



## **CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**

**THURSDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2019 at 10.00 AM**  
**in COMMITTEE ROOM ONE, COUNTY OFFICES, NEWLAND, LINCOLN Lincs LN1**  
**1YL**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

**Lincolnshire County Council:** Councillors D Brailsford, R L Foulkes, A G Hagues, S R Parkin, Clio Perraton-Williams, R H Trollope-Bellew and M A Whittington

**Added Members (non-voting):** Polly Coombes, Ann Wright, Amy-Louise Butler, Amy Lavery and Elizabeth Bunney

### **AGENDA**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Pages</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence/Replacement Members</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Members' Interest</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel meeting held on 19 September 2019</b>	3 - 14
<b>4</b>	<b>Announcements by the Chairman, Executive Councillor and Lead Officer</b>	Verbal Report
<b>5</b>	<b>Independent Reviewing Service - 6 Month Report</b> <i>(To receive a six monthly report from Carolyn Knight, Quality and Standards Manager, which provides the Corporate Parenting Panel with an overview of the Independent Reviewing Service for the period April to September 2019)</i>	15 - 42

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|-----------|---|-----------|
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Regulation 44 Independent Visiting Service - 6 Month Report (April to September 2019)</b><br><i>(To receive a six monthly report from Carolyn Knight, Quality and Standards Manager, which provides the Corporate Parenting Panel with an overview of the Regulation 44 Independent Visiting Service for the period April to September 2019)</i> | 43 - 58   |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Quarter 2 Performance Report for Looked After Children</b><br><i>(To receive a report from Janice Spencer OBE, Interim Director of Children's Services, which invites the Corporate Parenting Panel to consider and comment on the Looked After Children Performance Measures for Quarter 2 2019/20 for the period July to September 2019)</i>   | 59 - 74   |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Looked After Children (LAC) Annual Report 2018/19</b><br><i>(To receive a report from John Harris, Children's Services Manager, Regulated (North and Fostering), which provides the Corporate Parenting Panel with an overview of the Looked After Children Annual Report 2018/19)</i>   | 75 - 118  |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Voices for Choices (V4C) Update Report</b><br><i>(To receive a report from Ben Lilley, Team Manager Quality and Standards, which provides the Corporate Parenting Panel with an update on V4C activities for the period June to August 2019)</i>   | 119 - 128 |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Corporate Parenting Panel Work Programme</b><br><i>(To receive a report from Daniel Steel, Scrutiny Officer, which enables the Corporate Parenting Panel to consider and comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year)</i>   | 129 - 132 |

Distributed on Wednesday, 6 November 2019

Should you have any queries on the arrangements for this meeting, please contact Katrina Cope via telephone 01522 552104 or alternatively via email at [katrina.cope@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:katrina.cope@lincolnshire.gov.uk)



## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL 19 SEPTEMBER 2019

### PRESENT: COUNCILLOR D BRAILSFORD (CHAIRMAN)

**Lincolnshire County Council:** Councillors S R Parkin, Clio Perraton-Williams (Vice-Chairman) and M A Whittington.

**Added Members:** Ann Wright (Foster Carer) and Elizabeth Bunney (Lincolnshire Community Health Services).

Officers in attendance:-

Kieran Barnes (Virtual School Head Teacher), Nicola Brangam (Children's Services Agency Advisor, Fostering and Adoption), Nicola Corby (Acting Principal Lawyer), Deborah Crawford (Team Manager - Fostering South), Andrew Morris (Corporate Parenting Manager), Krysta Parsons (Caring to Learn Project Manager), Yvonne Shearwood (Children's Service Manager - Regulated (South and Adoption)), Janice Spencer OBE (Interim Director of Children's Services), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer).

### 15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A G Hagues and R H Trollope-Bellew.

An apology for absence was also received from Polly Coombes (Foster Carer) and Amy Lavery.

### 16 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

Councillor M A Whittington wished it to be noted that he had an adopted son who was in receipt of services from Barnardos.

### 17 MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL MEETING HELD ON 25 JULY 2019

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel meeting held on 25 July 2019 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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AND LEAD OFFICER**

The Interim Director of Children's Services reported that the results of the Ofsted Inspection held in May 2019 for Children's Social Care Service had been published and that the service was awarded a rating of 'outstanding' for all areas. It was noted that Lincolnshire was one of only eight authorities in the country that had received this rating.

**19 LEGAL SERVICES LINCOLNSHIRE END OF YEAR REPORT APRIL 2018  
TO MARCH 2019**

Consideration was given to a report from Nicola Corby, Acting Principal Lawyer, which provided the Corporate Parenting Panel with the end of year report (April 2018 to March 2019) for Legal Services Lincolnshire.

The Committee was advised of the two types of proceedings in which Children's Services were involved, these were Public Law Proceedings and Private Law Proceedings. Pages 13 and 14 provided the Panel with an explanation of the two types of proceedings. Page 15 of the report provided the Panel with details of the number of care proceedings issued between April 2018 and March 2019. Page 17 of the report provided an analysis of outcomes for children who had been the subject of care proceedings. The analysis highlighted that there had been a reduction in the number of Care and Placement Orders as well as Supervision Orders. It was highlighted that for 2017/18 132 applications had been issued in respect of 135 children and in 2018/19 156 applications had been issued in respect of 184 children. It was highlighted further that for the 184 children there had been 156 applications for Care Orders and 28 applications for Supervision Orders. A pie chart on page 20 of the report provided the Panel with pictorial evidence of the number of Orders granted in 2018/19.

The Committee was advised that Special Guardianship Orders had been introduced by the Adoption and Children Act 2002; and that they were initially intended as a permanent legal action for older children, who had a pre-existing relationship with a relative/long term foster carer/family friend. Pages 26 and 27 of the report provided the Panel with details relating to the number of Special Guardianship Orders granted in 2018/19; as well as comparative information to 2017/18; and an analysis of ages. It was reported that half the children subject to proceedings concluded 2018/19, were of an age where a plan of adoption could be progressed 0 to 5. It was highlighted that the average timescale for proceeding in 2018/19 was 36.5 weeks, in contrast to 34 weeks in 2017/18. Details relating to timescale for 2018/19 were shown on pages 29 and 30 of the report.

The Panel was advised that the shortest case had been five weeks and the longest case had been 87 weeks. Details of each of the aforementioned cases were shown on pages 30 to 34 of the report.

In conclusion, the Panel noted that in 2018/19 the number of cases concluded had remained static compared to the number of cases concluded in 2017/18 as only a decrease of 1% had occurred.

During discussion, the Panel raised the following points:-

- In terms of pre-proceedings, it was queried whether the proposed changes would increase the workload of the children's services department. The Panel was advised that this would increase the workload initially, however, if the assessments were robust enough, this may avoid long court proceedings. It was highlighted to members that if this process could be got right, it would be a positive thing as children would not have to go through court proceedings. If the changes were to come into force, in Lincolnshire there would only need to be a few changes to how things were done, rather than a wholesale change of processes.
- It was highlighted that page 20 of the agenda pack referred to support services being provided by the local authority for up to three years when a Special Guardianship Order was granted, and it was queried what happened if the child reached the age of 18 before the 3 years. It was reported that SGO support would lapse at 18, but the young person would become eligible for leaving care support.
- It was queried whether there were any differences in the breakdown of placements for SGO's when compared to other placements and if there was anything the authority could do to prevent the breakdown. The Board was advised that significant work was being undertaken on the disruption policy. However, it was noted that disruption for an SGO would be after the order had been granted. Work was ongoing on a support package for carers, to ensure they knew they were able to come for a review at any time.
- As part of the kinship agenda, officers looked robustly at how to make SGO's work. It was important that people knew they were able to come back to the authority for support, and the plans needed to be as robust as possible.
- SGO support groups were starting to be developed, which were similar to those for foster carers.
- It was noted that kinship assessments were incredibly robust, and went through a Panel process. By the time it got to court, officers could say with confidence that the relative was able to meet the needs of the child.
- It was queried whether there was any mechanism where the authority reached out to people. It was noted that this was the case for those carers that received a financial payment as their finances were assessed annually.
- It was commented that SGO's were really positive, as it was important to keep vulnerable children within their own families. The same checks were applied to SGO's as fosterers. It would be ensured that there were not any generational issues which could impact on the child.
- It was queried whether step family members would be considered, and the Board was advised that social workers would look at families to establish who would be the most appropriate person to care for that child within Lincolnshire.
- It was noted that in terms of support for SGO's, it was work in progress, and the Adoption Team was looking into providing support and ensuring that what

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was provided for adoptive families was also provided for SGO's. The timescale for completing this work was the end of 2019. However, it was noted that this was a big piece of work and was looking at a number of issues, including the financing of placements, and practical and emotional support that was offered to families and children.

- It was noted that Looked After Children, once they left care were entitled to £2300 pupil premium, for schools to provide appropriate support. It was commented that it was understood that under the new Ofsted framework, this was not something that would be examined in the future. It was queried whether something would be put in place to ensure that schools were accountable for how they used that money. It was noted that Ofsted would still be looking at performance of children with protected characteristics and it was expected that inspectors would be interested in the number of Looked After Children and how they were progressing.

**RESOLVED**

That the Legal Services Lincolnshire End of Year Report be noted.

**20 CARING2LEARN - YEAR 2 UPDATE**

The Panel gave consideration to a report from Krysta Parsons, Project Manager, which provided an update on the implementation and impact of the Caring2Learn project.

In guiding the Panel through the report, reference was made to the background behind the project. It was highlighted that Caring2Learn was a multi-agency approach which was focussed on improving a wide range of educational outcomes for looked after children and young people from Early Years to post 16. It was noted that Caring2Learn was supporting schools to be able to nurture and promote wellbeing and attachment and ensuring Looked After Children achieved better than expected progress whilst in care, as well as enhancing training for and raising the profile of the role of the Designated Teacher. It was noted further that the project was developing foster carers resilience, knowledge and skills to promote learning in the home and help children develop a desire for learning.

The Panel was advised that Caring2Learn was funded by the Department for Education as part of the Partners in Practice programme until the end of March 2020; it was noted that funding for an extension of the project had been agreed until April 2021.

Details of the three main areas of work of the Caring 2Learn project were shown on pages 38 to 40 of the report presented.

The following Appendices accompanied the report:-

- Appendix A – A copy of the Caring2Learn training events from September 2019 to March 2020;
- Appendix B – A copy of the Caring2Learn, Caring School Toolkit;

- Appendix C – A copy of the Caring2Learn, Learning Homes Workbook; and
- Appendix D – A copy of the Caring2Learn Cased Studies and Impact Evaluations.

The Panel was advised that positive comments from the 'Outstanding' OFSTED inspection carried out in April 2019 had been received, and a summary of these comments were shown on pages 40 and 41 of the report.

In conclusion, the Panel was advised that evidence over the last eighteen months had shown that the Caring2Learn project had the impact on and had the potential to positively affect the work of a wide range of teams. It was highlighted that it was therefore essential that the project continued to be a comprehensive multi-disciplined approach as it integrates into everyday business.

It was reported that there had been considerable interest in the project from the Department for Education, other local Authorities, schools and organisations. It was noted that from September 2019, a trial implementation of Caring2Learn was commencing with North Lincolnshire Children's Services. It was noted further that the small trial would explore the viability of the commercial and income generating possibilities of Caring2Learn which could support the continuation of the approach within Lincolnshire for the benefit of children and young people.

It was highlighted that during the last academic year an action research project was run in conjunction with the UCL Institute of Education as part of the Promoting Achievement of Looked After Children Programme which focused on the implementation of a 10 week literacy intervention with 10 KS2 pupils in 5 schools. The intervention was based on joint working between educational psychologists, foster carers, teachers and teaching assistants and included activities based in the individual needs and personal interests of the child. There were two sessions a week at school and two sessions a week at home. The children were reassessed after 5 months, with very positive results. On average the children had made a two year improvement in their reading age. The carers had been fully involved with the school.

The Board was provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- From a foster carer perspective, it was highlighted that one of the issues experienced when going through the process to become a foster carer, was the need to have 1 year of evidence, and new fosterers did not always have all the experience necessary and there would be a need to generate situations to obtain the evidence. This could be very challenging and it would be interesting to see how this process had evolved.
- In terms of the tool kit, there were concerns that it may be a bit onerous for foster carers to complete. It was queried whether there was any feedback from schools about what the process had been like for them. The Panel was informed that feedback had been positive and schools were willing to go through this process. Schools were offered 2.5 days per year per school for

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the Project Manager to work with them on their improvement plans. So far, there were 150 schools involved and over 100 foster carers. Feedback on the training had been really positive.

- It was commented that this was dealing with outcomes that were hard to quantify. The need to measure exam results was recognised, but it was important to not lose track of an increase in a child's confidence. If they developed an interest in something, other aspects of learning would follow.
- It was commented that it was good progress that 150 schools had signed up, and it was confirmed that this was about 50% of schools in the county. Officers had written to 125 head teachers who had Looked After Children on roll, to advise of the support which was available.
- It was queried whether once a school had achieved accreditation if it could be removed if standards were not maintained. Members were advised that there was no precedent for this at the moment, but there was the ability to hold the schools to account. However, it was likely that once that status had been achieved they would want to hold onto it and progress further.
- Of the 100 schools that had accessed the toolkit, it was confirmed that 37 had achieved the Caring Schools accreditation and two had reapplied to have their standard reassessed at a higher level. Therefore, the remaining 61 were currently working towards their accreditation.
- It was commented that it was very important to promote wellbeing. The Panel was advised that this was a key message, as there was a need to get to the child right place emotionally so they wanted to learn. It was also important for aspirations to not be too low. Expectations, historically, had generally been too low for looked after children. There was a need to let them reach their potential and have their own aspirations of what they wanted to achieve. It was highlighted that the key was to give the child the confidence that they could reach their aspirations.
- It was noted that one of the comments from Ofsted was praising the tenacity of the team.

**RESOLVED**

That the Caring2Learn project update be noted.

**21 ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

Consideration was given to a report from Yvonne Shearwood, Children's Services Manager – Regulated (South and Adoption), which provided the Panel with an overview of the adoption service.

The Panel noted that under the requirements of the National Standards, members, in their role as Corporate Parents should be informed on a regular basis about the activity of the Adoption Service. Detailed at Appendix A to the report was a copy of the Annual Adoption Report 2019/2019; and at Appendix B was a copy of the Adoption Statement of Purpose for the Panel to consider.

It was highlighted that the challenges for 2018/19 had been to adjust services in line with the significant service development from the previous year; whilst maintaining high levels of performance against government targets. It was highlighted further that performance in 2019/19 against the key threshold measures in the adoption scorecard had improved both for the single year and for the three year rolling average. The Panel was advised that the number of adoptions completed was back to the average, but the timescales had improved. It was noted that the number of children waiting at year-end had decreased due to the team being proactive in family finding.

The Panel noted that in October 2015, the service had achieved a judgement of 'Outstanding', which was a strong endorsement of the professionalism and expertise within the team and the confidence shown to the service by senior managers and the council as a whole. The Panel noted further that in March 2017, it was announced that Lincolnshire was to be a 'Partner in Practice.'

It was highlighted that going forward the Service would be looking to positively respond to the challenges presented, whilst maintaining its strong focus on delivering excellent outcomes for the children of Lincolnshire who have a plan for adoption.

During discussion, the Panel made reference to the following points:-

- Work was taking place with Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland putting together a business case on how the requirements of the government could be delivered for a new regional adoption agency for the East Midlands. Lincolnshire had been rated as an outstanding adoption agency for the last 10 years, and there would be a need for careful management to ensure the authority could support the other authorities whilst not negatively affecting its own service.
- The YOS model was being looked at, as it was noted that this was a well established model. A lot of work had been carried out so far and assessment processes had been aligned, as well as work on family funding and family medical officers. Operationally, the region was in a very good place.
- It was commented that there could be significant variation in terms of attendance by adopters at support groups. When families were in crisis they may be more likely to feel that it would be of benefit to attend the groups. Officers were looking at ways to make it more meaningful for these families. Officers were not concerned about the lack of engagement.
- It was commented that this was a good report, and it was pleasing to see that numbers of adoption orders had increased. The majority was still for the 0 – 5 age range.
- In terms of adoption, as part of the proceedings it was considered in the application to court what would be in the best interest of the child if they were not able to go back to their parents or other family members. There were a number of factors to consider, and one of those was age, another was any trauma the child had experienced. In older children the trauma was often manifested in such a way that meant carers were not able to take them on.
- Reference was made to a cap on applications to the Adoption Support Fund, and it was queried what this money was for. The Panel was advised that this

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funding was to support placements, and a cap had been introduced as there was a limited budget, and there was a need to ensure that sufficient support could be offered for all families that requested it. If there were extenuating circumstances it could be possible to increase the amount available.

- It was noted that the £4.5m of start-up funding that was promised by the government did not seem like a lot of money for the whole country. Officers advised that they would ensure that any funding that was received would be spent wisely.
- Members commented that they were pleased to variety of social activities being arranged. It was noted that the aim was to encourage children to experiment and go beyond their comfort zones.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the Adoption Service Annual Report and Statement of Purpose be noted.
2. That the Adoption Service Annual Report and Statement of Purpose be approved.

**22 FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

Consideration was given to a report which informed the Corporate Parenting Panel of the work of the Fostering Service for the year 2018/2019 in accordance with the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000, Fostering Services 2011 and Fostering National Minimum Standards. The report provided a written summary of the Service, including relevant performance data, achievements and areas for development.

It was reported that Standard 25 of the National Minimum Standards required that the Fostering Service was effectively monitored, including the provision of quarterly written reports and annual service report. The report identified the successes of the Fostering Service and outlined the challenges it was facing.

The Panel was advised that it had been an interesting year in fostering, and a significant amount of work had taken place in preparation for the Ofsted inspection. There were currently 614 Looked After Children, which was a slight reduction on previous years. It was reported that part of the success was due to the number of children who were matched and placed in permanent placements, as well as the ability to place large sibling groups.

There was a need for caution as nationally and regionally it was very difficult to recruit foster carers, so it was important that the authority did not become complacent. There were 28 approvals for foster carers the previous year. However, there were a number who had recently decided to cease fostering. But, officers were reassured when looking at the reasons for leaving, that they were not going to a more competitive agency.

Members of the Panel were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- It was noted that Ofsted had given an excellent report of the fostering services at Lincolnshire County Council, but it was queried what the services were like from the perspective of a foster carer. It was commented, by a foster carer, that from her personal experience she had been very well supported and was aware of Caring2Learn (although she was not involved). The experience of supervising social workers had always been positive. She had met a lot of potential foster carers, and fostering was a huge task, as there were so many skills and requirements needed. The support groups and focus groups were invaluable. There was a need to build up a support network of wider foster carers. Whilst her experience had been good, she knew there were other foster carers who had found it more difficult.
- It was accepted that there would always be 'bumps' in the road for foster carers, but recruitment and retention were a concern. It was noted that recruitment was a national issue, and authorities were 9000 households short across the country. It was a serious challenge. Over the last couple of years, Lincolnshire had lost people with a significant amount of experience, however this had often been due to tragic life events or they had been foster carers for many years. Officers were reassured from the exit interviews that those that chose to leave were not doing so due to a lack of support from LCC. It was also noted that the average age of a foster carer was high, and the challenge was to encourage more younger people to become foster carers.
- It was queried whether it was possible to put inserts into County News advertising for foster carers. The Panel was advised that the recruitment strategy was wide reaching and varied, and included targeting the big employers, magazines, it did not rely on social media. There were also face to face recruitment events.
- It was noted that the previous Friday, there had been a session for dual hatted councillors on 'Corporate Parenting across the Districts', and it was reported that 28 councillors had attended, which was a very good turnout.
- There was still work to do with big employers, although some would allow time off if a foster child was ill, as they would for an employee's own child. It was noted that this was something which would be discussed with the district councils.
- The performance measures for placement stability were explained to the Panel, in relation to what was measured as a 'move' which included a child going from home to foster placement, or from a foster placement back home. It was not necessarily a move between foster placements. The Panel was advised that placement stability in Lincolnshire was good, and it was the way that the calculation was done which was mis-leading.
- It was queried whether the Panel could have a presentation on understanding placement stability and the relationship between movements and breakdowns.
- Every child that was placed with a family became a Looked After Child.
- It was noted that there were 641 Looked After Children, and was queried what happened to those children who were not in foster care, or under a Special

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Guardianship Order. Members were advised that some were in children's homes, some would be in a placement with their parent(s) but would remain as LAC before going back to the courts to discharge the order. Some would also be unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

- It was queried whether the only contingency the authority had if there were not enough fosterers was to go to private fosterers. The Panel was advised that the starting point when placing a child was always the family, relatives or connected persons. However, sometimes the size of the sibling group or the trauma experienced by the child made it difficult to place some children. All of the community and family that was appropriate for the child would be considered.
- It was confirmed that there were only 22 children who were in external provision. Eight of those were unaccompanied asylum seeking children. It was highlighted that Lincolnshire children should stay in Lincolnshire where possible.
- It was noted that there were other options available for 16 – 18 year olds, such as supported accommodation.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the Fostering Annual Report and Statement of Purpose be received.
2. That the Fostering Annual Report and Statement of Purpose for 2018/19 be recommended for approval.

**23 PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**

Consideration was given to a report which informed the Corporate Parenting Panel of the state of Private Fostering in accordance with the requirements of the Children Act 1989, the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulation 2005 and the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering 2005, to provide key service performance over the past 12 months.

The Panel was guided through the report and it was noted that there had been a slight reduction in numbers from 32 down to 26 children. There were only 11 private fostering arrangements in place. The LSCB had been very proactive, and it would remain a standing item on the sub-group's agenda.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- In terms of language schools, was queried whether the children that came to study from other countries were privately fostered, and what happened if those homes were not suitable. The Panel was advised that there were sanctions within the law. An assessment would be carried out and if it was not satisfactory, officers would work with the foster parents to make it satisfactory. The ultimate sanction was a prohibition order.

- There were a number of reasons a child would go into private fostering, such as to manage the breakdown of relationship with parents or parental illness.
- It was noted that there were two children in the 0 – 5 age group in private fostering, and the authority had been keen to understand the reasons for this, which were found to be legitimate. There was a very clear proves to ensure that the placement remained stable.
- Members were advised that there was no average length of stay as each individual case was so different, and the numbers of children involved were very small, therefore any average figures would be distorted. What was important was that the authority knew where the children were.
- It was queried at what point were the authority informed that children were in private foster arrangements, and the Panel was advised that it was usually other professionals that would notify the local authority and make the referral.
- People who were caring for children were subject to an assessment by the fostering service.

#### RESOLVED

That the Corporate Parenting Panel endorses the current approach to Private Fostering.

