The current Looked After Children's Sufficiency Strategy (2023-2027) was approved at Cabinet in October 2022
- The Looked After Children Sufficiency Strategy has been developed in line with the duty to provide or procure placements for Children Looked After by the Local Authority. The duty of 'sufficiency' requires Local Authorities and Children's Trust partners to ensure that there is a range of sufficient placements which meet the needs of children and young people in care
- The Strategy sets out how Rotherham Children and Young People's Services will fulfil its role as a Corporate Parent and meet its statutory sufficiency duty by providing good quality care, effective parenting and support to children and young people in and leaving care

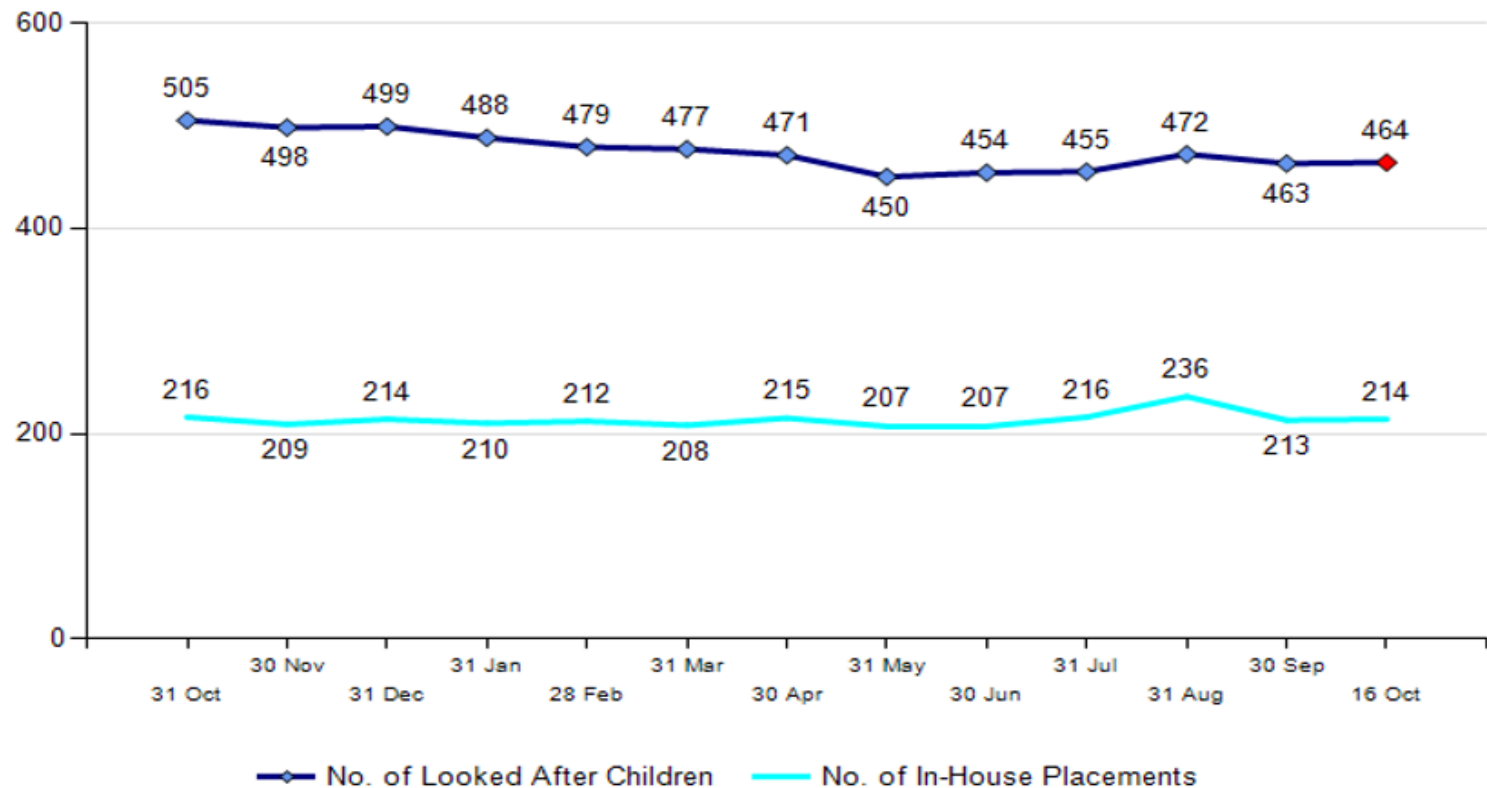


Key Priorities 2023-2027

- More young people are able to be cared for safely in their families and communities
- Children and young people have access to a range of homes (internal and external options) that meet their needs and improve their outcomes.
- All services take the Rotherham Family Approach to ensure all Rotherham children and young people are “resilient, successful and safe”, evidenced by Quality Assurance activity.
- Children and young people are able to access the support they need when they need it because Health, Education and Care Services share a joint understanding of the needs of children and young people in Rotherham and use this to inform commissioning and service delivery.
- Children and Young People, and their families and carers are able to access CAMHs assessment and intervention when needed.
- Children, young people, families and carers benefit from additional social value in Rotherham e.g. more employment opportunities.
- More children, young people and families benefit from additional support to improve outcomes and access employment.