#### 24 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Consideration was given to a report which provided key performance information for quarter 1 2019/20 that was relevant to the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel. It was reported that overall, performance for quarter 1 was positive, with only two areas where the target was not being achieved.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- Percentage of Looked After Children in the same placement for at least two years – it was commented that as the target had not been achieved (performance was 68.9%), it looked like the authority had failed. It was acknowledged that aspirational targets had been set, but there was a need to determine whether the data could be extrapolated.
- One member commented that they were not wholly concerned about the not achieved targets, as the outcomes were more important. Those children that there were concerns about, officers knew who they were and were working to resolve the issues.

#### RESOLVED

That the performance information presented be noted.

#### 25 CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL WORK PROGRAMME

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The Panel gave consideration to a report from Daniel Steel, Scrutiny Officer, which enabled the Panel to consider and comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year to ensure that scrutiny activity was focussed where it could be of greatest benefit.

The Work Programme for the Corporate Parenting Panel for the period from 19 September 2019 to 23 July 2020 was detailed on pages 296 to 298 for the Panel to consider.

It was reported that the V4C report would now be considered at the meeting on 14 November 2019, and it was also hoped to be able to report some positive news at that meeting regarding V4C.

The Chairman thanked the Members of the Panel and officers for their attendance at the meeting.

**RESOLVED**

That the work programme as set out in the report be approved.

The meeting closed at 12.41 p.m.

**Open Report on behalf of Janice Spencer OBE,  
Interim Director of Children's Services**

Report to:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>14 November 2019</b>
Subject:	<b>Independent Reviewing Service – 6 Month Report</b>

**Summary:**

This report is the six month report on the Independent Chair's Service. It serves to update members of the Corporate Parenting Panel on the work undertaken between April and October 2019 and includes an update on priorities identified for 2019-20.

**Actions Required:**

Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are requested to consider the six month report on the Independent Chair's Service and seek assurance that the identified priorities are on track to be achieved by March 2020.

## **1. Background**

Every child who is 'looked after' by Lincolnshire County Council must have a Care Plan. This document details the long-term plan for the child's upbringing, and the arrangements made by Lincolnshire Children's Services to meet the child's day-to-day needs. All local authorities have a statutory duty to review the Care Plan regularly, within legislative timescales, as stipulated in the Care Planning and Case Review Regulations 2010.

It is a legal requirement for every child who is looked after to have an Independent Reviewing Officer appointed to them under Section 118 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. The Independent Reviewing Officers' handbook (2010) specifies that the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) should provide continuity in the oversight of matters relating to a child being looked after, and that they should strive to establish a consistent relationship with the child. The statutory duties of the Independent Reviewing Officer include the following:

- Monitor the performance of the local authority and their function in relation to the child's case
- Participate in any review of the child's case
- Ensure that any ascertained wishes and feelings of the child are given due consideration by the appropriate authority
- Perform any other function which is prescribed by the regulations

It is a statutory requirement to provide an annual report in respect of the Local Authority's Independent Reviewing Service.

The Independent Chairs Service consists of combined roles so that an Independent Chair is responsible for chairing and managing child protection conferences alongside the IRO duties and functions. The attached report therefore details performance across both these roles to ensure members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are provided with a holistic overview.

**2. Conclusion**

The last six months has seen continued progress in developing the service and the priorities identified earlier this year are all on track to be achieved by the end of March 2020. In addition there has been significant scrutiny and feedback by Ofsted in April 2019 and a Learning Day in October. The feedback from both of these events was extremely positive.

**3. Consultation**

**a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?**

N/A

**b) Risks and Impact Analysis**

N/A

**4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Independent Chair's Service Six Month Report October 2019

**5. Background Papers**

This report was written by Carolyn Knight, who can be contacted on 01522 553732 or Carolyn.knight@lincolnshire.gov.uk

**Lincolnshire County Council – Children’s Services  
Independent Chairs 6 Month Report  
1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

***The Contribution of Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) to Quality Assuring and Improving Services for Children in Care***

This IRO report provides evidence relating to the IRO Services in Lincolnshire as required by statutory guidance. Due to the core business of the team also including child protection, short breaks and Reg 44, where appropriate this report contains information relating to those areas.

The IRO report must be presented to: Corporate Parenting Board and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

**Purpose of service and legal context**

The IRO Service is set within the framework of the IRO Handbook which provides the statutory guidance for independent reviewing officers and local authorities on their functions in relation to case management and review for looked after children.

The guidance is issued as part of a suite of statutory guidance which sets out how local authorities should carry out the full range of responsibilities in relation to care planning, placement and review for looked after children. The aim is to provide looked after children with the most appropriate placement to meet their needs and improve their outcomes.

The CP Chairs role is described within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 which is a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Following section 47 enquiries, an initial child protection conference (ICPC) brings together family members (and the child where appropriate), with the supporters, advocates and practitioners most involved with the child and family.

The purpose of the CPC is to analyse all relevant information and plan how best to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child with the family and their network taking the lead. It is the responsibility of the conference to make recommendations on how organisations and agencies work together to safeguard the child in future.

## Update on the priorities for 2019 – 2020

### Priorities for 2019-20

- **Further embed Signs of Safety (SOS) across CP and LAC - to promote use of Family Network Meetings, genograms, eco maps and safety plans, promote family and friends time.**

All Independent Chairs are SOS Practice Leads and they have attended Practice Lead sessions with SOS Consultant Tracey Hill. Learning is then shared at Team Meetings, in Professional Supervision and Group Learning.

The Quality and Standards Management Team are also Practice Leads and continue to ensure that this approach is embedded at a practice level and in their interactions with team members.

An SOS Practice Adviser, has attended Team Meetings and Group Learning to offer guidance and support.

Group Learning sessions occur on a rolling basis in both the North and South of the county every 6 weeks. The team practice SOS skills, Best Questions, Scaling Questions and Restorative Practice (RP) skills.

Professional Supervision includes Appreciative Inquiry and Case Supervision has been developed to better reflect the specific roles of the IRO and Chairs in relation to their impact upon plans and outcomes for children and young people, SOS, Reflection and Best Questions.

Reviews are child focussed and follow the SOS framework to ensure continuity and consistency of approach from CP to LAC in working with families and children. Chairs role model SOS within CP & LAC; preparing best questions, scaling questions and using genograms and ecomaps. The team continue to develop new ways of working with children within Looked After Reviews, changing language within reports and meetings i.e. "family and friends time, foster parents, foster home." The IRO's and CP Chairs have responded to national feedback from children and young people in relation to what they expect from their reviews and changing the way professionals talk about children in care (TACT Project "Language that Cares" March 2019).

A new Agenda for Child Protection Conferences was developed in a group workshop with the team and the SOS & RP Lead Manager Partners in Practice. This session was introduced by Roz Cordy, Assistant Director and Carolyn Knight Quality and Standards Manager in February 2019 and is now embedded in current practice.

A new template has been developed to integrate SOS into a 'Record of the Meeting' report which now replaces CP minutes. The template has been reviewed and improved with feedback from the Chairs, the Minute Takers, the Safeguarding and Review Team and Partners in Practice. Representation from a FAST team was also included. This

incorporates the learning from recent Serious Case Reviews and was also later supported in the OFSTED Report June 2019 in relation to the previous format "Child protection minutes are over detailed which makes it difficult for parents and children to pick out the pertinent risks and understand the main concerns."

The IRO's and Chairs have undertaken Restorative Practice training and the Practice Leads cascade RP techniques to the team. RP is integral in the management of the meetings undertaken by the IRO's and Chairs and in their contact with children and families outside of these. An example of this is that they now contact families prior to Initial Child Protection Conferences in order to ensure that families feel comfortable about the child protection process and that they can ask questions and allay fears to ensure it is more inclusive.

Chairs are inviting families into the Conference Room ahead of professionals wherever venues allow this to happen.

RP has been integrated into the new CP agenda and working practices.

The Quality and Standards Management Team have attended the Restorative Practice Deep Dive sessions – "developing a restorative mind-set and building community."

- **To engage parents more pro-actively and if they don't attend LAC reviews, to make efforts to contact them and if necessary and/or appropriate to write directly to them.**

When parents attend Reviews and Conferences the IRO's and CP Chairs encourage them through SOS, RP and child centred reviews to be part of the plan; to contribute rather than be a spectator. Plans are future focused – specifically for teenagers – promoting changes to family time and relationships particularly if there is a possibility of young person returning to family when they are 18 or possibly younger.

The chairs continue to make concerted efforts to engage parents in the LAC review process, on some occasions going the extra mile, by offering them transport, or advocating for support with transport to be offered by the social work team, if that was felt to be a barrier to attendance. The chairs also call parents to gain their views should they be unable to attend. There are many examples of good practice that is aimed to become an established and consistent approach across the whole team.

- **Promoting referrals to Life Links.**

Life Links (LL) is a new strand of work being offered through the Family Group Conference Service for Looked after Children over age 15 and Care Leavers to enable them to develop a life time of support from the people they choose. Since its launch in April 2019 the IROs have positively promoted the LL service with young people and in total 14 referrals have been made and LL are currently working with 8 young people.

- **Ensure that mental health is focussed on particularly in LAC reviews. All IROs to undertake the LSCP mental health course.**

The chairs are live to the challenges that a young person in care has to face, in terms of their management and healing from the trauma experiences that led for them to be taken into care. The chairs are taking long term view of the care plans to be geared towards the healing process, even when on the surface a young person appears to be doing well and be settled.

The aim is for all Independent chairs to have completed the mental health training offered within the council by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

- **Recommendations from permanence and CP audits to be translated into practice. To include: Chairs reports to further embed clarity around permanence options, timescales, what needs to happen.**

The Quality Assurance Board has been in place since September 2018 and is a strategic decision-making forum to better understand, monitor and progress a number of quality assurance strands within the service area. This includes the coordination of and learning from audit outcomes as well as identifying the key actions to be taken and areas for consideration across the service areas. Feedback and learning takes place during individual supervisions and team meetings.

QA's specific to the role of the Chairs have included observations of CPC's undertaken in Feb & March 2019 and a of CPC plans that ended in less than 3 months in April 2019.

A QA of 2<sup>nd</sup> Review and Permanency of LAC was undertaken in April 2019. The audit identified that the vast majority of the reports seen were of an acceptable standard. Variable practice remains one of the main issues to ensure further improvement but had not in any delay in progressing the care plan for permanence. A repeat QA is planned for April 2020 to ensure that learning is impacting upon practice.

- **Review external escalations process to improve the effectiveness of the process and improve attendance and performance around CP conferences**

This has been completed with LSCP and the new process commenced in September 2019 – a Quarterly email is now sent to the Senior Liaison Officer's to make them aware of any escalations raised for staff or areas that they cover. The SLO's are also expected

to provide a response to how the themes of concerns have been addressed within their area. The Procedure is being updated on LSCP website.

- **To visit looked after children within 6 months and maintain/promote on-going contact between reviews.**

This remains a key focus for the team who find creative ways to keep in touch including offering children an opportunity to meet with their IRO in a surgery style arrangement in a particular school.

Visits to children are included in supervision and appraisal but unfortunately have also been impacted upon by recent team pressures and capacity.

- **Chairs to undertake Chairing of adoption and SGO disruption meetings. Training to be provided to support this on new procedures.**

Extensive work has been completed drawing on the independent chairs' experience and knowledge and lead by Paul Fisher, to develop the framework of managing disruption meetings. The criteria for SGO meetings have recently been agreed by DLT, agenda, guidance, referral process and report templates have been developed and the wording of the policy/procedure is due to be finalised in the very near future.

Upon the service agreeing to undertake disruptions meetings, it was believed that these will represent only a very small number of 4-5 meetings a year. However from April 2019 to date the team has already received 15 referrals. These referrals will need to be scrutinised against the newly agreed criteria. This will reduce the number of disruption meetings undertaken by the team. Given the current pressures on the team, adoption disruption meetings have been prioritised; however SGO referrals received in the last three months have been subject to some delay in completion or have been put on hold momentarily, until capacity within the team allows for the work to be undertaken.

- **Feedback from young people and parents is an on-going priority in order to QA the service and identify potential learning which will impact on outcomes for children.**

We offer young people and parents an opportunity to give their feedback in a variety of ways:

- All of the consultation and information leaflets have been updated to reflect SOS and RP and will be reviewed annually.
- When managers observe IRO/chairs they always attempt to meet with parents/children following the meeting.
- IRO's support young people to complete consultation docs if carers or SW's have not been able to.
- IRO's contact YP's before reviews to check how they want their reviews to be managed

- Feedback sheets are given to young people and their family and carers after every LAC review and after every Conference. We have developed a spread sheet that will collate this feedback for analysis using a rag rating and any comments. This will then inform future work programmes, helping us to better understand the impact upon children and families.
- The Young Inspectors were due to undertake qualitative interviews with a number of looked after children but due to their staffing difficulties this was postponed. An Independent Chair was tasked to do this in September 2019 and has so far undertaken 4 interviews and whilst there are identified areas for development;

***"Emily said that the reviews have made a 'big difference' to her care, she feels confident to have her say, generally."***

***"Charlotte finds it positive as people can work together to solve a problem. She was also aware that her IRO is independent."***

- We have trialled a follow up scheme through Business Support to contact parents post Conference to seek their views with mixed success. Further consideration will be given over the forthcoming year regarding how this can become established practice.
- The Tell Us What You Think survey was designed to capture the views of Looked After Children about various aspects of their care experience. The intention is to identify the extent to which services are meeting quality standards and the needs of young people. It is also intended to give children and young people a voice to help identify how services can be improved. The outcomes in relation to the IRO role are shared in team mtgs.

### **Other work completed:**

A LAC leaflet "All About You" explains to younger children the role of the IRO and the review process including details of the IRO, Advocacy and Counselling. This is posted out to all children and young people who become looked after from primary school age to age 18. IRO's also take copies out with them when visiting children. A leaflet is being developed each for young people subject to Remand, for UASC and CWD. This leaflet will be in use by the end of October 2019.

Although the numbers of CWD LAC cases are reported on at present, further work is being undertaken in relation to MOSAIC to ensure that improved performance data can be drawn directly from the system. The IRO's update is included in the Child in Need Plan and they now have their own Activity Step in which to capture their involvement. An aide memoir is in place (developed with the CWD team) to support the IRO's

reporting of the LAC or STB review meeting. An audit has just been completed by CWD and Team Manager which will be fed back to each team.

IRO's and Chairs continue to attend Children's Services locality team meetings every 6 months. This has been received very positively by the teams both in having the opportunity to explore the role and expectations of the IRO and Chairs but also to raise matters and find solutions therefore improving practice.

Six monthly meetings with colleagues from CAF/CASS have continued and the existing Protocol has been reviewed and updated again. A joint workshop and problem solving session took place to develop care planning around family time within the PLO process, SGO support planning. The feedback from this event was positive and that communication between services had improved.

The Manager of the QA Service also now sits on the local Family Justice Board and this has served to raise the profile of the IRO Service within the court arena. A recent survey by the National IRO Managers Partnership around IRO views in the court arena has recently been shared with them and there may be scope for a further twilight session to the Family lawyers and court staff (including Judges) on the role of the IRO in 2019.

One Team Manager attends the Sector Led Improvement Regional IRO and CP Managers group meeting every quarter. Members of the group also arrange regional workshops across the year for IRO's and Chairs. In addition the Team Manager also attends the National IRO Managers Partnership, as one of the two regional representatives of East Midlands. Workshops have included;

14<sup>th</sup> May in Derby – Participation and Engagement.

10<sup>th</sup> September in Leicester- Contextual Safeguarding, Modern Slavery & Trafficking.

19<sup>th</sup> November in Lincoln – Outcome Care Planning, communication, language.

Lincolnshire Children's Services is an Improvement Partner for Northamptonshire. A peer review of SQAS (Safeguarding, Quality Assurance Service) in Northampton took place over 3 days in July 2019 and 3 auditors present from the Q&S Team. The auditors were provided with a scoping document by Northamptonshire with key lines of enquiry. The review was been undertaken collaboratively to include the IRO's, CP Conference Chairs, LADO, Business Support, Advocates and Independent Visitors, Virtual School Head, the Assessment, LAC & Leaving Care Team Managers, and the Safeguarding Business Manager.

In July 2019 one Chair has been seconded from Lincolnshire to Northampton for 6 months as part of a team to support an improvement programme.

#### OFSTED

Lincolnshire County Council were Inspected by OFSTED 29<sup>th</sup> April – 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2019. Services for children and families in Lincolnshire are judged to be "Outstanding".

There were two recommendations from the inspection, one of which in related to the quality and consistency of Pathway plans for care leavers. In response, the LA led by the County Manager for Looked after Children has developed a new pathway plan process and template, to which our service has also contributed by participating in developing and testing the process on the case management system.

The OFSTED report specifically commented on the impact of IRO's and CP Chairs:

- Children's progress is closely monitored through the use of scaling tools, at regular, well attended CPC's.
- Families are central to the planning to reduce risk.
- Plans are effective and improve children's experiences and outcomes.
- For those children unable to return to their birth families or live within family networks, alternative permanence options are carefully considered with parallel planning occurring from the earliest opportunity.
- Minutes are sensitively written to children following reviews, this means that children have a better understanding about how decisions were made about their lives.
- Staff feel well supported in their roles and are unanimously positive about and committed to working for Lincolnshire.

## **Learning Day 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

Learning Days are undertaken on a regular basis for all teams with the main objective of each day to provide a dedicated reflective learning opportunity for the team. They also provide an opportunity for Strengthening relationships between Senior Managers and the Children's Services workforce, Ensuring messages from senior management are being filtered down to the workforce and from the workforce are being share with senior management; Providing assurance to senior managers that children and young people feel safe.

The Learning Day for Independent Chairs and LADO teams took place on 19<sup>th</sup> September and included a collaborative audit in relation to a looked after child and an observation of the LAC review, an observation of an ICPC, discussion with the Reg 44 Officer and LADOs.

The Learning Day was undertaken by one Assistant Director and a Head of Service. Feedback received on the day included the following:

*"It was a privilege to hear from such an impressive, values-driven set of professionals, and to observe some of the work. I left feeling humbled by it. Thanks to all involved"*

*"I would echo all of Mary's comments I had a fabulous day. I will with Mary pull together some more detailed feedback but you have a very child focused, highly motivated and passionate team! "*

More formal feedback has since been received and this is being fed into the on-going work of the teams.

## **Professional Profile of the IRO Service**

The Independent Reviewing Service continues to be embedded within the Quality and Standards Service Area of Lincolnshire County Council.

The Independent Chairs Team is made up primarily of two distinct roles: Independent Reviewing Officers IRO and Child Protection Chairs. In a number of Local Authorities these roles are separate roles, often located in separate teams, however this is not the case in Lincolnshire. Currently there are 18.6 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Independent Chair posts within the team that cover the county as a whole.

The team also has responsibility for reviewing CWD Short Term Breaks and Regulation 44 Inspections. Both of these roles are also statutory requirements.

In addition there are 3 LADOs within the wider team who are line managed by the Quality and Standards Manager. These roles are filled by qualified Social Workers at the same grade as the IRO's and Chairs and are able to assist with covering work on occasion.

### Short Term Breaks (STB's)

Short breaks are part of a continuum of services which support children in need and their families. They include the provision of day, evening, overnight and weekend activities for the child or young person, and can take place in the child's own home, the home of an approved carer, or in a residential or community setting. In Lincolnshire the users of short breaks are disabled children and their families. The breaks usually have two aims: to enable the child to participate in fun, interesting and safe activities; and to provide a break from caring for the parents.

The role of the IRO for children looked after in a series of short breaks is more limited than for children looked after longer term. It is important that IROs are sensitive to the close and active involvement of parents. Given this sensitivity, parents as well as children and young people can highly value their contribution and independent perspective, especially in helping to resolve any difficulties with the placement. IROs have a responsibility to alert the local authority if the placement is not meeting the child's needs.

The performance of this part of the service can now be reported within the OMG reports when needed.

Number of Short Term Break meetings held			
Apr 18	8	Jan 19	6
May 18	12	Feb 19	4
Jun 18	8	Mar 19	5
Jul 18	8	Apr 19	5
Aug 18	1	May 19	3
Sep 18	7	Jun 19	11
Oct 18	4	Jul 19	5
Nov 18	9	Aug 19	0
Dec 18	8	Sep 19	8

#### Regulation 44

The Regulation 44 Officer continues to be based within the team. The role is a statutory one to act as an independent person, visit and report on the children's homes. Lincolnshire has 7 residential homes with a wide range of specialism – one Secure unit, two homes accommodating children with disabilities for short breaks, one long term home for children with disabilities and 3 children's homes that offer long term placement for children who are looked after. There has been the launch of a new supported living scheme in Grantham providing accommodation in two houses for 5 young people aged 16-18 for a period of up to six months. This accommodation is to be inspected under the Regulation 44 process however this is 'a light touch' exercise every 4 months. For details in terms of the service please see the individual report provided for the corporate parenting board.

## **Staffing**

### Management Team

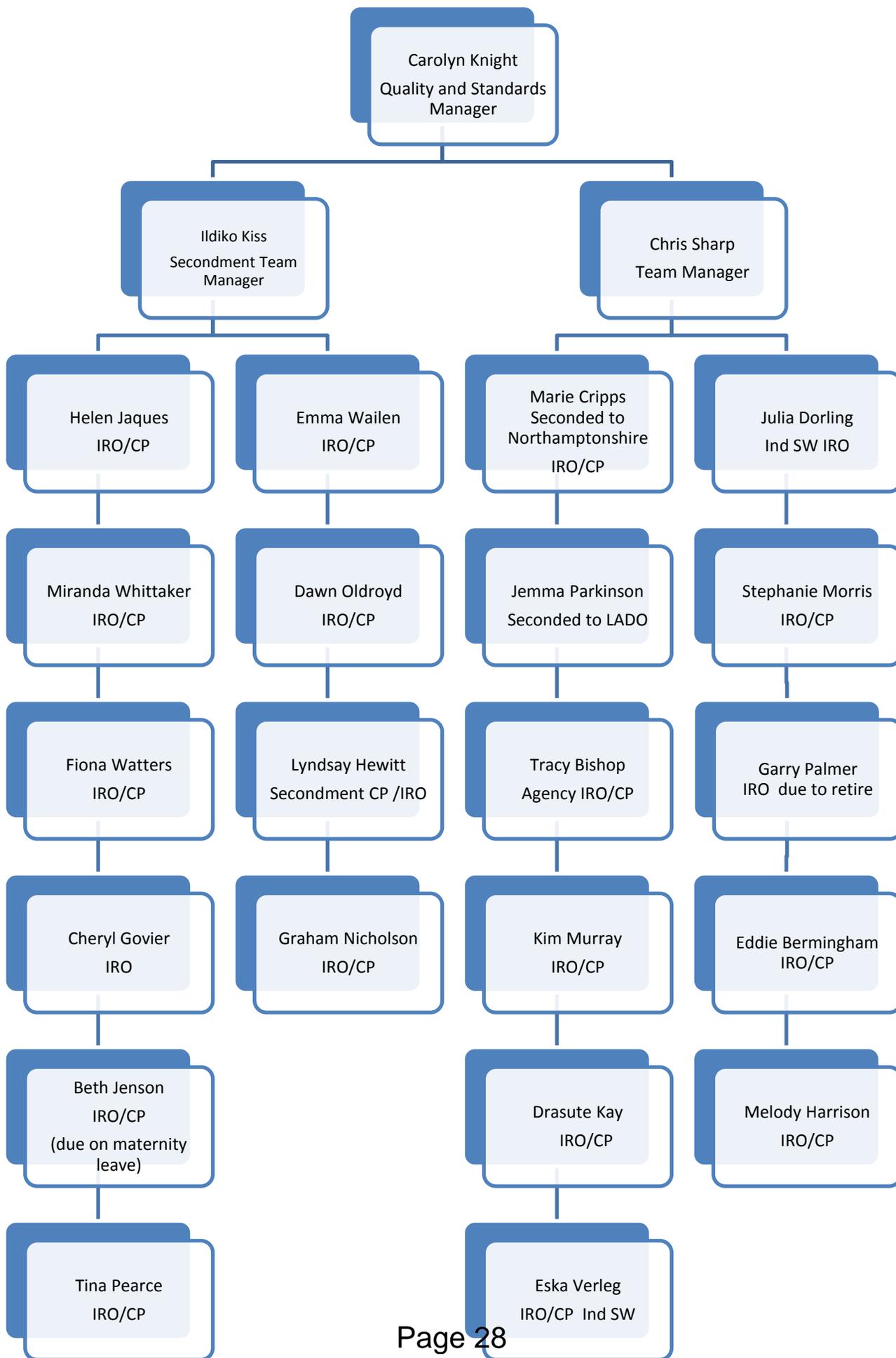
Chris Sharp has been a consistent Team Manager during the reporting period. Ildiko Kiss has recently (August 19) returned from maternity leave and her absence was covered by Paul Fisher (LADO) who was seconded into the other Team Manager post from April 2018 to August 2019.

### Independent Chairs

The team has experienced a number of changes since April. 3 team members have retired; one Chair on temporary contract left the team to secure a permanent position at another Local Authority; two IRO/Chairs are seconded out of service, and another to Northamptonshire to support the council as part of the Partners In Practice. Two further chairs are due to leave in November, one due to maternity leave, another Chair (Independent SW) who had reduced hours in the team, is leaving for personal reasons.

The team has experienced further pressure due to sickness and absence due to bereavement. As a result of the number of changes within the team, the time needed for recruitment and current secondments in place, the capacity within the team has been diminished to the tune of almost three full time equivalents. This has meant an increased workload for the rest of the team members.

Attempts have been made to increase capacity within the team, by recruiting to three full time positions, two of whom have started in June and another is due to start at the end of October. We have attempted unsuccessfully to recruit to back fill secondments. One seconded Chair has had her secondment extended until May 2020 although this is subject to review in December. As a result three agency workers have been recruited, one in July and a further two in October/November.



## **Looked After population and the IRO service**

The numbers of looked after children show an upwards trend in comparison to the same period in the last year, where the LAC numbers showed a decreasing trend, only to start increasing again in October 2018. An estimate of the average LAC population for 2019 April until September is almost 622 children, whereas in 2018, same comparative period would give an average estimate of 634 children.

Since April 2019 the IROs conducted 784 reviews involving 929 children, having 1.18 children per LAC review. In 2018, the same period, 713 reviews were held for 916 children, having 1.28 child per review meeting.

7.8 % (almost 5) additional reviews of the 61 could be attributed to having less children per reviews, and the other 56 meetings would represent early reviews held due to PLO and significant events.

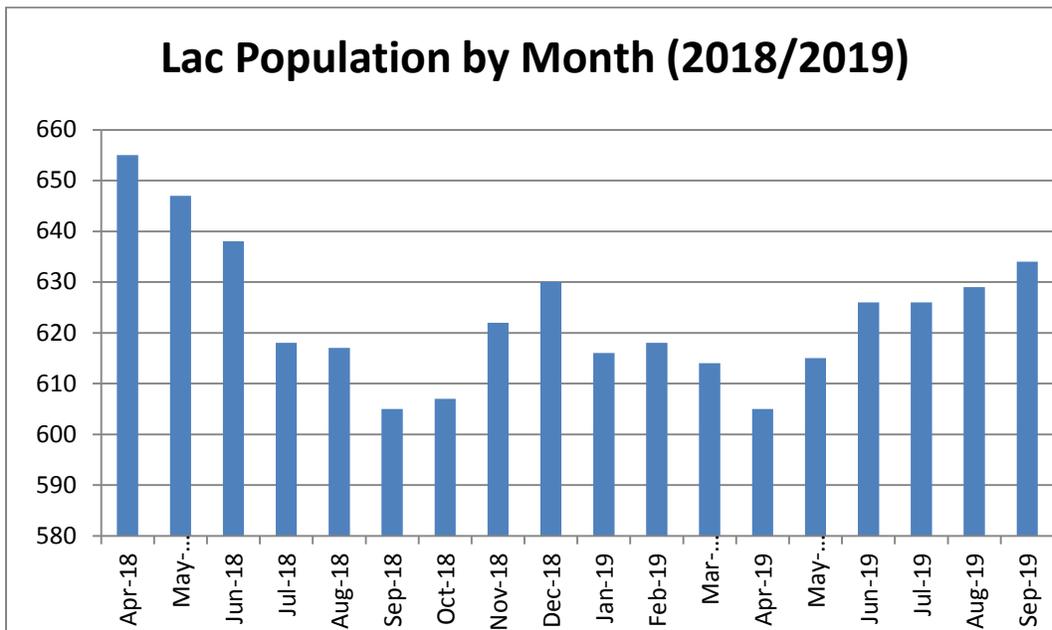
It is interesting to see that even though the average LAC population is nearly 2% less than in comparative period of 2018, yet, the LAC review meetings held in 2019 have increased by nearly 10%.

The main factor for increase is believed to be due to additional reviews being held to meet PLO timescales. Some of the increase in the number of the review meetings can also be explained by the reduction in children that have been reviewed as sibling groups. This is because they have different care plans.

Three young people have been subject to Secure Accommodation under Section 25 of the Children Act 1989 and to date three Secure Accommodation Reviews have been held.

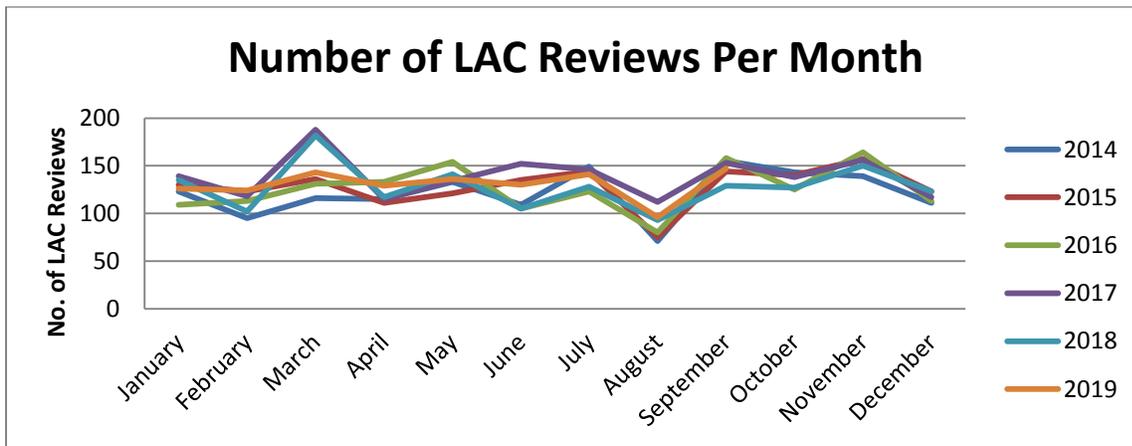
Eight young people have been subject to Remands in the reporting period. Nine reviews have been held to date for these young people.

## Looked After Population

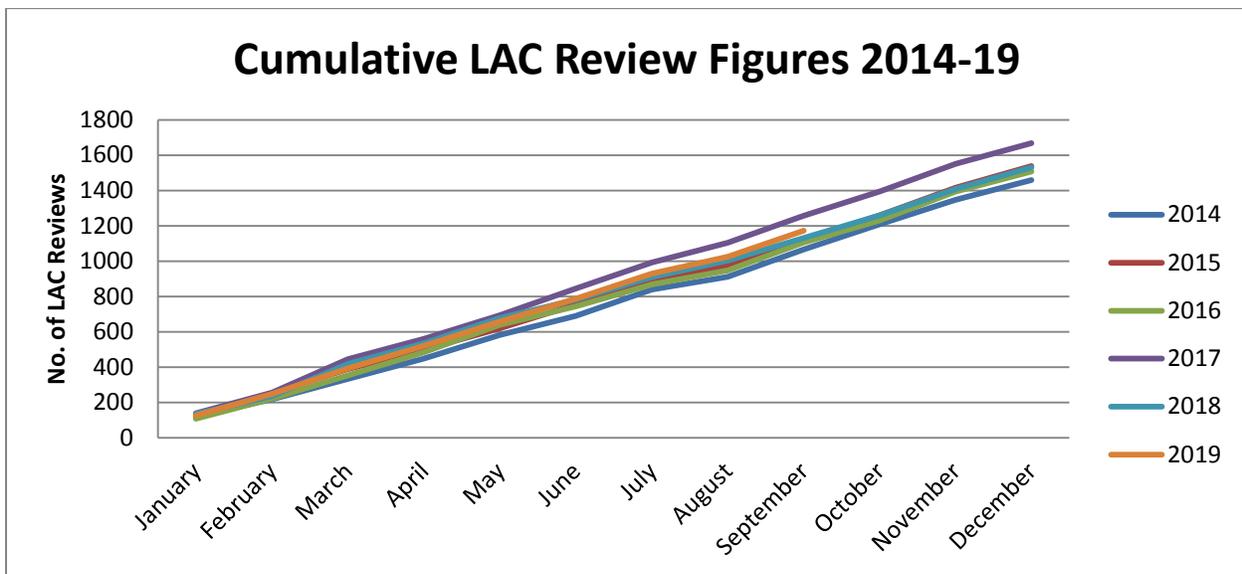


Number of LAC Reviews						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
January	123 (161 Children)	130 (155 Children)	109 (135 Children)	135 (201 Children)	134 (169 children)	122 (153 children)
February	95 (119 Children)	123 (162 Children)	113 (132 Children)	117 (144 Children)	102 (120 children)	124 (143 children)
March	116 (145 Children)	136 (172 Children)	131 (179 Children)	186 (226 Children)	181 (226 children)	145 (176 children)
April	115 (149 Children)	111 (136 Children)	133 (150 Children)	112 (145 Children)	118 (136 Children)	129 (146 children)
May	133 (160 Children)	120 (156 Children)	154 (190 Children)	135 (165 Children)	142 (178 Children)	134 (151 children)
June	109 (145 Children)	135 (161 Children)	105 (127 Children)	146 (183 Children)	145 (183 Children)	130 (170 children)
July	149 (192 Children)	144 (179 Children)	119 (154 Children)	145 (180 Children)	128 (152 Children)	143 (170 children)
August	71 (87 Children)	75 (93 Children)	80 (96 Children)	111 (127 Children)	95 (115 Children)	95 (109 children)
September	155 (199 Children)	144 (182 Children)	158 (180 Children)	150 (184 Children)	128 (152 Children)	153 (183 children)

Number of LAC Reviews						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
October	142 (174 Children)	139 (173 Children)	125 (166 Children)	135 (160 Children)	127 (150 Children)	
November	139 (179 Children)	157 (197 Children)	163 (193 Children)	156 (182 Children)	150 (185 Children)	
December	111 (142 Children)	123 (156 Children)	112 (136 Children)	116 (142 Children)	123 (149 Children)	



Cumulative LAC Review Figures						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>January</b>	123	130	109	139	135	126
<b>February</b>	218	253	222	257	237	250
<b>March</b>	334	389	353	445	419	393
<b>April</b>	449	500	486	560	536	522
<b>May</b>	582	621	640	694	677	656
<b>June</b>	691	756	745	846	782	786
<b>July</b>	840	900	868	992	910	929
<b>August</b>	911	975	948	1104	1003	1024
<b>September</b>	1066	1119	1106	1257	1132	1177
<b>October</b>	1209	1259	1231	1395	1259	
<b>November</b>	1348	1416	1395	1551	1409	
<b>December</b>	1459	1539	1508	1668	1532	



### Advocacy

Advocacy provision in Lincolnshire is currently provided by Total Voice as part of a commissioned service. The Senior Advocacy Practitioner, Barnardo's, attended a Team Meeting in August 2019 and feedback has been given to the LA Manager of the Advocacy contract to identify changes that could be made to ensure that all young people are appropriately supported and have a voice within their Care Plan and Safety Plan.

IROs routinely check that children and young people know about advocacy and how it can support them in having a real say in decisions affecting their lives. LAC children are opted in to the Advocacy Service who are also automatically invited to LAC Reviews for children aged 8 and over. The advocacy service has worked with 92 young people since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 (16 LAC and 76 CP).

### Timeliness of reviews

99.8% of Looked After Reviews took place within the statutory timescales. This equates to one case (one young person) and late notification from the area team to Safeguarding & Review (S&R). A part one review was held on notification to monitor care planning and a Part two full review meeting a week later.

### Children and young people's preparation and involvement in reviews

Participation includes attending and/or contributing to their Review. All children and young people are sent a consultation form with their invite. Some have phone calls, emails and separate visits from their IROs in between reviews or in anticipation of a forthcoming review. This is to enable the IRO to build a relationship with the child, ensure that they have the opportunity to discuss any issues/talk about the positives in their lives and to determine how they want the next review to be conducted. Attending a

review is the child or young person's decision and not mandatory. All children, except one, over the age of 5 have contributed to their meeting in some form, either through attendance or more indirect means, such as consultation booklet, or their views being represented by a trusted adult or advocate.

Signs of Safety, Restorative Practice and Social Pedagogy are being utilised by staff in partnership with SW colleagues in their planning for reviews and engagement with children and young people. This remains an important strand of work to ensure we can reach out to young people who do not attend to gain feedback and improve participation.

Chairs continue to promote and adapt reviews to ensure that they are relevant and appropriate in line with the wishes of the child or young person. This has meant that reviews can be incredibly varied dependent on the age, circumstances and wishes of the young person, from the more "traditional" review to some very interesting variations.

There still remains the limitations of venues, timing of reviews and working around school holidays that will continue to impact on attendance, however participation still remains a core focus for the Chairs.

Further work will be undertaken over the coming months to identify if there are specific age ranges or groups that are more or less likely to attend their reviews. If there are any specific identifiable trends we would then be looking to identify whether we need to focus our efforts to engage more effectively and identify barriers to attendance that would be relevant to them.

#### Looked After Review Plans

The Chairs continue to focus on checking the availability and quality of Plans and to escalate if they are missing or are not up to date/relevant to the children's needs. The integrated Care Plan/Chairs Report was launched at the beginning of April 2019, as a cooperative system workflow between Social Work and IRO team. This initially caused difficulties, as one or both parties may have not completed their step in a timely manner, which in turn impacted on the other team's workflow. Following intensive work and collaboration with the other teams, there have been improvements made but it is not yet functioning as hoped and remains work in progress.

#### Children seen in separate interviews and children attending their reviews

At this time no accurate data can be provided in respect of children/ young people seen in a separate interview by the IRO prior to the review, or with regards to the number of children who attended their reviews. In addition, changes to Mosaic made in April 2019, as detailed above, had some unintended consequences, which eventually translated into currently a high number of Looked after steps not yet being finalised, which in turn impacts on the data collated. Also it has recently been noted that the report provided by

the performance team needs updating to ensure it captures all of the different review/mosaic step types since the recent changes (pathway plans, adoption etc), and that the LAC monitoring report only actually captures data for children that are still LAC 'today'. Therefore children that have left care in the last 3-6 months are now not included in the report. The issues are currently being addressed with the performance team, and it is envisaged that accurate data can be provided for the annual report. .

#### Progress-chasing Activities between Looked After Reviews

All IROs have a duty to monitor the progress of their allocated children and young people between reviews. This is to ensure the care plan is progressing and allows them to intervene and escalate issues where matters are drifting. All young people are provided with the IROs name and contact details at the initial meeting and routinely at reviews

#### Identifying good practice, problem resolution and escalation

IRO's identify and share good practice with colleagues but also raise concerns with social care teams via positive challenge and formal escalation.

The majority of concerns are still raised by the IROs through positive challenge, and these are recorded on MOSAIC.

The team have been focusing on improving consistency in terms of escalations made and to ensure a better monitoring, reducing drift and delay. Systems are in place to support managerial oversight as well as helping the IRO's in their duty of tracking escalations. The IROs now are sent weekly reminder emails of open formal escalations so that they can follow these up with the respective teams. Also escalations have been included into the individual IROs appraisal goals and are actively discussed during supervisions. The drive is to make the escalations more robust and to increase the use of positive challenge, whenever this is warranted to approve care planning and outcomes for young people.

All Independent Reviewing Officers are required by the regulations to have access to legal advice. Clearly, given the independent nature of the Service, it would not be appropriate for any such advice to be provided by the Children's Services Legal Department. Therefore, arrangements are in place for this service to be delivered by barristers' chambers in Nottingham. To date, this service has not been accessed.

Number of formal escalations (by month)

Month	April 2016	May 2016	June 2016	July 2016	Aug 2016	Sept 2016	Oct 2016	Nov 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017	Mar 2017
No	9	4	0	3	1	3	4	3	6	2	5	8
Month	April 2017	May 2017	June 2017	July 2017	Aug 2017	Sept 2017	Oct 2017	Nov 2017	Dec 2018	Jan 2018	Feb 2018	Mar 2018
No	2	5	7	5	1	9	4	5	5	8	4	7
Month	April 2018	May 2018	June 2018	July 2018	Aug 2018	Sept 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2018	Dec 2018	Jan 2019	Feb 2019	Mar 2019
No	4	4	4	5	2	4	1	1	0	3	2	2
Month	April 2019	May 2019	June 2019	July 2019	Aug 2019	Sept 2019						
No	8	3	1	0	0	8						

Theme of LAC Formal Escalations (April 2019 to September 2019)

Theme	Number Raised
Drift & Delay	8
Practice Issues (Multiple Issues)	6
Placement/ Accommodation Concerns	2
Provision of Service	2
Transitions	1
<b>Total Escalations Raised</b>	<b>19</b>

In relation to good practice, Chairs feedback directly to individual workers, copied to Managers when good practice is identified.

Management oversight

The Guidance states that operational social work managers must consider the decisions from the Review before they are finalised. This is due in part to the need to ensure any resource implications have been addressed. Once the decisions are completed the

Manager has 5 days to raise any queries or objections. Managers rarely ask for any amendments to be made and this process appears to work well.

IROs have continued to monitor the quality of care plans, adoption plans and pathway plans and social reports to review. Where any issues were identified, IROs have attempted initially informally to address these and on a few occasions have formally escalated concerns.

#### Leaving Care – Director's Decision

Month	Total	Month	Total
Apr 18	1	Jan 19	0
May 18	3	Feb 19	0
Jun 18	2	Mar 19	0
Jul 18	1	Apr 19	0
Aug 18	2	May 19	1
Sep 18	0	Jun 19	0
Oct 18	1	Jul 19	1
Nov 18	1	Aug 19	2
Dec 18	0	Sep 19	0

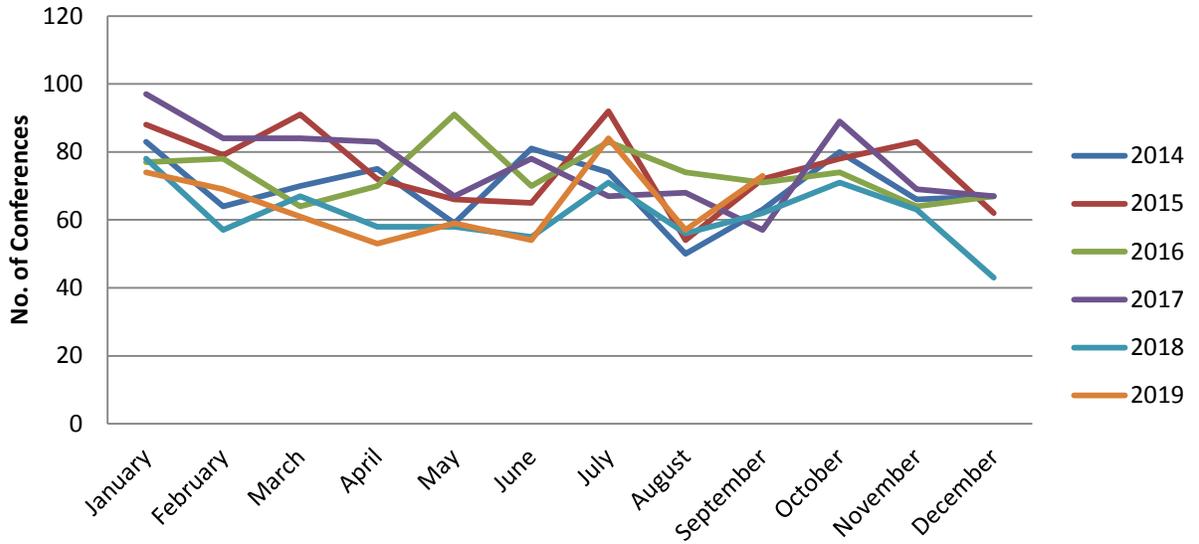
The procedure with regards to Sec. 20 Accommodated young people leaving care before their 18th birthday is understood by Chairs and is discussed within reviews as part of the Care Planning process and Recommendations. Any young person who has been accommodated for more than 20 days and is aged 16 or 17 and wants to leave care has to have this decision considered by the Director.