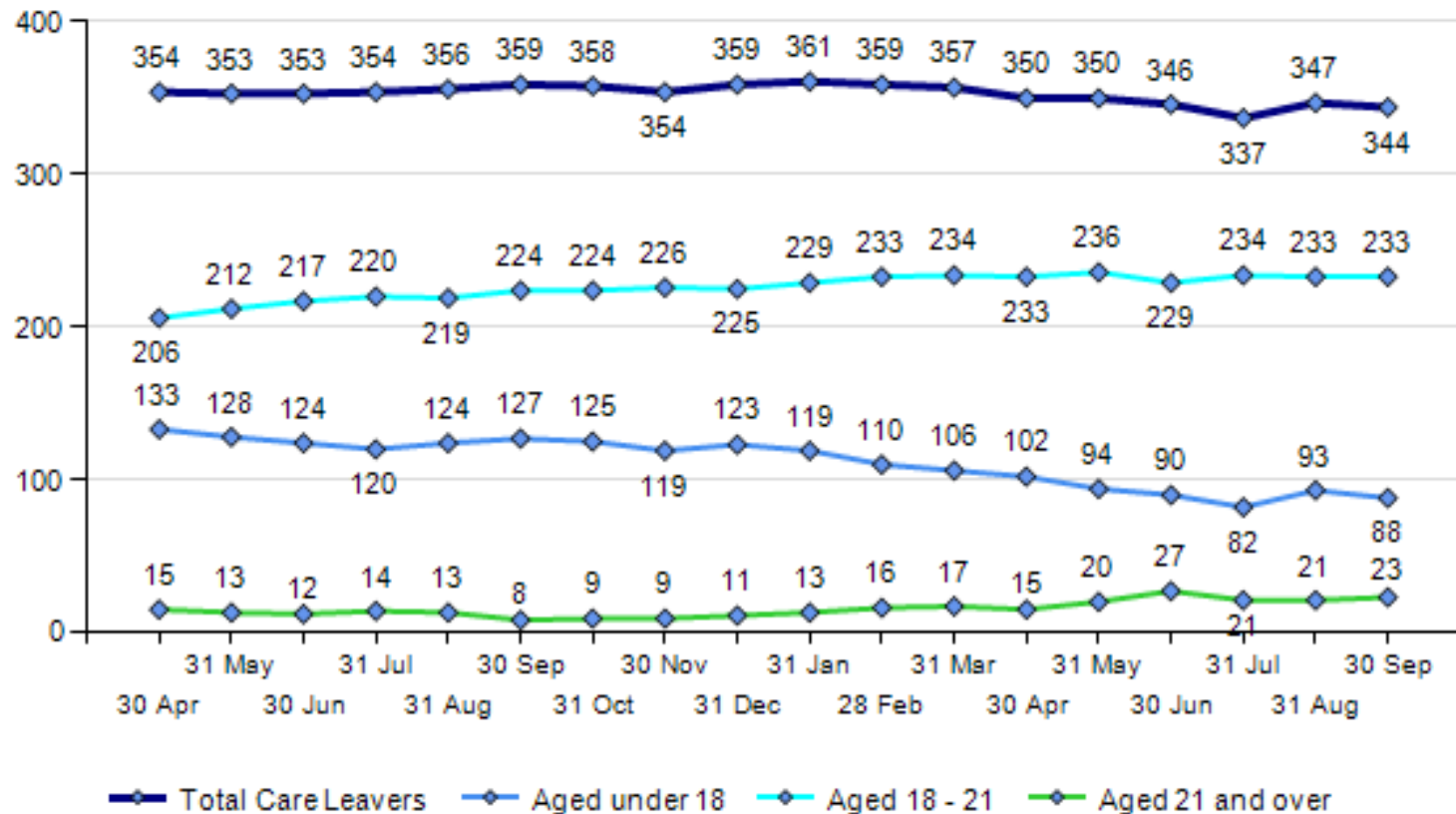
Children in Care Trends

12 Month Trend - Children in Care and In-House Placements



Leaving Care Trends

12 Month Trend - Care Leavers



Residential Case Study

Background information was obtained through the initial referral form and gathered further by a matching meeting. Service Manager took the opportunity to meet D at his Children in Care review

Being sensitive to his experiences and his life chances. The remit was to create a secure base where we could further explore his risks and prepare him for independence as part of his step-down plan.