### **Child Protection**

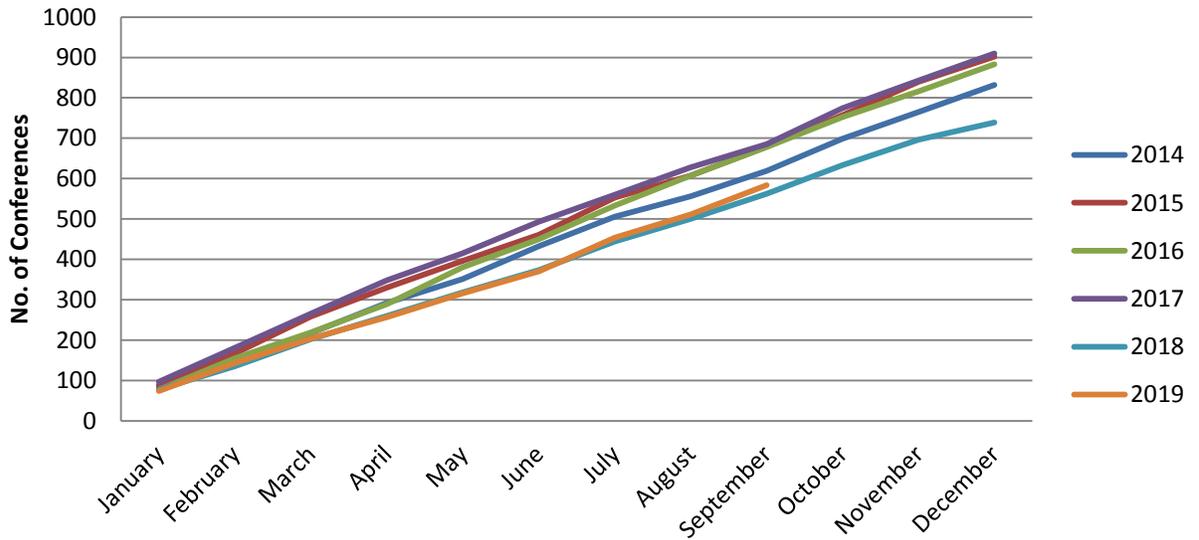
The numbers of children subject to a CP Plan has steadily increased between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 (303) and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 (399). This is compared to a consistent period between April 2018 (303) and March 2019 (315).

<b>Cumulative Number of CP Conferences</b>						
	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>January</b>	83	88	77	97	78	74
<b>February</b>	147	167	155	181	135	143
<b>March</b>	217	258	219	265	202	204
<b>April</b>	292	330	289	348	260	256
<b>May</b>	351	396	380	415	318	315
<b>June</b>	432	461	450	493	373	368
<b>July</b>	506	553	533	560	444	447
<b>August</b>	556	607	607	628	500	504
<b>September</b>	619	679	678	685	562	577
<b>October</b>	699	757	752	774	633	
<b>November</b>	765	840	816	843	696	
<b>December</b>	832	902	883	910	739	

### Number of CP Conferences Per Month



### Cumulative Number of CP Conferences 2014/19



Number of CP Conferences						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
January	82 (159 Children)	88 (187 Children)	76 (140 Children)	97 (184 Children)	78 (157 children)	74 (129 children)
February	64 (122 Children)	79 (132 Children)	78 (144 Children)	84 (142 Children)	56 (115 children)	69 (133 children)
March	70 (132 Children)	91 (190 Children)	64 (112 Children)	83 (157 Children)	66 (128 children)	61 (135 children)
April	75 (167 Children)	72 (130 Children)	70 (133 Children)	81 (162 Children)	58 (99 Children)	52 (101 children)
May	59 (113 Children)	66 (123 Children)	89 (174 Children)	67 (123 Children)	58 (107 Children)	59 (108 children)
June	81 (158 Children)	65 (108 Children)	70 (134 Children)	79 (151 Children)	55 (99 Children)	53 (109 children)
July	74 (143 Children)	92 (172 Children)	83 (162 Children)	67 (141 Children)	71 134 Children)	79 (164 children)
August	50 (88 Children)	54 (92 Children)	74 (144 Children)	68 (118 Children)	56 (96 Children)	57 (110 children)
September	63 (134 Children)	71 (136 Children)	71 (129 Children)	57 (124 Children)	62 (118 Children)	73 (166 children)
October	80 (156 Children)	78 (135 Children)	74 (136 Children)	89 (169 Children)	71 (130 children)	
November	66 (113 Children)	85 (163 Children)	64 (120 Children)	69 (136 Children)	63 (110 Children)	
December	68 (149 Children)	62 (117 Children)	67 (113 Children)	67 (112 Children)	43 (72 Children)	

### Timeliness of reviews

100% of child protection meetings were held in timescale.

### Children and young people's preparation and involvement in conferences

A number of young people attend conferences and are supported by advocates if they choose to be and the service has worked with 76 young people subject to CP since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. Advocates also attend meetings on behalf of children.

### Activities between Child Protection Reviews

Chairs undertake a monitoring check at the midway point between Conferences and a check when preparing for reviews. This is to ensure that statutory tasks have been undertaken and that the plan is progressing and having a positive impact for the child and family. Where there are concerns the Chair will alert the relevant member of the team SW, PS or TM.

For children who are reaching 12 months on a child protection plan a process in place to review progress, prevent delay and agree a way forward. This discussion has a formal agenda and is led by a different CP Chair to include the allocated Chair, SW, PS and TM. The record of the discussion is saved the child's case file.

### Identifying good practice, problem resolution and escalation

There is a separate and newly updated process in place for child protection escalations relating to reports and attendance which are completed immediately after a child protection. The new process commenced in September 2019 – a Quarterly email is now sent to the Senior Liaison Officer's to make them aware of any escalations raised for staff or areas that they cover.

For the period April 19 to September 19 there were 157 escalations to the following agencies, compared to 148 for the period Apr 18 to September 18 (and 268 for the whole of 2018/19).

Organisation	Number of Escalations
GP's	69
Schools (Teachers, Headteachers, Safeguarding Lead, SENCO etc.)	21
Other/Misc	11
Addaction	10
Housing (LA's, charities)	8
Hospital Based Worker	8
Nurseries / Early Years	7
Social Workers / Practice Supervisors	6
Probation	5
Health Visitors	4

PPU	3
Midwives	2
Early Help Worker	1
Family Welfare	1
Child & Young Person's Nurses	1

CP Escalations commenced throughout the year

Apr 18	15	Jan 19	26
May 18	33	Feb 19	22
Jun 18	27	Mar 19	30
Jul 18	27	Apr 19	23
Aug 18	20	May 19	24
Sep 18	26	Jun 19	14
Oct 18	18	Jul 19	33
Nov 18	26	Aug 19	15
Dec 18	12	Sep 19	46

The overwhelming reason for escalation was no report and no apologies provided. Good practice is reported on in the same way as it is for LAC reviews.

As previously explained, currently this data reflects only the formal escalations made; positive challenge is recorded in the chairs activity form. The formal escalations are monitored by the Chairs with the support of a weekly report and reminder from the Safeguarding Team. These measures will support the team to reduce any further drift and delay.

## **Quality Assurance of the IRO Service**

Auditing and observations undertaken by the IRO Manager

Each Team Manager supervises ten members of staff. They undertake two observations of each member of staff; one child protection meeting and one LAC review. Written feedback is provided and discussed in supervision.

Conferences are also observed by a number of different professionals, both internal and external staff who want to familiarise themselves with the conference process and learning – this has included colleagues from Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire, LCC LSCP Trainers, SOS Practice Advisers.

A recent audit of LAC Chairs reports by the Team Managers was fed back to individual members of staff and demonstrated positive progress in this area with some excellent examples that really capture the voice and participation of the child.

## Supervision and training

IROs have scheduled monthly supervision (pro rata) and informal supervision as and when required. All IROs have a Personal Development Plan (PDP) and are encouraged to attend training through Lincolnshire Learning and Development Team, Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and the Regional Workshops.

All Independent Reviewing Officers are social workers and registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). As part of their continued registration, workers are required to undertake five days training/development each year.

The National Assessment and Accreditation System (NASS) is for child and family practitioners and practice supervisors. It is designed to enhance social workers' knowledge and skills, create a national standard of practice in relation to the post-qualifying standards: help social workers gain a better understanding of their practice, prompt employers to review how they support social workers. The team is working towards taking this accreditation.

The Team Managers have implemented a system to record the training attended by the team to ensure that mandatory training is completed and that training is completed in a timely and co-ordinated way.

Team Meetings are held monthly and include guest speakers and workshops. To date these have included Advocacy, Corporate Parenting Manager, SGO and Kinship Team, Barnardos Leaving Care Team and LAC team.

## Any resource issues that are putting at risk the delivery of a quality service

The team currently has vacancies but plan are in place to recruit and use agency staff in the interim.

**Carolyn Knight**  
**Quality and Standards Manager**

**Ildiko Kiss and Chris Sharp**  
**Team Managers**

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**Open Report on behalf of Janice Spencer OBE,  
Interim Director of Children's Services**

Report to:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>14 November 2019</b>
Subject:	<b>Regulation 44 Independent Visiting Service – 6 Month Report (April to September 2019)</b>

**Summary:**

This report is being prepared in order to provide the Corporate Parenting Panel with an update of the work of the Independent Visitor. Part six, regulation 43 of the Children's Home Regulation 2015 makes provision for the appointment of an Independent Visitor. There remains an expectation that the appointment of an Independent Visitor will continue to be the responsibility of the Local Authority, with clear guidance being offered as to the criteria which must be met in terms of ensuring the visitor's independence is clearly demonstrable. The visits continue to be required to be made on a monthly basis.

**Actions Required:**

Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are requested to consider and comment on the Independent Visiting Service report and highlight any recommendations for future consideration.

## **1. Background**

The Independent Visitors conduct monthly inspection visits to the seven children's homes within Lincolnshire and produce reports to the management team which are then shared with Ofsted. In addition the service has begun the inspections of Denton Avenue supported accommodation on a quarterly basis.

Visitor reports reflect the implementation of Signs of Safety across the authority, in the summary highlighting: what's working well, what we're worried about, what needs to happen (good practice suggestions, emerging issues, matters in progress). This ensures consistency of practice within a framework that all staff utilise within children's services. Recommendations from previous reports are reviewed to ensure that progress is being made within reasonable timescales. Where issues remain outstanding Visitors continue to challenge Home Managers to ensure these are being addressed. Additionally the Regulated Homes Service Manager has sight of all reports ensuring additional support can be given if required.

## 2. Conclusion

Overall the homes provide good, if not in some instances exceptional levels of care for the young people in their homes. There is an ethos of reflective practice and approaches within the homes; they ensure that learning is shared across the team. The use of Signs of Safety and Social Pedagogy champions ensures that practice is continually updated and promoted rather than being lost.

Staff teams have been resilient and remained motivated even when staffing issues and management of young people have caused additional challenges. The recruitment process has been consistently used and staff have assisted between homes at times of need to ensure safe levels of care. Homes continue to promote positive practice and strive for positive outcomes for the young people in their care. The staff and manager's commitment to providing good quality care to the young people in spite of the challenges is to be commended and is consistently evident across the service.

There is the enthusiasm to develop the role of the Independent Visitor through engagement with Ofsted and engaging at a regional and national level.

## 3. Consultation

### a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

Risks and impact are identified in monthly reports and shared with the homes on a monthly basis.

### b) Risks and Impact Analysis

See report.

## 4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	REPORT FOR THE INDEPENDENT VISTING SERVICE April 2019 - September 2019

## 5. Background Papers

This report was written by Eska Verleg and Dawn Oldroyd, who can be contacted on 07825 973554 and 07833236464 respectively.

**REPORT FOR THE  
INDEPENDENT VISTING SERVICE**

**April 2019- September 2019**

**Dawn Oldroyd and Eska Verleg**

**Regulation 44 Visitors**

## **Basis of report**

This report is being prepared in order to provide the Corporate Parenting Panel with an update of the work of the Independent Visitor.

## **Introduction**

Part six, regulation 43 of the Children's Home Regulation 2015 makes provision for the appointment of an Independent Visitor. There remains an expectation that the appointment of an Independent Visitor will continue to be the responsibility of the Local Authority, with clear guidance being offered as to the criteria which must be met in terms of ensuring the visitor's independence is clearly demonstrable. The visits continue to be required to be made on a monthly basis.

Within the regulations it is expected the Independent Visitor will report on the quality standards in specified areas. These can be summarised as follows:-

- (a) the quality and purpose of care standard (see regulation 6);
- (b) the children's views, wishes and feelings standard (see regulation 7);
- (c) the education standard (see regulation 8);
- (d) the enjoyment and achievement standard (see regulation 9);
- (e) the health and well-being standard (see regulation 10);
- (f) the positive relationships standard (see regulation 11);
- (g) the protection of children standard (see regulation 12);
- (h) the leadership and management standard (see regulation 13);
- (i) the care planning standard (see regulation 14).

The Independent Visitor continues to be expected to provide a report following each visit. Part six, regulation 44 of the Children's Homes Regulations provides for the reporting of the standards.

The Regulation 44 report maintained its format providing a succinct summary of the homes under the signs of safety headings. The recommendations following each visit are noted under two headings. Under the 'What needs to happen' the Visitor notes all the difficulties, shortfalls that have been observed during a particular visit. Some of these issues, the ones that may have potential significant impact on the young people or may represent a risk, are reiterated under the formal Recommendations section. Also issues that have been consistently raised under 'What needs to happen' but not acted upon by the homes may also become a Recommendation. The use of two tiers allows for an approach that signals any potential difficulties, including one-off matters in time for the home to consider and address timely, before it becomes a problem. The Recommendations therefore gain more weight and represent the urgency and importance of it being acted on without

delay. For a period a slightly modified version was trialled, where the recommendations tier has been removed, but maintained the 'What needs to happen' tier, however it is felt by the visitors that valuable information that did not represent immediate concerns, got left behind and as a result it is currently being reviewed again to ensure that all information is given its rightful place and no information is missed or lost in the format of the report.

The structure of the report conclusion has been revised to ensure that actions identified as needing to happen are clearly outlined with timescales to ensure they are monitored and completed with a clear audit trail.

### **The Independent Visitor**

Since April 2019 Regulation 44 visits have been undertaken by two Independent Reviewing Officers (Visitors) following the retirement of David Proudlove (Visitor). Dawn Oldroyd and Eska Verleg continue to share the visiting duties to the 7 homes, by visiting 4 and 3 homes respectively for a consecutive 4-6 months, after which the two Visitors will change homes for a further 4-6 months period. There has been the launch of a new supported living scheme in Grantham providing accommodation in two houses for 5 young people aged 16-18 for a period of up to six months. This accommodation is to be inspected under the Regulation 44 process however this is 'a light touch' exercise every 4 months.

Ildiko Kiss, Team Manager, has now returned from maternity leave and has resumed management oversight of the Regulation 44 scheme.

Monthly visits have continued within timescales and Dawn and Eska maintain positive working relationships with care home managers, staff and young people. The consistency has enabled them to allay worries and concerns regarding the inspection process, working collaboratively to highlight what's working well and address issues within the homes that contribute to the effective care of the young people. The Visitors have continued to observe shift handovers, team meetings and key worker team discussions to gain further insight into practice within the homes. Weekend visits and conducting visits on different days and different times and around festive events have been beneficial in reflecting the home routines and dynamics. The Visitors speak with key stakeholders including the young people, parents, social workers, health and education partners and other relevant individuals to gain an holistic appraisal of the homes.

Dawn and Eska continue to maintain positive working relationships with the home management teams including the new Registered Managers at Beacon and Albion Street.

Visitor reports reflect the implementation of Signs of Safety across the authority, in the summary highlighting: what's working well, what we're worried about, what needs

to happen (good practice suggestions, emerging issues, matters in progress). This ensures consistency of practice within a framework that all staff utilise within children's services. Recommendations from previous reports are reviewed to ensure that progress is being made within reasonable timescales, where issues remain outstanding Visitors continue to challenge Home Managers to ensure these are being addressed, additionally the Regulated Homes Service Manager has sight of all reports ensuring additional support can be given if required. Progress in respect of Social Pedagogy and Restorative Practice are also reflected within the reports and successes highlighted.

The dispute resolution procedure is now in place ensuring that any disagreements are resolved in a timely manner between the Independent Review service and senior managers for the care homes. The process enables the Visitor to retain independence as the process is overseen at an Assistant Director level. This has been used effectively over the last 6 months whereby issues have been resolved efficiently.

The Visitors have attended two Homes Manager Meeting and this was felt to be a positive contribution and the hope is to continue this on a more regular basis to promote the role of the Visitor and to discuss thematic issues arising amongst the homes countywide.

The Visitors and the Acting Team Manager, Paul Fisher, met with Ros Chapman, Ofsted Inspector, in April 2019 to discuss the Regulation 44 process and to gain feedback and insight from the Ofsted perspective of the reports provided by Lincolnshire County Council with a view to improving and developing the service we provide. The meeting was useful and enabled the Visitors to build a relationship with the Ofsted inspector and provided positive and useful feedback about the quality of the reports being provided and where potential beneficial developments could be made. The inspector reported that the information that is provided in the report was helpful and informative and in a format that is useful and easily accessible. She reported positively about the quality and format of the reports. She also commented on the marked improvement over the past year in terms of the timeliness in the production of the reports. This is also an on-going issue that the Visitors continue to work and improve on with a monitoring schedule in place and having the safeguarding and reviewing team supporting in this matter.

Visitors continue to be seen as a critical friend, gathering feedback from other stakeholders such as children, parents and professionals to improve the young person's overall experience and to provide a report that is reflective of the life of the home.

Going forward the plan is to create opportunities to observe other Independent Visitors and visit other homes from neighbouring areas and share examples of good

practice with the aim of continuing to develop the Regulation 44 procedures and practice in Lincolnshire.

### **The voice of the child**

Across the service the homes are very good at promoting communication between staff and young people and involving them at all stages using different tools and approaches. Haven have examples of one young person who has been placed on a full time basis and the staff have been encouraged to take photos of the young person signing as there are particular signs which the staff do not understand. Management have suggested the photos can then be shared with the school and parents in an attempt to interpret and understand what has been said. Strut and Haven have also promoted family Christmas experiences for young people placed with them for full time care.

Beacon uses activity and planners using visual aids (PECS) that the children are able to recognise as they have been involved in developed the PECS (pictorial aids for communication). They are promoting training for staff and have a clear plan in place to develop this skill and to ensure the child's voice is reflected in written documentation. They have also undertaken work with all the young people to gain their wishes for a feature wall in their own bedrooms so it is reflective of their choice.

Within the secure unit the young people continue to inform the multi-disciplinary meeting through their own contribution forms and the Risk Manager enables them to identify their own themes and views which encompass a wide range of topics from summer activities to health issues to how they can develop gym and sporting equipment.

Strut consistently and routinely use a variety of alternative and preferred methods such as makaton, PECS and iPads. The staff have taken time to instruct the Visitor on methods and simple sign language to enable them to communicate directly with the young people. The young people at Strut House have had access to a wide range of activities and experiences throughout the summer holiday and there are photographic displays throughout the home demonstrating the children's wishes and feelings.

The voice of the child is extremely well represented in reports, particularly those prepared by Strut and Haven who are also routinely displaying quotes and photos of the young people.

Some homes have also been creative in developing spaces for children to reflect and talk to staff when necessary. Staff at Eastgate have promoted the use of the 'Thinking Swing' for young people to have a space to reflect and/or calm down. They also have access to the Theraplay space / quiet room for a breathing space. Haven have developed a sensory garden for the young people to have a calm and reflective space and also have the additional use of a summer house which is accessible to all the young people for sensory experiences during the daytime and night.

Northholme are very strong on advocating for the young people, including one young person being supported to make a complaint to the police (the young person directly stated to the Visitor "I felt like I had a voice"); and staff advocating on behalf of another young person to access appropriate educational support. This has resulted in a young person being able to access full time education and she is now attending daily whereas before her attendance and behaviour was extremely poor.

Within the secure unit, the young people have been confident and vocal in sharing their views with the Visitor and this has been strongly supported by the staff members and responded to favourably by the management team. This has been in relation to whole group issues as well as individual issues and concerns. There was evidence of follow through of actions and the young people clearly felt listened to.

Throughout the majority of the homes there is more evidence of "You said we did" boards and some of the outcomes are reflected within residents meetings. Most of the homes actively promote the compliments and complaints processes (raising day to day issues) and there is very good evidence of the process working and there being a timely response to the young person, particularly in the Secure Unit, Eastgate and Northholme where young people have raised a complaint and these have been effectively and robustly resolved. If there are worries that this is not utilised as effectively, the visitors continue to challenge and raise this as action points.

Social Pedagogy is delivered and recorded at different levels in the homes across the county, with some homes being more embedded. Northholme is particularly good with SP work and the SP Champion has delivered a session within the six day course presenting examples of practice within the home. Eastgate are also doing deep dive work to ensure recordings are of good quality and there is follow up work. Haven have now started the SP and Restorative Practice approach and this has featured within their team development day. The team have agreed plans of how to promote SP and RP in a complimentary fashion in terms of recording incidents and reports to inform care planning. Northholme already has established practice with regards to restorative incident reports and Strut are in the process of developing a restorative/reflective approach to recording incidents.

The Independent Advocacy service continue to attend all homes although there have been some delays in sharing reports at times due to staffing and capacity. The Independent Advocacy Service have been in the process of recruiting new advocates due to staff retirement and this has caused a delay between some visits and providing the reports however this is being monitored by the relevant Registered Managers. Nevertheless, the visit dates are recorded in home files although reports can take a little longer. The reports provided and feedback to management teams has been valuable.

Visitors have adopted a range of skills and activities to engage with the young people in the homes, including one to one discussions, group discussions, playing with young people and enjoying activities in order to gain their voice.

## **Quality of care**

The children within the homes continue to receive a good quality of care. There have been some significant challenges for some care homes regarding the on-going challenge of recruitment of staff at a variety of levels, from RCO1 to Homes Manager, however it is positive that 2 permanent Registered Managers have been recruited and are both in post. In some homes there is a bank of regular agency and relief workers who have had access to focussed training and support. This has enabled some homes to develop a consistent staff group where the young people have been able to form a rapport and the staff have had the opportunity to become well accustomed with the home routines. It has become clear to the Visitors that a stable staff team is an essential foundation for providing settled homes and quality care to the young people and this has proven to be quite a struggle for some of the home during this report period.

Staff and managers have ensured that they have been flexible in covering staffing vacancies, going the extra mile to ensure that young people's daily activities and routines aren't compromised. It has been positive to see the involvement of all staff within the home taking part in the care of young people.

Albion Street have been through a particularly challenging period due to a combination of issues also including the dynamics between the young people, staffing issues, the need for an established and skilled management team, and a few admissions. It is a credit to the staff that they have continued to present for work following a difficult shift.

There is good quality training being delivered and also access to a range of courses to aid the on-going development of staff including:

- recording skills training alongside staff from other children's home to develop skills in day to day recording requirements
- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention training is underway to ensure all staff are up to date with their training.
- Restorative Practice training is to be delivered in-house imminently.

There is also tailored training for specific homes such as healthy living or to meet an individual children's needs, such as a CAMHS Psychologist delivering training within a team meeting focusing on the impact of trauma on a child's development.

There has been positive use of Signs of Safety planned mapping exercises with staff members, some are routinely delivered within team meetings to reflect on individual young people's needs. The secure have benefited from one staff member being allocated to develop the key work sessions, particularly focusing on signs of safety and RP and this has made a marked improvement in ensuring quality and frequency of keywork sessions in the home.

All the homes are able to evidence multi-agency partnership working and there are routinely contributions from health, police, school, social care and other agencies, undertaken through scheduled monthly meetings and ad hoc communications. The Police and PCSO presence within the homes in a preventative manner is evident in the mainstream homes, building the trust between the young people and police and also the relationship with the staff and police. There is an openness to invite other professionals and agencies into the homes to meet the needs of the young people. Such examples are weekly meetings between Beacon and Sandon School; the introduction of a motorbike scheme at the secure unit with bikes donated by the police; Strut House providing a location for education to be delivered in a familiar space for two young people; the involvement of young inspectors. Beacon have used staff meetings and handover meetings to share information within the staff group whilst Strut have revised their handover sheet to ensure relevant and concise information is shared between shifts.

Home staff follow through with procedures and routinely contact 111, GP's, Pharmacies and specialist health providers where there have been health issues or concerns regarding medication. Medication discrepancies have been appropriately managed and used as an opportunity for effective individual and group learning to minimise the risk of reoccurrence. Young people are routinely taken to standard GP, dentist and optician appointments as well as specialist consultant appointments. There has been a drive on general healthy living across the homes and Northolme has benefited from a new kitchen with Eastgate and Albion Street to undergo renovations.

There is evidence that staff are attending EPEPs, EHCP reviews, sports days and parents evenings, they routinely engage with teaching staff regarding individual young people to ensure that their educational needs are being met. There is also evidence of staff advocating for the young person when their educational needs are not being met. There have been examples of young people having additional support from Positive Futures and mainstream schools being creative in their delivery of education and promoting attendance. Staff members have planned ahead during holiday periods to promote the transition from primary schools to secondary, or from establishment to establishment. Within the secure unit there has been the appointment of a new Head Teacher who has revised the approach to inducting new young people into the school, developing new and more effective ways of educating and promoting care staff and educational staff to work together to ensure a smooth transition between school and home within the unit.

The homes each offer a variety of activities for the young people to meet their needs and interests. Haven and Strut have a well-established routine of activities both in and outside the home which promote social inclusion and experiences. All activities are well risk assessed and even if there are incidents during the activity there is an emphasis on reflecting and reviewing the risk assessment to ensure the young person can still participate rather than withdraw the activity. The homes provide a good variety of activities and actively promote independence where they can and

encourage community participation, develop the young people's interests and positive social interactions with peers such as visiting friends after school for tea.

The young people are also enabled to go on extended trips within the UK or abroad and they have enjoyed a range of summer holidays including camping, adventure holidays in Northumberland, a girls trip to Cornwall, and overnight trips with siblings to Butlins. The secure unit have been building on community links, for example young people have been enjoying the regular input of an ex GB table tennis coach; one young person accessing a community based college; the planned introduction of the bike scheme; and an acknowledgement that this can be improved and built upon. Beacon staff continue to develop a system whereby all the children access activities outside as well as within the home providing them a varied experience. Haven and Strut promote social inclusivity and independence enabling young people to access community experiences such as going to the cinema and to local fairs.

Eastgate have now completed the homework room and this has been used for home tuition with one young person whilst he was awaiting a fulltime provision.

Beacon is awaiting the development of the outdoor space which is due to be completed now funding has been agreed.

Within Haven, the modernisation projects have been agreed for refurbishment of the sound and sensory room; a new front door entry system has been completed; improvements to the garden to include a fire evacuation cabin and swings are still in the planning stage; refurbishment of the Arjo bathroom is complete; and window inserts for one bedroom is complete.

There is a significant refurbishment underway at Albion Street which has been somewhat delayed in being completed. New doors have been recently installed and bedrooms have been re-decorated, re-furbished with new en-suite bathrooms and some new carpets. The new kitchen has not been completed at the time of writing this report. The Registered Manager acknowledges that this has been a huge task and has challenged the young people's daily routines.

The homes seek to ensure that the home environment is clean, well-kept and ultimately safe for the young people. The handyman role has been subject to a restructure whereby they now have a county wide remit so the homes have daily access to maintenance support according to their needs and this is now centrally managed by the manager at the secure unit.

Independent Visitors would make particular reference to the swift and supportive response from Beacon, Strut and Haven to the emergency admissions of young people arising from the suspension of a private children's home provider. These homes have provided exceptional levels of care to a number of young people and have been responsive to their needs in exceptional circumstances and the feedback from other professionals and families has been wholly positive and should be commended. Beacon has now increased capacity and now provide care to ten young people.

## **Social Pedagogy and Restorative Practice**

Social Pedagogy (SP) and Restorative Practice (RP) is evident within all of the homes to varying degrees, being on the visual display boards and individualised to the child within the home. Some homes, whilst they agree that SP and RP work needs to be promoted, are currently having to prioritise other pertinent factors and areas of recording. Work is being done, albeit informally in some homes, however it is not being consistently recorded in the most effective way. For new staff SP continues to be promoted through the induction process and consequently through continuing professional development. This has been a significant feature in Beacon who have had a large influx of permanent staff over recent months so training has been delivered throughout their induction periods.

Each home has identified champions that have responsibility for integrating SP and promoting practice although there has been some challenges where the lead has left the home. Across the board, staff have reported the training is very good though intense. This is now being embedded in homes via adhoc activities as well as organised events. SP is recorded on individual case files along with SP activity files, team meeting agendas and is subject to regular audits by senior staff within the home.

SP is used alongside restorative practice to reflect on daily activities and providing a structure for focussed work with the young person following an incident. This is still in its infancy in some homes however staff are sharing experiences and work examples between the homes to develop and embed good practice across the service. Its use is being aligned with the young person targets and care plans in order to embed this into the day to day interactions with staff and activities. Staff are reporting that this is complimenting their practice rather than being seen as a standalone piece of work and they are seeing the benefits of linking behaviours to feelings and reflecting on their contribution to dynamics and relationships. It is positive to see the enthusiasm of the champions within the homes, notably Strut, Eastgate, Northolme and Haven, and the way in which they are driving developments within and between the homes.

The SP ethos and practices have provided an outlet for a more structured and reflective practice within the staff teams although some homes are at quite an early stage of embedding practice. It is instrumental in supporting the development of deep and meaningful relationships between the staff members and the children/young people and a focused method to support the young people with emotional difficulties.

## **Challenges**

Visits are conducted on a monthly basis, there have been challenges in ensuring that the written reports are completed and fed back in a timely manner, this continues to be a focus for improvement for the visitors.

In respect of planned moves, there is good evidence of risk assessments and matching of children within the homes being undertaken and impact assessments being appropriately used in respect of decision making. This is essential to maintaining stability within the homes however there is some concern in relation to the impact of emergency placements.

The mix of young people and their individual needs has continued to present a real challenge for some of the homes over the course of the last 6 months. The need to accommodate some young people at short notice has created an additional complexity to the dynamics of the group and whereby particular young people have been challenging and their behaviour has impacted on the staff and young people already residing in the homes in particular at Albion Street. This has led at times to a chaotic living environment with physical damage to the home environment as well as a negative impact on the other children and injuries to staff. Staff have shown a resilience in responding to these issues.

Staffing of the children's homes remains one of the on-going challenges that is addressed through rolling recruitment and more targeted advertising.

### **Ofsted inspections**

All of the children's homes are subject to Ofsted inspection. Each home is subject to twice yearly inspections, ordinarily there will be a full inspection annually followed by an interim inspection approximately six months later.

The **Lincolnshire Secure Unit** had an Inspection on the 24 September 2019

Judgement at last inspection: Good

Date of last inspection: 15 January 2019

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.

At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

**Albion Street** had an inspection on: 6 to 7 August 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account: requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 1 March 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

**The Beacon**, which provides care for children with special needs had an inspection on 27 to 28 August 2019.

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account: good

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 April 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

**Northolme** was subject to an inspection on the 05/12/18 to the 6/12/2018.

Overall experience and progress of the children and young people was outstanding.

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers was outstanding.

**Haven Cottage**, which offers short term care to children with special needs, was last subject to a full inspection 3 and 4 September 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people Outstanding

How well children and young people are helped and protected Outstanding

The effectiveness of leaders and managers Outstanding

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standard of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly

improved outcomes and positive experience of the children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Strut House**, a short term unit for children with special needs had an inspection on the 9 to 10 Oct 2018 and continue to be awarded an Outstanding grading.

**Eastgate**, was subject to an OFSTED Rating of the Home from the last inspection Outstanding: Inspection dates: 17 to 18 October 2018

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

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people      Outstanding

Taking into account:

How well children and young people are helped and protected      Outstanding

The effectiveness of leaders and managers      Outstanding

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

## **Conclusion**

Overall the homes provide good if not in some instances exceptional levels of care for the young people in their homes. There is an ethos of reflective practice and approaches within the homes; they ensure that learning is shared across the team. The use of champions ensures that practice is continually updated and promoted rather than being lost.

Staff teams have been resilient and remained motivated even when staffing issues and management of young people have caused additional challenges. The recruitment process has been consistently used and staff have assisted between homes at times of need to ensure safe levels of care. Homes continue to promote positive practice and strive for positive outcomes for the young people in their care.

The staff and manager's commitment to providing good quality care to the young people in spite of the challenges is to be commended and is consistently evident across the service.

There is the enthusiasm to develop the role of the Independent Visitor through engagement with Ofsted and engaging at a regional and national level.

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**Open Report on behalf of Janice Spencer OBE,  
Interim Director of Children's Services**

Report to:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>14 November 2019</b>
Subject:	<b>Quarter 2 Performance Report for Looked after Children</b>

**Summary:**

The accompanying appendices to this report provide key performance information for Quarter 2 2019/20 that is relevant to the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

**Actions Required:**

The Panel is invited to consider and comment on the performance information contained in the appendices of this report and recommend any actions or changes to the Executive Councillor for Adult Care, Health and Children's Services.

## **1. Background**

Appendix A provides a full and detailed report that covers the measures that are relevant to Looked after Children used by Children's Service. This is available for questions.

There are 13 measures in total that relate to Looked After Children that are reported on in Quarter 2. Of these measures 2 are outside of the target set by the services. These are:

- **Fostering/adoption of Looked After Children aged 10 to 16 year olds -**  
This performance has improved slightly but remains under target. The vast majority of children looked after within this age group are placed in foster care settings. However, there has been an increase in the numbers of younger children in residential placements in the past year. These are often children who have experienced a number of foster placement moves who struggle to adhere to the expectations of living in a family. Residential care has provided a nurturing environment for this group and have enabled them to settle. There has also been a concentrated focus on reunifying children with their birth families this year and some of this group are awaiting revocation of their care orders.

- **Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (EET)** - The exact reason is unknown as the issues affecting access to education and employment are varied and unique to individuals. However, a dip post September (in the new academic year) is common as young people find the right course for them and attendance fluctuates as people change their decisions. The Leaving Care Service continues to monitor every single young person who is not in EET, and reports on a monthly basis the efforts of the service to re-engage individuals back into EET. The Service also continues to grow the number of employment readiness programmes offered to young people, and grow the number of work experience slots available to support young people back into purposeful activity and employment. The Care Leaver Apprenticeship Scheme (CLAS) has been reviewed and a supported employment programme and growth in access to traineeships is being worked through YPLP. It is anticipated that this will enable greater access to ET opportunity from early 2020.

## 2. Conclusion

This report summarises the Quarter 2 performance for Looked after Children and Young People, and the Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to raise any questions on the content of the report.

## 3. Consultation

### a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

N/A

### b) Risks and Impact Analysis

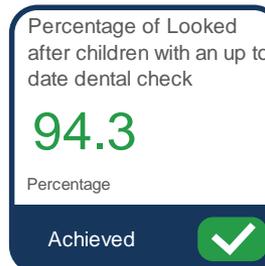
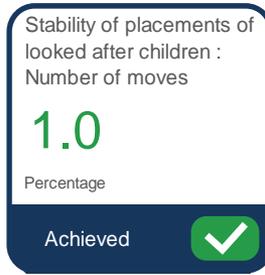
N/A

## 4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Looked after Children Measures

## 5. Background Papers

This report was written by Kevin Rands, who can be contacted on 01522 553099 or [Kevin.Rands@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:Kevin.Rands@lincolnshire.gov.uk).



## Corporate Parenting Sub Group



## Healthy and Safe

Children are Healthy and Safe

### Fostering/adoption of LAC aged 10 to <16 years old

Percentage of Looked after Children aged 10 to under 16 who have been fostered or placed for adoption



Not achieved

82.5

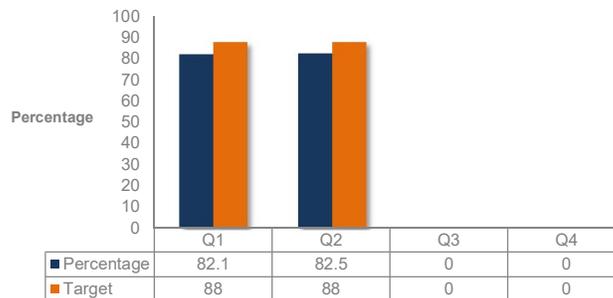
Percentage  
Quarter 2 September 2019



88.0

Percentage  
Target for September 2019

Fostering/adoption of LAC aged 10 to <16 years old



#### About the latest performance

This performance has improved slightly but remains under target. The vast majority of children looked after within this age group are placed in foster care settings. However, there has been an increase in the numbers of younger children in residential placements in the past year. These are often children who have experienced a number of foster placement moves who struggle to adhere to the expectations of living in a family. Residential care has provided a nurturing environment for this group and have enabled them to settle. There has also been a concentrated focus on reunifying children with their birth families this year and some of this group are awaiting revocation of their care orders.

#### About the target

Target to remain the same as the previous year, this is to take into account the increase of the number of LAC in the past year.

#### About the target range

A 2% variance is set for the upper value and 3% for the lower value.

Meeting the upper tolerance level would achieve a performance level not reached in recent years and show a change in the overall trend.

#### About benchmarking

Benchmarking data no longer available



## Healthy and Safe

### Children are Healthy and Safe

#### Number of Looked after Children per 10,000 under 18s

Looked after children per 10,000 population aged under 18. There are a number of reasons why a child may be 'looked after' by the local authority. Most often it is because the child's parents or the people who have parental responsibilities and rights to look after the child are unable to care for the child, have been neglecting the child or the child has committed an offence. The local authority has specific responsibilities and duties towards a child who is being looked after or who has been looked after. This measure is reported taking a snapshot in time. So for example Q2 is performance as at 30th September.

A lower rate of children looked after by the Local Authority indicates a better performance.



Achieved

43.7

Rate

Quarter 2 September 2019

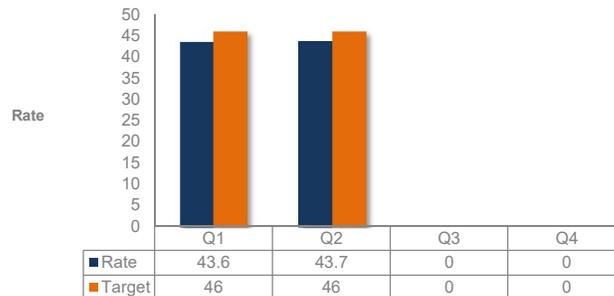


46.0

Rate

Target for September 2019

Number of Looked after Children per 10,000 under 18s



#### About the latest performance

There has been a slight increase in the number of children who are looked after when compared to the last quarter. This has arisen as a result of an increase in the number of children who require to be looked after. We continue to robustly monitor the number of children coming into care through the support panel which is part of the gate keeping process. In addition we actively review children who are looked after in order to ensure that this remains the best plan for them.

#### About the target

Targets have been maintained at the same level as last year, as national comparators are showing an increase.

#### About the target range

The Upper and lower Target allows for the number of LAC to vary between approximately 622- 694. This is about +/- 35 children from target. Anything above or below this number would be flagged as worse than target, i.e. indicating a significant variance from the current position.

#### About benchmarking

We benchmark nationally and with similar Local Authorities. Benchmarking data is sourced from the national LAIT (Local Authority Interactive Tool).



## Healthy and Safe

Children are Healthy and Safe

### Stability of placements of looked after children : Number of moves

Percentage of Looked after Children with three or more placements



Achieved

1.0

Percentage

Quarter 2 September 2019

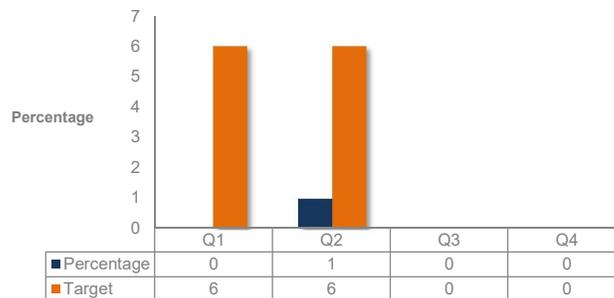


6.0

Percentage

Target for September 2019

Stability of placements of looked after children : Number of moves



#### About the latest performance

This is a cumulative indicator identifying those children who experience 3 placement moves. The target is challenging and slipped under target last year. In 2018 the Children's Commissioner produced a report on placement stability and identified that 10% of looked after children experienced 3 placement moves in a year. The performance at the end of the second quarter is unlikely to be indicative of the trend for the whole year which is dependent on the availability of suitable, matched placements and the complexity of children requiring placements.

#### About the target

The target has been reduced to 6%, although performance is well below this target the service manager feels with the increase in LAC numbers and the difficulty in recruiting new carers will have an impact on the performance

#### About the target range

Achieving the upper tolerance level should maintain LCC's position within the top quartile nationally and still maintain LCC as one of the best performing of our statistical neighbours. Anything below the lower level should be shown as a significant improvement over last year.

#### About benchmarking

We can compare ourselves both nationally and with similar authorities on an annual basis



## Healthy and Safe

Children are Healthy and Safe

### Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement

Percentage of Looked after Children in the same placement for at least two years



Achieved

73.2

Percentage

Quarter 2 September 2019

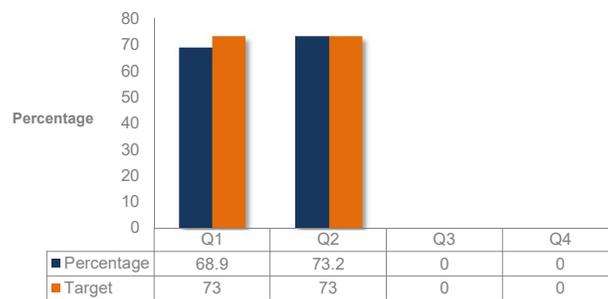


73.0

Percentage

Target for September 2019

Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement



#### About the latest performance

Current performance has met the targets set.

#### About the target

Target is set 2% lower than the previous year, however this is an incremental increase on recent performance and above the present performance of statistical neighbours. Tolerances for this measure take into account the current performance.

#### About the target range

Lower tolerances have been set to account for the downward trend currently occurring.

The upper tolerance is set at 1% which should push LCC up into Quartile Band A and more importantly stop the downward trend.

#### About benchmarking

We can compare ourselves both nationally and with similar authorities on an annual basis



## Healthy and Safe

Children are Healthy and Safe

Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales

Percentage of Looked after Children cases that have been reviewed within timescales



Achieved

99.8

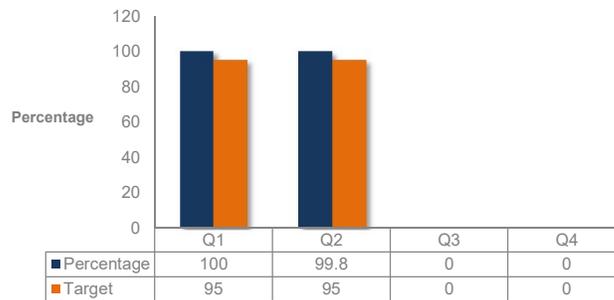
Percentage  
Quarter 2 September 2019



95.0

Percentage  
Target for September 2019

Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales



### About the latest performance

Current performance has met the targets set.

### About the target

Target has reduced to 95% to take into account current performance.

### About the target range

As the target is 95%, an upper value of 5% has been set.

A lower value of 95% has been set to highlight any performance lower than 95%

### About benchmarking

We can compare ourselves both nationally and with similar authorities on an annual basis



## Healthy and Safe

Children are Healthy and Safe

### Participation of LAC in reviews

Percentage of Looked after children who participated in their reviews



Achieved

99.1

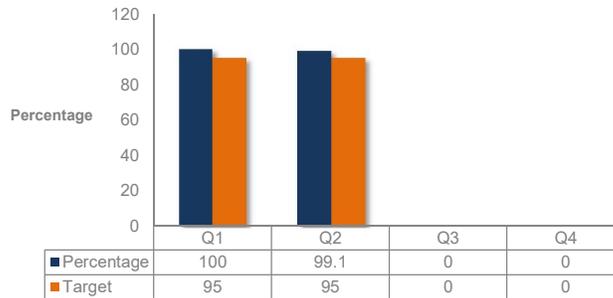
Percentage  
Quarter 2 September 2019



95.0

Percentage  
Target for September 2019

Participation of LAC in reviews



#### About the latest performance

Current performance has met the targets set.

#### About the target

Target has reduced to 95% to take into account current performance.

#### About the target range

As the target is 95%, an upper value of 5% has been set.

A lower value of 95% has been set to highlight any performance lower than 95%

#### About benchmarking

We can compare ourselves both nationally and with similar authorities on an annual basis



## Healthy and Safe

Children are Healthy and Safe

### Percentage of Looked after children with an up to date health check

Percentage of Looked after children with an up to date health check record



Achieved

96.8

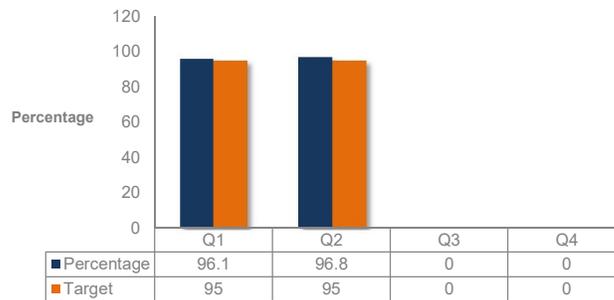
Percentage  
Quarter 2 September 2019



95.0

Percentage  
Target for September 2019

Percentage of Looked after children with an up to date health check



#### About the latest performance

Current performance has met the targets set.