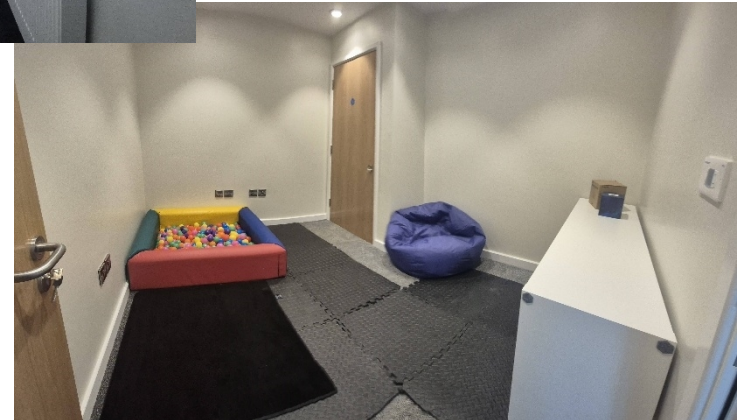
Positive relationships formed and evidenced by

- Sharing sensitive information including past experiences, hopes for the future
- Decreased frequency of missing and when missing he would stay in contact with the team.
- Increased family time
- Engaged with numerous direct work sessions a month

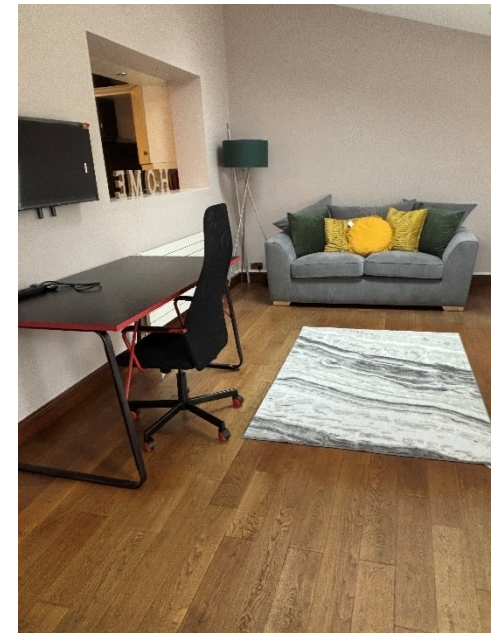
Supported in his transition to further placement outside of Rotherham in line with his step-down and safety plan.

D has visited placement since and expressed it is the only place he felt safe and cared for.

Children's Home 2



Childrens Home 3



Fostering Rotherham

- Fostering Rotherham is a collaboration of digital on-line marketing and place based foster carer recruitment, support and retention of local foster carers
- Fostering Rotherham work with amazing local foster carer heroes who offer up their homes and hearts to young people in and around our community. We work with over 120 fostering families from across Rotherham and South Yorkshire to improve the lives of local children and young people.
- Every day, all our fostering team and carers live the RMBC values that are at the core of what we do. We believe in honesty, accountability and always being respectful. We are ambitious, because we want to make a real change for all of Rotherham's looked after children, and we are proud of what we do.



Foster Carer Retention

Building a Stronger, Connected Community

We provide regular opportunities for carers to connect, learn and feel valued all year round.

Monthly activity for our carers includes:



Coffee afternoons – Informal peer support and connection

Foster Carer Breakfasts – Recognising and celebrating carers

Forums (quarterly) – Opportunities to learn and strengthen relationships across the fostering community.

Wellbeing Sessions (quarterly) – Promoting foster carer wellbeing through activities like 'Paint a Pot', pamper sessions, wreath making, jewellery workshops and even walking with Alpacas.



Partnerships Activities: Working with local organisations including The Arc Cinema, Wentworth Woodhouse, Grimm and Co and Rotherham United to offer free or discounted experiences for our families. We also have businesses that have financially supported some of our activities.

Celebrating our Foster Carer Community - Highlights from the last 12 months

Launch of our short fostering film 'Everything' at The Arc Cinema – October 2024

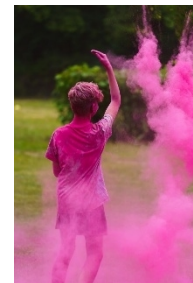
Free tickets for Wentworth Woodhouse 'Twas The Night Before Christmas and free tickets for a Christmas Panto for our fostering families - December 2024

Easter Egg Hunt and 50 Years of Fostering Celebration – April 2025



First Fostering Rotherham Festival and fostering trip to Bridlington (with RFCA) – May 2025

First Fostering Rotherham Olympics and Colour Dash – July 2025



Story Making workshop for our children in care – August 2025

Afternoon Tea with the Mayor – Celebration of Foster Carers – October 2025.

Our varied programme recognises commitment, builds community and ensures every foster carer feels part of the Rotherham Family.



Challenges

- Recruitment for residential workforce remains extremely competitive
- Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers remains an ongoing challenge due to the competitive nature of the market
- Shortage of availability of externally commissioned placements across Fostering, Residential and 16+

Opportunities

- Continued/improved awareness and local support for our Looked After Children especially when developing new provision
- Development of our place-based marketing to recruitment to complement our online presence
- Continue to promote what's working well and share good new stories