#### About the target

Remain as previous year, tolerance allows performance to be in line with this year's performance.

#### About the target range

An upper tolerance of 4.5% has been set. This would mean that if all checks were done within timescale we would have achieved an excellent outcome, which would be shown as better than target.

A lower tolerance of 2% has been set to allow for under performance. Data from the last two years shows achieving 93% is very achievable and performance has not often fallen below this marker.

#### About benchmarking

We can compare ourselves both nationally and with similar authorities on an annual basis



## Healthy and Safe

Children are Healthy and Safe

### Percentage of Looked after children with an up to date dental check

Percentage of Looked after children with an up to date dental check



Achieved

94.3

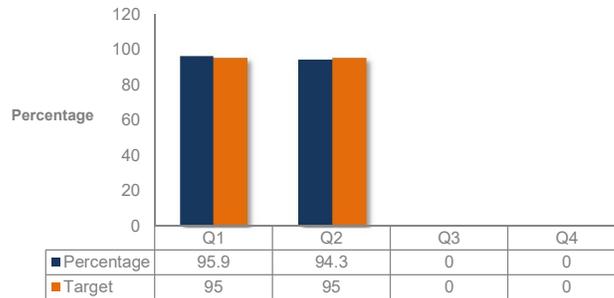
Percentage  
Quarter 2 September 2019



95.0

Percentage  
Target for September 2019

Percentage of Looked after children with an up to date dental check



#### About the latest performance

Current performance has met the targets set.

#### About the target

Remain as previous year, tolerance allows performance to be in line with this year's performance.

#### About the target range

An upper tolerance of 4.5% has been set. This would mean that if all checks were done within timescale we would have achieved an excellent outcome, which would be shown as better than target.

A lower tolerance of 2% has been set to allow for under performance. Data from the last two years shows achieving 93% is very achievable and performance has not often fallen below this marker.

#### About benchmarking

We can compare ourselves both nationally and with similar authorities on an annual basis



## Healthy and Safe

### Children are Healthy and Safe

#### Percentage of Looked after children with an up to date routine immunisations

Percentage of looked after children with an up to date routine immunisations recorded



Achieved

95.3

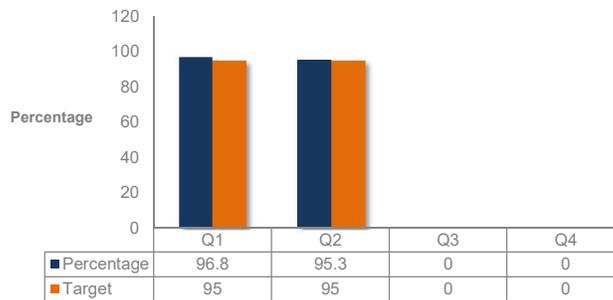
Percentage  
Quarter 2 September 2019



95.0

Percentage  
Target for September 2019

Percentage of Looked after children with an up to date routine immunisations



#### About the latest performance

Current performance has met the targets set.

#### About the target

Remain as previous year, tolerance allows performance to be in line with this year's performance.

#### About the target range

An upper tolerance of 4.5% has been set. Achievement of this would indicate that all LAC received all their health checks within timescale – achievement of 100%.

A lower tolerance of 1% has been set to allow for under performance. Data from the last two years shows achieving 94% is very achievable and performance has not often fallen below this marker.

#### About benchmarking

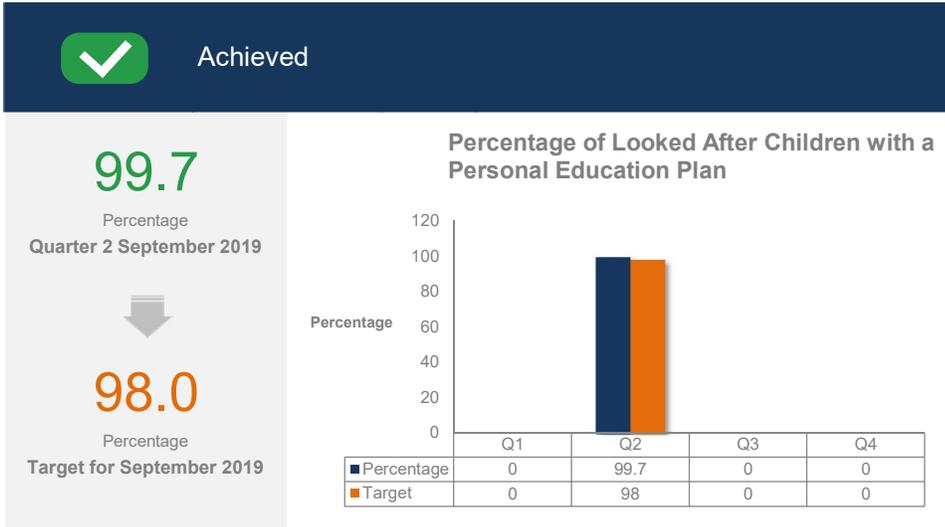
We can compare ourselves both nationally and with similar authorities on an annual basis

 **Learn and Achieve**

Learn and Achieve

Percentage of Looked After Children with a Personal Education Plan

Percentage of Looked After Children with a Personal Education Plan



About the latest performance

Current performance has met the targets set. Data reported following the three school terms throughout the year. Q2 reports Summer Term data (April- July).

About the target

Target remains at 98%, increase in capacity in the Virtual school should see the performance being reached.

About the target range

Lower tolerance is set to 2% below the target which would represent poor performance. The tolerance range reflects the need for emergency placements out of county/in county for a small proportion of children in care.

About benchmarking

We can compare ourselves both nationally and with similar authorities on an annual basis.



## Ready for Adult Life

### Ready for Adult Life

#### 16-17 year old Looked After Children who are participating in Learning

This measures young people recorded as being Looked After Children participating in learning at the end of the reporting period and will not take into consideration the length of time that they have been in local authority care.

Numerator: Number of Looked After Children participating in learning at the end of the reporting period.  
Denominator: Number of Looked After Children at the end of the reporting period.

The percentage is calculated as follows: Numerator divided by the denominator multiplied by 100. The parameters of this measure were previously defined as recording 16-18 year old Looked After Children participating in learning. As of Q1 2017/18 onwards, the Department for Education no longer require monitoring of children aged 18, and so the measure has been amended accordingly, restricting data provision to 16-17 year old Looked After Children only. A higher percentage of Looked After Children participating in learning indicates a better performance.



Achieved

68.2

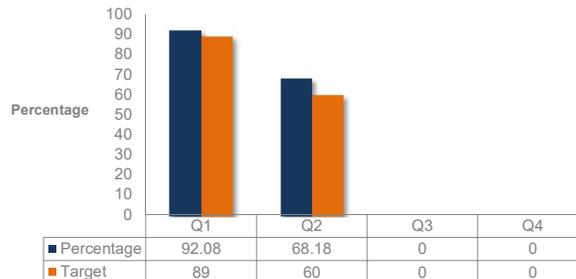
Percentage  
Quarter 2 September 2019



60.0

Percentage  
Target for September 2019

#### 16-17 year old Looked After Children who are participating in Learning



#### About the latest performance

Quarter 2 data is at the start of the academic year when all information relating to young people's placements has yet to be received from all colleges and FE providers. The target has been profiled to reflect this and will show much higher participation in quarter 3 when this data has been received and processed. At 68.2% Quarter 2 performance is significantly higher than the LCC target for the Quarter of 60%. The Virtual School team works effectively with our social workers, carers students and education providers to ensure that transitions from Year 11 into Year 12 are successful and that all students have an appropriate educational placement that meets their needs Post 16. Once they have accessed a place in Sixth Form or College we regularly monitor and review their progress to ensure they are appropriately supported to become confident learners.

#### About the target

Target to have a small increase on previous year's target.  
Q2 & Q3 targets lower to allow for the expected dip at this time of year due to September being the start of the tracking process

#### About the target range

The target range is set at a level to allow for 2 percentage points above the target and 5 percentage points below the target.

#### About benchmarking

Benchmarking information is not available for this cohort.



## Ready for Adult Life

### Ready for Adult Life

#### Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation

A care leaver is a young person who reaches the age of 18 who had been in local authority care.

Numerator: Number of care leavers turning 19 years of age in the year who are living in accommodation deemed as "suitable".

Denominator: Number of care leavers turning 19 years of age in the year.

The percentage is calculated as follows: Numerator divided by the denominator multiplied by 100. A higher percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation indicates a better performance.



Achieved

94.1

Percentage

Quarter 2 September 2019

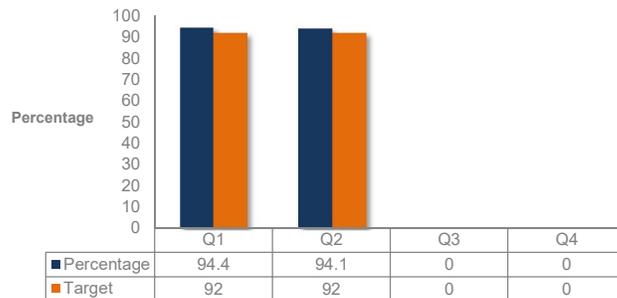


92.0

Percentage

Target for September 2019

Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation



#### About the latest performance

The vast majority of our Care Leavers are in suitable, safe and appropriate accommodation. There has been a small dip in performance in this area, this is reflective of a small increase in the number of young people receiving short custodial sentences. A range of accommodation has been developed and confirms the Authorities commitment to ensure that all care leavers have somewhere that is safe and appropriate. The leaving care service have a clear overview of the young people in unsuitable accommodation and engage with each of these to ensure that they understand the full range of housing options available to them.

#### About the target

Target to remain the same as previous year, we are above both national and similar authority average.

#### About the target range

The lower target has been set at the 25% quartile. Meaning if we fall below this we will not be in the top 25% of authorities. The upper target has been set 5% above this.



## Ready for Adult Life

### Ready for Adult Life

### Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training

The number of care leavers turning 19 years of age in the year who are in either Education, Employment or Training



Not achieved

**55.6**

Percentage

Quarter 2 September 2019

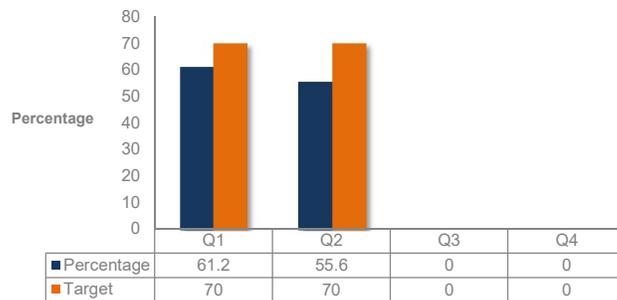


**70.0**

Percentage

Target for September 2019

Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training



#### About the latest performance

There has been a small dip in the number of Care Leavers employed or in education and training (EET). The exact reason is unknown as the issues affecting access to education and employment are varied and unique to individuals. However, a dip post September (in the new academic year) is common as young people find the right course for them and attendance fluctuates as people change their decisions.

The Leaving Care Service continues to monitor every single young person who is not in EET, and reports on a monthly basis the efforts of the service to re-engage individuals back into EET. The Service also continues to grow the number of employment readiness programmes offered to young people, and grow the number of work experience slots available to support young people back into purposeful activity and employment. The Care Leaver Apprenticeship Scheme (CLAS) has been reviewed and a supported employment programme and growth in access to traineeships is being worked through YPLP. It is anticipated that this will enable greater access to ET opportunity from early 2020.

#### About the target

Target remains at 70% as current performance is currently at 69%

#### About the target range

Upper Tolerance is set to aim to regain Quartile A. Lower tolerance is set to maintain performance at a reasonable level

#### About benchmarking

We can compare ourselves both nationally and with similar authorities on an annual basis

**Open Report on behalf of Janice Spencer OBE,  
Interim Director of Children's Services**

Report to:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>14 November 2019</b>
Subject:	<b>Looked After Children (LAC) Annual Report 2018/19</b>

**Summary:**

This Annual Report is intended to inform LAC/YP, the general public, elected members, stakeholder partners and staff of the progress and developments of the services to date. It has been jointly produced by Lincolnshire Community Health Services (LCHS) LAC/YP team, the LAC/YP team from Lincolnshire Local Authority (LLA), Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust (LPFT) and Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG).

This report covers the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019. The Department of Health Statutory Guidance on Promoting the Health and Well-being of Looked after Children (DCSF/DH. 2015) requires a report on the delivery of service and the progress achieved for the health and wellbeing of children in care. In addition, the Local Authority (LA) requires an annual report to provide a summary of the core activities relating to Looked after Children/Young People (LAC/YP).

**Actions Required:**

Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are requested to consider and comment on the Looked After Children Annual Report and highlight any recommendations for future consideration.

## **1. Background**

There has been reduction in the numbers of looked after children/young people in 2018/19 which appears to be at variance to national trends. Resources have been allocated to bolster preventive services in order to sustain that trend. In 2018/19 this has included the development of the Futures4me service, a multi disciplinary team focusing on preventive work with older children on the cusp of care. Nevertheless older children comprise a greater percentage of the looked after cohort and meeting their needs remains a significant challenge due to complexity of behaviour and limited placement options.

This report incorporates full year health data, which enables a better understanding of the essential characteristics of looked after children/young people. The partnerships across health and social care within Lincolnshire remain

strong, with a determination to continue improving the effectiveness of services in order to reduce the disadvantages that these children and young people are acknowledged to experience. The associated workforce is committed and skilled in supporting looked after children/young people.

The health data indicates that in many areas, we are achieving better than the national average in meeting the health needs of our Looked after Children/young people. The health assessment questionnaire continues to provide a valuable source of data about the health profile of our Looked after Children/young people. The annual data during future years will enable comparative information to inform services and commissioning.

**2. Conclusion**

That the report for the year 2018/19 to be accepted as an accurate overview of the Service.

**3. Consultation**

**a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?**

N/A

**b) Risks and Impact Analysis**

N/A

**4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Looked After Children (LAC) Annual Report 2018/19

**5. Background Papers**

This report was written by John Harris, who can be contacted on 01522 554109 or john.harris@lincolnshire.gov.uk

**LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE ANNUAL  
REPORT 2018/19**



**Lincolnshire Community  
Health Services**  
NHS Trust



***Lincolnshire  
Clinical Commissioning Group***

**Lincolnshire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL  
*Working for a better future*



**Lincolnshire Partnership**  
NHS Foundation Trust

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report covers the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019. The Department of Health Statutory Guidance on Promoting the Health and Well-being of Looked after Children (DCSF/DH. 2015) requires a report on the delivery of service and the progress achieved for the health and wellbeing of children in care. In addition, the Local Authority (LA) requires an annual report to provide a summary of the core activities relating to Looked after Children/Young People (LAC/YP).

The NHS has a major role to play in supporting the LA as Corporate Parent in ensuring the timely and effective delivery of health services to LAC/YP. As directed by the Children Act 1989, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and NHS England have a duty to comply with the requests from the LA to help them to provide support and services to these children. The NHS is also statutorily obligated to support LAC/YP who have been placed by an external LA within the County of Lincolnshire when they have been notified of the placement.

This Annual Report is intended to inform LAC/YP, the general public, elected members, stakeholder partners and staff of the progress and developments of the services to date. It has been jointly produced by Lincolnshire Community Health Services (LCHS) LAC/YP team, the LAC/YP team from Lincolnshire Local Authority (LLA), Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust (LPFT) and Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG).

### The key messages within this report are:

- The number of LAC/YP placed by Lincolnshire County Council was 614 at year end a fall of 7.5% over the year. This is at variance to the upward trend experienced by many Local authorities. The number of Looked After Children and Young people placed into Lincolnshire by external authorities continues to rise .
- The 16/17 year old age group now makes up almost 24% of the looked after population.
- There remains a continued emphasis on children who become looked after being placed within kinship placements but in 2018/19 there was a reduction in the number of SGO's granted and an increase in the number of adoption orders.
- Initial Health Assessments are not being achieved within the statutory time frame of 20 working days from the child/young person becoming looked after. In 2018/19 an improved health visitor pathway was introduced to ensure oversight of children when they become looked after. Children & Young People's Nurses (CYPN) are informed by LAC Health team when a child becomes looked after. At 15 days if the child or young person does not have a booked IHA, the CYPN is informed via referral and a face to face contact for health assessment is arranged within 5 days. This is not a full medical assessment but ensures that any immediate health needs are identified early.
- The rate of completion of review health assessments is amongst the highest in the country, with regard to completion within the statutory time frame, plus the assessments are continually improving in quality.
- Up-to-date immunization and vaccination of the LAC/YP cohort is higher at year end than that of their peers in the general population and above national average and our statistical neighbours.
- The LAC/YP health data used in this report is only a small proportion of the amount

of reporting against health issues which has continued to be developed over the last year.

- LAC/YP in Lincolnshire are actively encouraged and supported to participate in the shaping of services for them.
- There continues to be increased evidence that voice of the LAC/YP is heard.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Our vision

#### "Putting Children First"

#### Working Together with Families to Enhance Children's Present and Future Lives

### Our purpose

Children and families will be

- Helped to make changes for themselves
- Seen as a positive solution to the challenges they face
- Able to get the right service at the right time
- Understood as a whole family

Supported by a workforce who

- Uses evidence informed practice
- Understands and applies Relationship Based Practice
- Is Restorative in approach
- Is well trained and supported

Enabled and equipped by

Clear governance that puts children and families at the heart of how we plan and deliver support for them

- Using a system called Signs of Safety that builds on families strengths

Our purpose within Regulated Services is to ensure that every child in every part of the county achieves their potential, responding appropriately to the assessed needs of all LAC/YP to ensure that their life chances are maximized by their experience of the service.

This Annual Report details the services and expected health outcomes for LAC/YP who reside either in Lincolnshire or in out-of-county placements, and is aligned to the Children and Young People's Commissioning Plan.

The LAC/YP population represents children and young people who, within the reporting period of April 2018 – March 2019 are:

1. Corporately parented by Lincolnshire County Council / Local Authority, with strategic oversight through the Corporate Parenting Panel  
or
2. Are placed by an external LA who maintains corporate parent status, and local strategic oversight and quality assurance is maintained via the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and is incorporated in their LSCB business plan.

The evidence tells us that LAC/YP are disadvantaged when compared to their peers in the general population, in all the wider determinants of health. Accordingly, they require proactive commitment from the professionals working with them.

The level of commitment is made explicit within the 'Children's Pledge' which was updated in 2016 and was created in conjunction with young people, including looked after children/young people and partner agencies. The Pledge is supported by a stated commitment of 10 things children and young people can expect from their social worker.

The pledge states that all agencies involved with the child or young person will:

- Do our best to keep you safe
- Help you know your rights
- Do what we say we are going to do

**Together we will**

- Listen and understand each other
- Be honest with one another
- Show each other respect
- Be reliable

Central to this commitment is the aspiration for health needs to be accurately identified with care and support provided that maximizes the health and well-being of LAC/YP. The services around the child must ensure that this care complies with all relevant legislation and the statutory guidance surrounding these children.

This report incorporates specific health data which offers a full year profile of the health of all LAC/YP residing within the county. It identifies issues that impact upon the health and well-being of all LAC/YP and will support future service commissioning and delivery. Such data is crucial to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which is now amended on a quarterly basis to incorporate emerging policy relating to LAC/YP.

The LAC/YP population incorporates corporately parented children by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and those LAC/YP placed in Lincolnshire by external authorities. The status of the children is identified within the population data included in this report.

### **Achievements in 2018**

A greater proportion of children's reviews are led by the child themselves. All are managed in accordance with the signs of safety model. All IRO's maintain contact with a child in between statutory reviews

A revised 'Leaving Care Health Summary' document was introduced in 2018/19.

An OFSTED Focus Visit undertaken in April 2018 concluded that:

Leaders are ambitious for children in care. They know their services and prioritise resources to support social work to flourish. This results in stable and experienced teams who deliver high-quality social work which improves outcomes for children in Lincolnshire.

A focus on identifying permanent foster placements has enabled 49 children to have their plans for long term care fulfilled

A Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy was agreed by all agencies with Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

## **2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

### **2.1. Definition of 'looked after' children and young people**

Most children become looked after as a result of abuse or neglect.

'*Looked after*' refers to children and young people under 18 years of age, who have been provided with care and accommodation by children's services, as defined in law under the Children Act 1989 (CA 1989).

A child is looked after (by a Local Authority) if they are in Local Authority care, or are being provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

Looked after children fall into five main groups:

- Children who are accommodated under voluntary agreement with their parents Section 20 (S20)
- Children who are subject to a care order Section 31 (S 31)) or interim care orders Section 38 (S38)
- Children who are the subject of emergency orders for their protection Section 44(S44) and Section 46 (46)

And;

- Children who are compulsorily accommodated, including children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement Section 21 (S21).
- 16/17 year olds who are homeless and require accommodation (under section 20 (S20)

A child entering care will be disrupted from his/her familiar relationships and home environment. The Local Authority Children's Services strive to do all that is possible to minimize disruption to the child's education. For all LAC/YP, Lincolnshire County Council is committed to ensuring continuity of educational placements unless a care plan determines that a change in school would be beneficial, such as when a child moves to a permanent placement.

LAC/YP share the same health and social issues, risks and problems, experienced by

their peers, but often to a greater degree. They will often enter care in a poorer state of health, due to the impact of:

- Abuse and neglect
- Poverty
- Poor parenting
- Chaotic lifestyles
- Alcohol and substance misuse

Their experience can be further compounded by being over-exposed to significant challenges, such as:

- Conflict within their own families
- Frequent changes of home or school
- Lack of access to support and consistent advice from trusted adults

National statistics demonstrate that the longer-term outcomes for LAC/YP remain worse than their peers in general. As adults, they are more likely to experience:

- Psychological problems / mental illness,
- Homelessness,
- Imprisonment,
- Unemployment,
- Poorer health outcomes and life limiting conditions and/or
- Poor educational attainment levels.

The NHS and LA officers responsible for LAC/YP services are required to:

- Recognize and give due regard to the greater physical, mental and emotional health needs of looked after children in their planning and practice;
- Give equal importance (parity of esteem) to the mental health of looked after children and follow the principles in the national document, 'Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat, *Improving Outcomes for People Experiencing Mental Health Crisis*' and the work commissioned from SCIE "Improving mental health support for our children and young people".
- Agree multi-agency action to meet the health needs of LAC/YP in the area;
- Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to meet the identified health needs of the looked after population, including those placed in the area by other local authorities, based on the range of data available about their health characteristics;
- Take into account the views of LAC/YP, their parents and carers, in order to inform, influence and shape service provision, including through Children in Care Councils and local Healthwatch; and
- Arrange the provision of accessible and comprehensive information to LAC/YP and their carers.

Reducing the acknowledged disadvantage for these children is the responsibility of a designated team of elected members, and health and social care practitioners, including the following:

## **2.2. Corporate Parent**

The '*Corporate Parent*' is the collective responsibility of the council, elected members, employees, and partner agencies, to provide best possible care and safeguarding for each looked after child/young person. Every member and employee of the council and partner agencies has a statutory responsibility to act for that child in the same way that a good parent would act for their own child. This includes the children that LCC place outside of the county. Additionally, LCC ensures that all elected members undertake training in their role as a Corporate Parent.

The placing authority maintains the Corporate Parenting responsibility for their children residing in Lincolnshire. However, they may be placed a long distance away from the child and their communities. Each LAC/YP has an allocated social worker responsible for the management of their care plan. Services and aspirations for LAC/YP are enshrined in the 'Looked after Children and Care Leavers Strategy'.

## **2.3. Designated and Named Health Professionals**

In accordance with the Statutory Guidance, '*Promoting the Health and Well-being of Looked after Children*', designated and named health professionals are appointed in Lincolnshire. It is the responsibility of the designated doctor and nurses to ensure that every LAC/YP has timely access to their statutory health assessments, and that a care plan is formulated to address all identified health needs.

The health team provides statutory health services for the whole LAC/YP population, irrespective of the LA corporate parent status. The role of the designated doctor for LAC/YP is to provide strategic leadership and quality assurance of the statutory initial health assessments.

The health service responsible for the completion of health assessments for LAC/YP is provided within Lincolnshire Community Health Services (LCHS), who work closely with the children's social care team, including the independent reviewing officers.

## **2.4. Independent Reviewing Officers**

Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) are employed locally, in addition to the child's social worker to provide services for looked after children/young people. IRO's undertake statutory reviews as per the statutory guidance on all LAC/YP to ensure that their needs are being met on a multi-agency basis.

For children who are 'looked after' by LA's from other counties who are residing in Lincolnshire, it is the responsibility of the placing authority to ensure that an IRO is accessible to ensure that these children, who are placed far from their support mechanisms, have access to local services according to their needs. LCC promotes the local offer for children/young people placed by external authorities on the website, available

by clicking [here](#).

The above professionals collectively assist the LA and CCGs in fulfilling their statutory responsibilities as commissioners of services to reduce health inequalities, and improve health outcomes, for LAC/YP.

The Children's Commissioner in Lincolnshire is a joint post between Health and the Local Authority, and is situated within Children's Services Directorate Management Team.

### **3. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE PROFILE**

#### **3.1. Numbers of LAC/YP**

At the end of March 2019 614 children were corporately parented by LCC. This represents a decrease of 7.5% over the year.

Over the same period the number of children/young people who became looked after reduced to 273. This is a reduction of 8% over the previous year. The profile of children/young people who become looked after has confirmed the greatest numbers are in the age bands 0 – 4 and 16 +. There has been a marked increase in 16 / 17 year olds in care and they now comprise 24% of the looked after population. We have continued to see an increase in children aged between 8 and 12 who have care plans for permanent fostering and as a result, there continues to be a number of children waiting for a suitable placement. In 2018/19 considerable progress has been made in securing permanence for the majority of these children.

#### **3.2. Placement Profile**

Stability of placement for these children is key to improving health outcomes through providing as normal a family arrangement as possible:

- 62% are accommodated with foster carers /parents;
- 15% are placed in kinship arrangements;
- 5.3%, who are subject to care orders, are placed at home with parents;
- 9.1% are in residential homes; and
- 8.6% are in other accommodation, including residential schools, custody etc.

Lincolnshire remains at the forefront of using kinship placements, and, at year end, 15% of all looked after children/young people were in such placements. This contrasts with a national rate of 11.5% and is a reduction on last year's figure which might suggest some stabilisation.

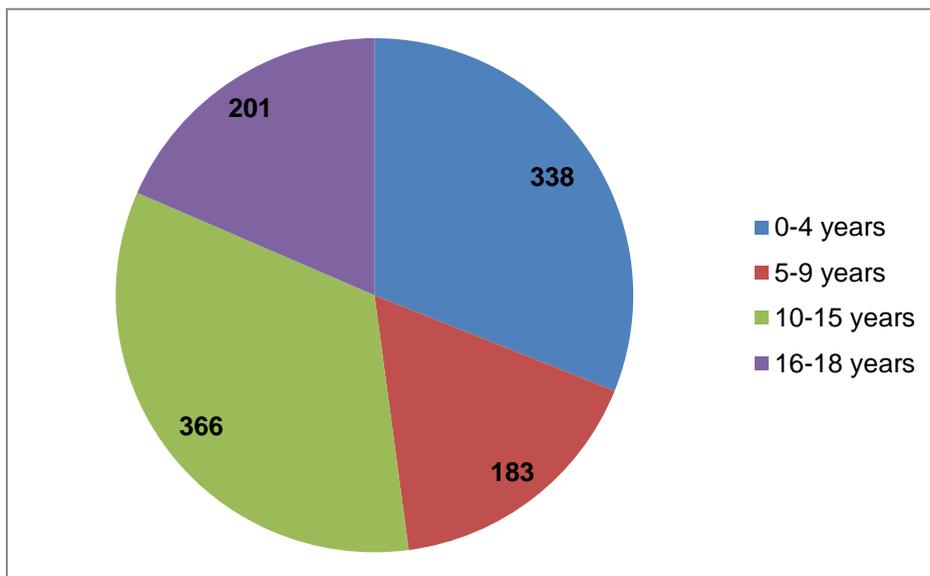
The reporting period has witnessed a continued increase in the number of children with especially complex needs who are corporately parented in Lincolnshire. In 2018/19 this has resulted in an increase in the number of children who find living in foster families difficult and as a result the average age profile of children placed in in house residential care has reduced and there has been an increase in those placed in external residential placements.

- 16 children (5 of whom were unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people) were placed in externally commissioned foster placements, and
- 25 children were placed in external residential homes, which is a decrease on the previous year-end figure.

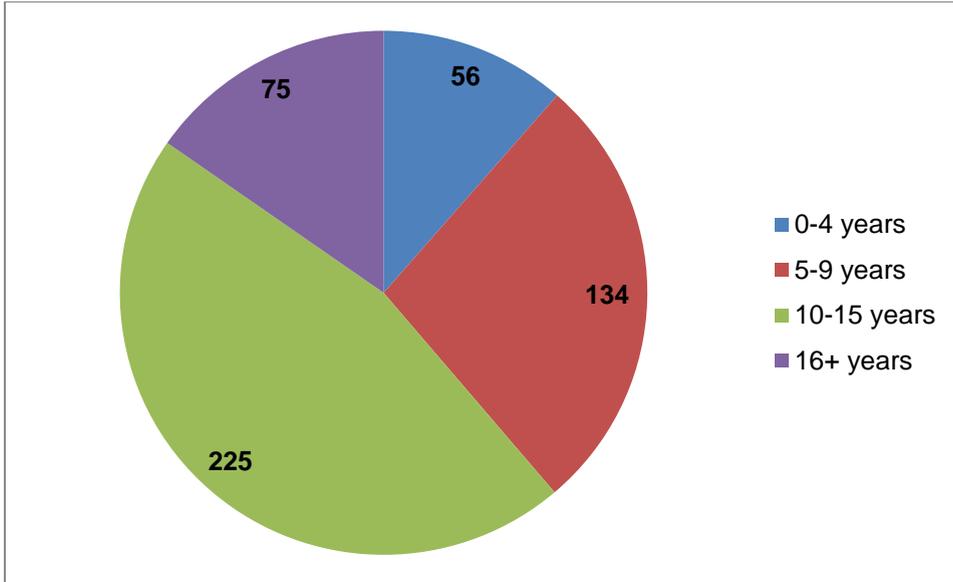
LCC has continued to maintain its achievement in managing to keep the increase in independent sector placements to a minimum, and the use remains significantly lower when compared to other local authorities. However there continues to be a demand for complex young people requiring residential placements often as a result of a suitable foster placements not being available and in 2018/19, this demand has proven more difficult to meet. Lincolnshire continues to have one of the lowest per head costs for a looked after child, being £780.00 in contrast to the average of £981.00 (CIPFA 2018). However it has proven difficult to identify placement options for a few children and these have required very expensive individual costed placements.

### 3.3. Composition of looked after children/young people

More boys than girls are represented in the total looked after children/young people population, and for those corporately parented by Lincolnshire County Council there are 339 (55%) males and 271 (45%).



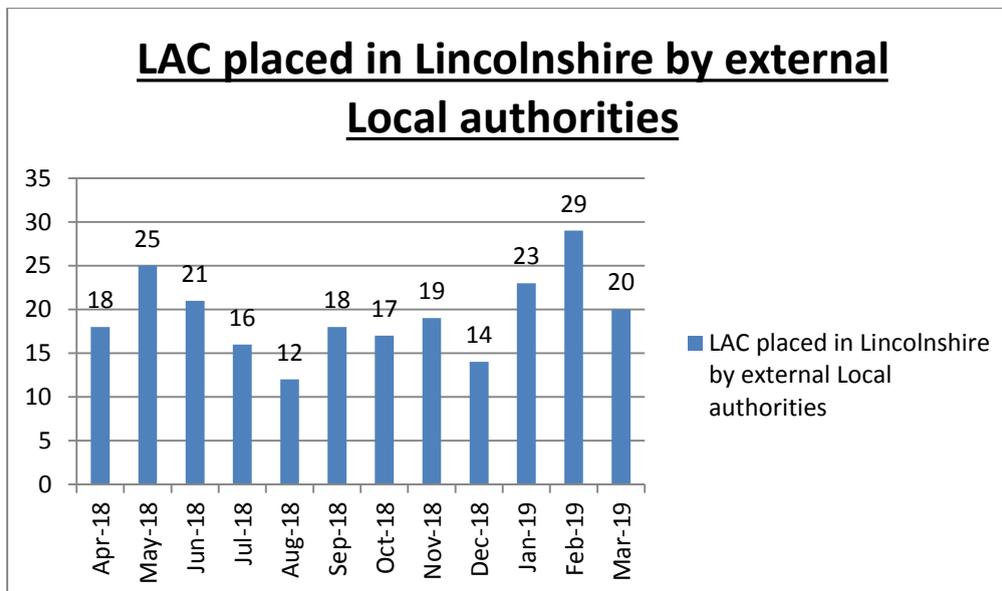
**EXTERNAL LA LAC**



### Looked After Children and Young People placed into Lincolnshire by external Local Authorities

Lincolnshire has consistently had a significant number of LAC/YP placed within the County by external LA's. Currently 490 children and young people-an increase year on year in recent years. (See page 18 to see increase in workload for LCHS LAC team)

The graph below shows the monthly numbers of LAC/YP newly placed in Lincolnshire by external LA's this annual report year (2018/19).



The high numbers of LAC/YP placed by LA's from other areas within Lincolnshire are predominantly residing within residential care homes and with foster carers who work for Independent Fostering Agencies. The placements are often intended to remove LAC/YP away from ongoing, high risk environments within the LA area responsible for their care. As a result of this some of the LAC/YP can present with challenging behaviours such as going

missing, self-harm, substance misuse and the risk of child exploitation (CE). It needs to be recognised that often the risks may continue despite the move out of their LA area as there is often potential for abusers to follow the young person to their new address. The vulnerabilities and needs of these young people also impact on the workload of Lincolnshire Integrated Sexual Health Services, CAMHS, Education and The Police.

**Summary:**

- The largest numbers of children entering care are aged less than one year;
- The greatest number of looked after children overall are in the 10-15 years age group.
- Almost 24% of the children admitted into care during 2018/19 were aged 4 or under
- 23% of all children admitted to care were aged 16+
- 80% of all looked after children/young people are subject of a statutory interim care order or a care order
- Whilst the number of Children and Young People Looked After by Lincolnshire has decreased over the past year, the number of Children and Young People placed into Lincolnshire by external authorities continues to rise. 2017-2018 376 placed into Lincolnshire. 2018-2019 490 placed into Lincolnshire.

The majority of looked after children/young people will be subject to care proceedings and will have care plans for permanence.

**3.4. Ethnicity**

The vast majority (86%) of looked after children/young people corporately parented by Lincolnshire County Council are of White-British origin, but the demographics are gradually changing, with a 14% increase in looked after children/young people coming from different ethnic backgrounds. This reflects an increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children/young people who become looked after upon arrival in the county.

The table below shows the ethnic background of looked after children/young people corporately parented by Lincolnshire County Council during the period April 2018 to March 2019.

**Ethnicity of Looked after Children Cohort 2018/19 (derived from MOSAIC)**

Ethnic Origin LCC Corporate Parent	Total
White-British	531
Mixed Race	40
Asian / Asian British	6
Black-African	3

Any Other Ethnic Group	29
<b>Total</b>	

#### 4. LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL: COURT PROCEEDINGS INITIATED

Within the reporting period, we have seen an increase in the number Care Proceedings issued.

In 2017/2018 132 applications were issued in respect of 135 children.

In 2018/19 156 applications were issued in respect of 184 children.

This equates to an increase of 24 applications and so an increase of 18 %.

This equates to an increase of 49 children/young people and so an increase of 36 %.

In respect of the 184 children, the applications comprised of 156 applications for Care Orders and 28 applications for Supervision Orders.

Care Proceedings were concluded in respect of 154 children.

In 2018/19, the number of children placed under Special Guardianship increased.

In 2017/2018 30 Special Guardianship Orders were granted.

In 2018/2019 41 Special Guardianship Orders were granted.

11 more orders were granted and this equates to an increase in these orders of 36%

The use of Placement Orders has dropped.

In 2017/2018 36 Placement Orders were granted.

In 2018/2019 27 Placement Orders were granted.

9 less orders were granted and this equates to a decrease in these orders of 25 %

The decrease in figures is reflective of the use of alternative orders rather than the number of care cases concluded over the year. In 2018/2019 the number of cases concluded remained static as compared to the number of cases that concluded in 2017/2018 as only a decrease of 1% has occurred.

The table below shows the orders obtained for the 154 children in proceedings that were concluded.

Orders	No	Orders	No
Care Orders and Placement Orders	27	Care Orders	37
Supervision Orders	12	Special Guardianship Orders	41

Special Guardianship & Supervision Orders	3	Child Arrangement Orders	12
Child arrangement and Supervision Orders	11	Special Guardianship, Supervision Order & Child Arrangements Order	0
Child Arrangements Order & Family Assistance Order	0	Supervision Order & Child Arrangement Order	0
Special Guardianship Orders and Child Arrangement Orders	0	Special Guardianship Order & Prohibited Steps Order	0
No Orders	11	Care Order, Placement Order & Parental Responsibility Order [ these would be very rare]	0

## 5. HEALTH OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

### 5.1. National Context

Most children/young people become looked after as a result of abuse and neglect - past experiences such as this increases vulnerability to disadvantage, including mental health issues, lower educational achievement and social exclusion. The childhood trauma of looked after children/young people is also associated with poorer health outcomes which have life-long consequences.

Nationally, key issues for consideration for the health of looked after children/young people include:

- Poorer health outcomes when compared to peers,
- Difficulty in accessing universal and specialist services,
- Failure of annual health assessments to meet their health needs,
- High prevalence of mental health problems,
- Poorer educational achievement,
- Increased likelihood of teenage pregnancy
- Increased risk of offending behavior and substance misuse.

In view of such increased disadvantage, measurement of the child's health on first coming into care is crucial – Initial Health Assessments are a key element to achieving this.

### 5.2 The Role of Health Services in Safeguarding Looked After Children/Young People.

Looked after children/young people are particularly vulnerable to safeguarding risks– they are more likely to go missing and are at an increased risk of being trafficked, exploited or of

experiencing domestic abuse.

High numbers of children are placed from other areas within Lincolnshire residential care homes, although these placements enable movement away from the high risk environment, the potential for Child Exploitation (CE) continues as abusers may follow the young person to their new home. LAC/YP service providers need to engage with children and young people, developing relationships that enable identification, and appropriate response, to such risks of Child Exploitation (CE) including child sexual exploitation (CSE).

### **Child Exploitation (CE)**

In Lincolnshire there is an operational multi-agency child exploitation team (MACE) who meet on a weekly basis. These meetings are the forum for discussing, mapping, and analyzing concerns and for identifying solutions for all children/young people who are thought to be at risk of CE, including LAC/YP who may be at risk.

Additionally, a strategic MACE group meets on a six weekly basis. The key purpose of the Strategic MACE is to provide a detailed overview of the profile of Child Exploitation within Lincolnshire including emerging concerns about particular localities, addresses, businesses or professions, particularly those related to the night-time economy. The strategic MACE works towards achieving the following objectives:

- To generate a dynamic analysis and understanding of the profile and picture of child exploitation within Lincolnshire.
- To identify, discuss and deliver a partnership response to any emerging themes, trends and patterns of child exploitation across Lincolnshire.
- To support and enhance operational practice by being responsive to and sharing intelligence around the changing nature and profile of risk and exploitation
- To strategically co-ordinate multi-agency resources and relevant powers to plan and implement timely action against those intent on abusing and exploiting children and young people.
- Through strategic collaboration priorities prevention, disruption and prosecution to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people who are being, or are at risk of being, sexually or criminally exploited.

### **Children Reported Missing**

Nationally, in the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 there were 11,530 LAC/YP who had a missing incident. The 2018/19 national statistics are not available at the time of writing this annual report. This equates to 11% of the LAC/YP population during the year: most of these missing incidents were of short duration.

Children and young people who are looked-after by the LA and who live with foster carers, or in residential children's homes, are often extremely vulnerable when missing. Even short

stays away from their carers can lead to the child or young person being at risk.

In Lincolnshire LAC/YP who go missing from home are provided with an independent care interview within 72 hours of their return: this service is provided by the LA.

### **Care Leavers**

- Barnardo's is commissioned by the LA to deliver the leaving care service in Lincolnshire.
- Arrangements for RHA for 16-18 year olds, as part of transition, are undertaken by the Community Nurses within the Looked after Children/Young People (LAC/YP) team.
- There is a process in place for the compilation of a health history summary for Lincolnshire looked after young people which is completed, discussed with and given to the young person when they leave care.
- The number of completed leaving care health history summaries is reported quarterly.

### **5.3 Meeting the Health Needs of the Looked After Children/Young People Population.**

Performance indicators for the LAC/YP service are:

Health Assessments:

- i) The number of Initial Health Assessments (IHA) completed within 20 working days of the child/young person coming into care.
  - ii) The number of Review Health Assessments completed every 6 months for children below 5 years of age.
  - iii) The number of Review Health Assessments completed on an annual basis for all children/young people 5 year's up to 18 years of age
1. Registration with a GP
  2. Registration with a dentist
  3. Immunisations up to date in line with local and national programmes; and
  4. Emotional wellbeing: Completion of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire for 4 to 17 year olds.

#### **5.3.1 Health Assessments**

Statutory Initial Health Assessments are completed on all children in the care of the LA followed by six-monthly or annual reviews, depending upon the age of the child. The LAC/YP health assessment questionnaire includes the following categories:

- Looked After Children/YP health assessment
- Access to services
- Growth
- Development and disability
- Medical conditions/hospital admissions/emotional and behavioural issues
- Lifestyle indicators

- Education and development
- Onward referrals identified in health plan

### **Health Assessments 2018 – 2019 (Q1/Q2/Q3/Q4)**

231 (278) IHA's were completed – A decrease of 47 compared to 2017-2018

180 (231) Lincolnshire Local Authority LAC + 51(47) External LA (A decrease of 51 IHA's completed for Lincolnshire LA LAC and an increase of 4 for External LAC compared to 2017-2018)

796 (653) RHA's were completed – An increase of 143 compared to 2018-2019

495 (449) Lincolnshire Local Authority LAC + 301(204) External LA (An increase of 46 RHA completed for LA Lincolnshire Local Authority LAC and an increase of 97 for External LAC compared to 2018-2019)

### **Health Assessments Total = 1027(931) - an increase of 96 compared to 2017-2018**

The increase of 96 health assessments from last year reflects the increased number of children/young people becoming looked after and living in Lincolnshire.

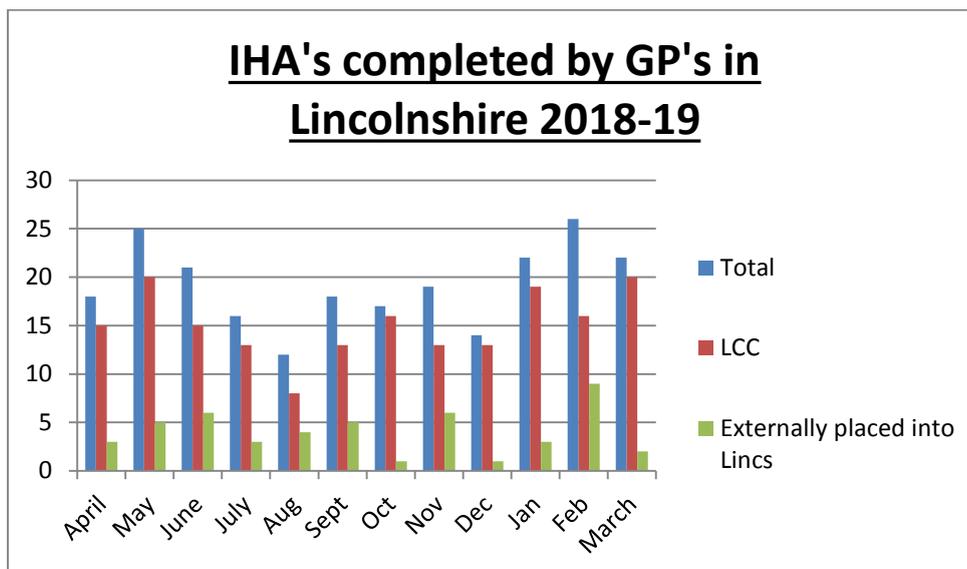
#### **5.3.1.1 Initial Health Assessments (IHA)**

Each child entering care has a statutory IHA and health care plan completed. The IHA is undertaken by a registered medical practitioner and should take place within 20 working days (4 weeks) of a child entering the care system. A health plan is formulated from this which is copied to the child's social worker who ensures that the plan is implemented, and then reviewed at least every six months in a meeting chaired by the independent reviewing officer (IRO).

This statutory requirement is not being achieved in Lincolnshire despite a significant amount of work being undertaken throughout the year to address this. A number of solutions have been identified and are being implemented.

Graph 2 shows the activity of initial health assessments that has been completed during 2018-2019 by the contracted GP's.

**Graph 2**



The total number of IHA's undertaken in Lincolnshire during 2018-2018 was 231 (257) (Lincolnshire LA LAC = 180(203)/ External LA LAC = 51(54).

This is a decrease compared to 2017-2018.

During this time period 45 Lincolnshire LAC/YP were placed outside of Lincolnshire and their IHA will have been completed by the 'host' trust.

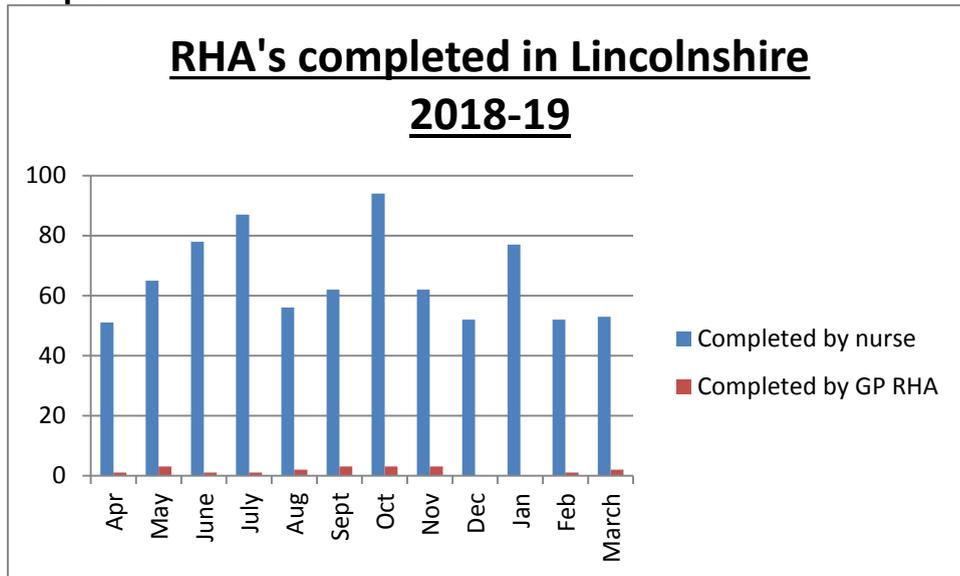
### **5.3.1.2 Review Health Assessments**

Review health assessments may be carried out by an appropriately qualified Registered Nurse/Midwife.

The timeframe for review health assessments are twice yearly for children under 5 years of age, and annually for children 5 years, up until a child is 18 years of age.

Graph 3 shows the number of review health assessments completed in Lincolnshire during 2018 – 2019. The total number completed by the Community Nurses was 796 (Lincolnshire LA LAC = 495 / External LA LAC =301).

**Graph 3**

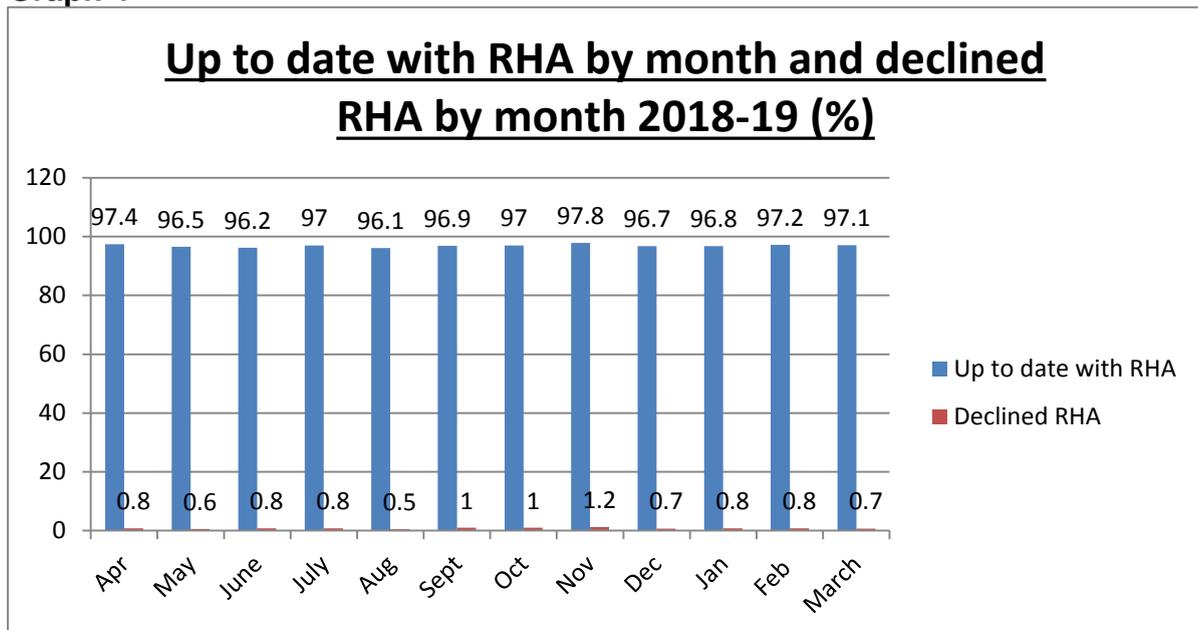


For Lincolnshire LA the percentage of completed RHA's for LAC/YP was 97.1% (97.1%) at year-end 2019 (graph 4).

This is a continued high achievement and demonstrates the robustness of the health assessment process and the commitment and partnership working between health and social care practitioners.

Graph 4 shows the percentage of LAC/YP with an up to date RHA and those children/young people who refused a Health Assessment from 01.04.18 to 31.03.19.

**Graph 4**



Young people who refuse their RHA are predominantly within the 15 – 18 year age group. They are all offered alternative access by LCHS LAC/YP team which has proved to be very successful.

### **5.3.2 Registration with a General Practitioner**

From 2018-19 LAC/YP health assessment reporting indicated that 99% (99)% of LAC/YP are registered with a GP.

There were 7(7) LAC/YP not registered with a GP: 3(3) of whom were Lincolnshire LAC/YP and 4(4) were LAC/YP placed in Lincolnshire from external local authorities.

Some children will have had their health assessment before being able to register with a GP.

### **5.3.3 Dental Practice Registration**

Looked after children and young people often enter care with poor oral health: usually as a result of their pre-care experience.

Attendance for annual dental checks is a national performance indicator for LAC/YP for LA's to report on.

Lincolnshire Local authority reporting on this performance indicator shows that 97.5% (95.9)% of LAC/YP had dental checks as of 31.03.19.

For LAC/YP who are not registered with a dentist at their health assessment appointments, carers are encouraged to register a child with a dentist as soon as possible.

There is now specific data available for this cohort of LAC/YP on their oral health from the LAC/YP health assessment questionnaire data. (Appendix 1)

### **5.3.4 Immunization's and vaccination**

Children who are not immunised are potentially more susceptible to a range of infectious diseases. In sophisticated industrialised societies such as the UK many diseases have been all but eradicated: however, in areas where immunisation up take is poor the potential for infectious diseases to re-emerge is significant.

There are only a small number of reasons why children should not receive a course of immunizations:

- If the immune system is compromised, certain, e.g. live vaccines are not given, (this could be that a parent or immediate family member has a compromised immune system resulting in a delay until it is safe to vaccinate).
- If a child / sibling has previously had a severe reaction to the same vaccine.
- Young people may refuse to have their vaccinations.

For LAC/YP the vaccination history is recorded by the GP on the CORAMBAAF form at their IHA.

Any outstanding vaccinations must be identified on the health plan section of the CORAMBAAF form.

The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) is responsible for performance managing and ensuring that any identified outstanding vaccinations are completed.

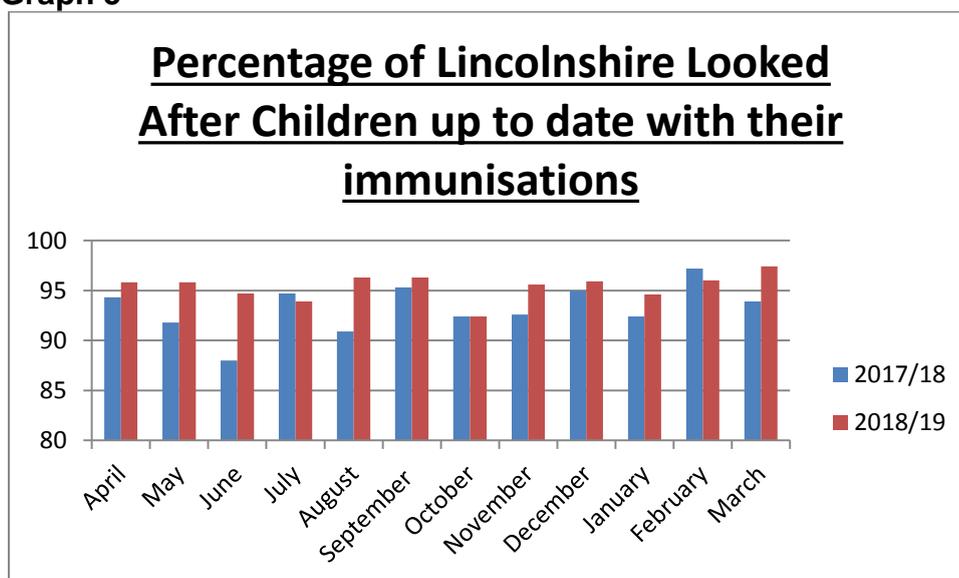
The vaccination and immunisation status submitted by Lincolnshire LA for the final percentage at year end 2018 - 2019 was 97.4% (93.9)%.

The percentage of LAC/YP who are up to date with their immunisations is at a higher rate of coverage compared with those of their peers in the general population.

All outstanding immunisations are checked quarterly by the LAC/YP health team.

Graph 5 (below) shows the monthly percentage of LAC/YP up to date with vaccinations 2018 - 2019 compared to 2017-2018

**Graph 5**



### **5.3.3 Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing (CAMHS)**

#### **5.3.3.1 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) play a crucial role in assessing and meeting any needs identified as part of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) screening process.

Clinical Commissioning Groups, Local Authorities and NHS England have the responsibility to commission CAMHS and other services to provide targeted support to looked after children, tailored according to individual needs. The legal status of children who are the

subject of a Care Order is not affected by detention either under the Mental Health Act or in custody. It remains the responsibility of the Local Authority to promote the welfare of looked after children who are so detained, and that includes maintaining and reviewing the child's health plan as part of his or her overall care plan.

The table illustrates the CAMHS services provided to looked after children, corporately parented in Lincolnshire. (The data for those placed by external authorities is not available for this reporting period). **Referrals Received**

Gender/Age	Attended two or more contacts	Attended one or more contacts <sup>(a)</sup>	Did not attend any contacts <sup>(b)</sup>	Grand Total ( <sup>a</sup> + <sup>b</sup> ) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Female</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>93</b>
Female aged 4 - 9	2	3	6	9
Female aged 10 - 14	15	28	15	43
Female aged 15 -19	14	27	13	40
Female aged 20 - 22	0	1	0	1
<b>Male</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>80</b>
Male aged 4 - 9	0	2	7	9
Male aged 10 - 14	8	22	22	44
Male aged 15 -19	6	13	14	27
Male aged 20 - 24	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>173</b>

- **Reason for Referral**

The table below provides breakdown of the reasons looked after children were referred to CAMHS (this is the total referrals including referrals not eligible)

Reason for referral	% out of 154 referrals 2018/19
Behavioural problems	41%
Low mood	13%
Anxiety	9%
Self-harming behaviour	8%
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	4%
Suicide Risk	4%
Attachment Difficulties	3%
Others	17%

<sup>[1]</sup>Please note that the grand total includes figures from the columns for those attending one or more contacts and those attending no contacts. It does not include figures from the column for those attending two or more contacts.

- **CAMHS Forensic Psychology Service**

Forensic psychology assessments are provided for young people who have offended or who are at risk of offending. The aim is to:

- Identify the level and type of risk presented by a young person towards themselves and others, and
- Give guidance on how a young person, his/her carers and involved professionals might best manage and address the identified risks

In total, 10 new referrals to the CAMHS Forensic Psychology Service were received in the reporting period, and only 1 of the accepted referrals is classified as a Looked After Child; 1 is classified as Special Guardianship.

The service offered includes a forensic or clinical psychology assessment, with follow-on consultation and advice to family and carers, and to other health, social care and educational professionals who are involved with the young person's care. All assessments are undertaken through direct contact with the young person. In addition the service offers monthly forensic group supervision sessions to support professionals working with young people who present on this pathway; this offer includes those professionals working with young people that are also looked after. Representatives from Future 4 Me, Looked After Children's Service and Children's Services have accessed this forensic supervision group.

As well as the 10 new referrals to the CAMHS Forensic Psychology Service, there were 8 ongoing cases that continued being seen, 5 of whom are officially classified as LAC; one of whom lives with grandparents. Therefore of the 18 forensic cases seen within CAMHS Forensic Psychology Service during this reporting period, 6 (33%) are LAC and 2 are special guardianship.

- **CAMHS Harmful Behaviour Service.**

This service provides assessment and intervention to children and young people up to the age of 18 years, who live in Lincolnshire, and who are presenting with sexually concerning behaviours.

Prior to a referral being accepted, any identified safeguarding concerns will have been referred to Children's Services for investigation. A member of Children's Services remains involved, as appropriate, to monitor and address any identified safeguarding concerns, and to work with the specialist therapists from the Harmful Behaviour Service, and AIMS trained CAMHS staff, in offering recommended interventions.

There were 27 new referrals to the Harmful Behaviour Service during the period 2018-2019, 25 of which were accepted. 12 (approx. 50%) of these accepted new referrals are looked after children living in Lincolnshire, either with foster carers or in local children's homes. The input offered has included completion of AIMS2 assessments and follow-on therapeutic interventions.

As well as the 25 new referrals there were 8 ongoing cases, 3 of whom are officially classified as LAC; 1 of whom is adopted.

Consultation and advice has also been offered to carers, children's home staff, education staff and other involved professionals, including social workers, Healthy Minds staff and early help workers.

## 6. EDUCATION

### 6.1 Learning and Achievement – Education for Life

#### **Virtual School support for our Children and Young People in Care and Previously in Care**

Lincolnshire County Council continues to support the work of the Virtual School and views the improvement of educational outcomes as a key priority going forward. Expansion of the team has enabled a reduction in caseloads in order to support students more effectively through locality based teams in the north and south of the county. It has also meant that the Virtual School can meet its responsibilities under the extended role to provide advice and support to schools, parents and guardians in promoting better educational outcomes for children and young people previously in the care of the Local Authority

#### **Research and Innovation**

The Virtual School has continued to work with University College London (UCL) and as a consequence 22 Lincolnshire schools have been involved in the 'Promoting the Achievement of Looked After Children' (PALAC) research programme. Also, the Virtual School Team and the National Citizenship Service continue to provide lots of exciting opportunities for our students aged 16+ over the Summer Holidays. This has included team building, including a residential overnight stay, and community and charity work to support young people across Lincolnshire.

### 6.2 Caring 2 Learn - Virtual School and Fostering Service

*Putting Children First is at the heart of our work in Lincolnshire; Working Together with Families to Enhance Children's Present and Future Lives.*

The Department for Education's Partners in Practice programme continues to run alongside the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme. The Partners in Practice programme aims to put genuine partnership between local and national government at the heart of work to improve services, with some of the very best practitioners and leaders in the driving seat of reform for children and young people.

The DfE is working with leading local authorities, including Lincolnshire, as Partners in Practice to understand how local authorities get to good and what it takes to move from good to excellent; to interrogate the most important practice questions facing children's social care; and to drive sector-led peer-to-peer improvement. Over the past year the Caring2Learn has gone from strength to strength with increasing levels of partnership working, participation and engagement across the county from schools, carers, residential homes, the Virtual School and Fostering.

The objectives of this programme are that Children, Young People and Families in Lincolnshire will be:

- Helped to make changes for themselves
- Seen as a positive solution to the challenges they face
- Able to get the right service at the right time
- Understood as a whole family.
- Supported by an integrated children's services workforce that:
  - Uses evidence informed practice
  - Understands and applies Relationship Based Practice
  - Is Restorative in approach
  - Is well trained and supported
- Enabled and equipped by:

- Clear governance that puts children and families at the heart of how we plan and deliver support for them
- Using a system called Signs of Safety that builds on families strengths.

## **7. SOCIAL CARE**

### **7.1 Permanence**

The Family Finding group considers all children with a care plan of permanence/long term foster care and has considered 31 children since April 2018. This number included seven sibling sets of two and one sibling set of three.

Out of the 31 children, permanent foster placements were identified for 18. This included 6 sets of siblings and with 8 remaining with existing task centered carers and the remaining 10 moving to newly identified carers.

A further five out of the 31 children moved to a residential placement; three moved to an IFA and a further three had a change of care plan.

In addition to this there have been 18 children linked at Permanence Panel with their existing foster families– this includes five sets of siblings.

The new Family Finding procedure was launched in July 2018 and from this date all new referrals are received through Mosaic, with the child's social worker attending the initial Family Finding meeting to provide in depth information about the child and his or her background and needs and to consider any potential matches.

Work has been undertaken to update all of the children's profiles, with more relevant and focused information and a brighter, more engaging appearance. These profiles are shared with all Supervising Social Workers across both North and South Fostering Teams and have been shared with existing foster carers.

The Family Finding lead social workers for North and South Fostering Teams are attending the Foster Carers Support Groups to promote permanence and answer any queries.

In October 2018 a new Permanence campaign was launched, aimed at recruiting eight new permanent fostering families. This has included advertising in local press, radio and social media and has generated significant interest- with some posts on Facebook receiving thousands of views.

Over the year four new fostering families have been approved for permanence and a further five are currently undergoing assessment. Alongside this six existing task centred carers have changed their approval to permanence.

A special Permanence Event was held in March 2019 at The Dower House Hotel in Woodhall Spa – the majority of existing foster carers were invited to this event to hear about the role of a permanent foster carer and the support that is provided as well as having the opportunity receive information about children currently on Family Finders and talk with their respective social workers, who were also present.

Support for permanent foster carers has been reviewed and includes a bespoke

preparation course (which includes the sharing of suitably anonymised profiles), an enhanced rate for children waiting for a permanent placement longer than six months, specific and/or tailored training, including access to training provided by post adoption support, support from Placement Support Workers trained in Theraplay and Therapeutic parenting and a minimum of 14 nights respite per year.

The Family Finders Review panel continues to meet regularly to consider children where no options have been identified within a three month period.

Overall it has been a successful year for Family Finders with all but two of the 31 children considered during the year having an appropriate placement identified.

## **7.2 Placement Stability**

Placement stability continues to be a critical factor in offering an effective Fostering Service, and is crucial to ensuring that the Local Authority delivers good outcomes for each Looked After Child. Recruitment activity seeks to improve placement choice at the point of admission to care and the engagement of early help and skilling up of placement support workers seek to offer improved levels of support to sustain placements. Stability is measured by 2 national indicators, NI062 relating to children who experience 3 placement moves within 12 months, and NI063 which relates to children looked after for 2½ years who have been in the same placement for 2 years.

The national indicator NI062 reported 7% at year end. This figure suggests that Children Looked After in Lincolnshire, have a high level of placement stability from the point of coming into care. This is significant in achieving long term positive outcomes. However, the complexity of children requiring placement and reduced placement options have had an impact on the indicator, and is likely to remain a challenge. Over recent years there has been considerable focus on supporting foster carers to maintain placements, and perhaps as a consequence, the NI063 placement stability figure has shown only a small deterioration with a year-end figure reported as 67.8%. We will continue to place an emphasis on supporting foster carers to promote sustained placement stability. However we have seen an increase in the number of children subject to care orders with plans for long term fostering and we continue to experience the occasional unplanned ending of seemingly stable placements. We know that recruitment of permanent foster carers remains a significant challenge and will need to carefully track these individual children to ensure that all possible family finding activity is undertaken.

## **7.3 Kinship Service**

Since 2015 there has been dedicated 6 FTE Supervising Social Workers specifically undertaking Kinship Assessments, which has allowed for a greater scrutiny to review and assess the level of referral within this area of the fostering service. In the early part of the year, there was a decrease in the volume of referrals. However the trend was not sustained and the latter part of the year saw an upturn. At the end of the year the volume of assessments had reduced by 15%.

The placement of a child within their family and friends network offers a positive alternative for many children enabling them to maintain the links with family and friends and a continued sense of their identity and culture but can also bring with it practice issues in terms of supporting family members to fully understand their role as 'connected person carers' and the expectations of this role.

The picture below for the year records the number of referrals and reflects the ongoing national picture in terms of the area of service increase in terms of assessments.

### Overview of the Year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31st March 2019

Number of Referrals	SGO	Reg.24 to SGO	Reg.24	Private Fostering
152	62	24	41	25

Of the above figures:

- SGO – 8 applicants withdrew / did not progress due to alternative SGO assessment placement ended for varying reasons
- SGO – 12 are still in process
- SGO – 2 were negative assessments and the children were not placed
- SGO – 1 case, Court granted a Child Arrangement Order
- SGO – 38 were reference and checks completed by Fostering Service as child not LAC
- SGO – 1 positive but remained at home

Where children were placed but with a likely plan to progress to SGO

- SGO/Reg.24 – 8 SGO granted
- SGO/Reg.24 – 7 are still in process
- SGO/Reg.24 – 9 where child was moved or other Order granted
- Reg.24 – 14 Carers Approved at panel
- Reg.24 – 8 children were moved
- Reg.24 – 14 Not yet attended panel
- Reg.24 – 1 carer granted Child Arrangement Order
- Reg.24 – 4 Returned home

The service has continued to offer the specific initial preparation course for both Regulation 24 carers and Special Guardianship applicants, with three having taken place in 2018/19 with consistency in terms of numbers attending. It is a positive initial step to engage families and also connected person carers continue to be invited to the recent county focus groups and foster carer's social events.

### 7.4 Transition into Adulthood

The transition into adulthood is rarely an easy path for any young person, but for looked after children the path can often be more complex. Many such children have few or no direct family support networks. It is therefore imperative that every opportunity is provided, and all relevant supports are put in place, to enable as smooth a transition as possible. As their Corporate Parent we have a responsibility to support our young people as we would our own family, and on this basis LCC have committed to reducing the age at which Care Leavers accesses their Leaving Care worker from 17.5 to 16 years old. This earlier allocation and offer of additional support will assist our young people into adulthood.

In planning this transition for care leavers, the Pathway Plan should be prepared for each relevant child prior to ceasing to be looked after. In Summer 2016 the revised Pathway Plan was launched; this was revised in consultation with young people and uses the 'signs of safety' methodology. The professional preparing the plan on behalf of the Local Authority

must engage constructively with the young person to help them define priorities and the focus of the plan. Never wanting to stand still, LCC and its partners are continually revisiting the Pathway planning process and the way we engage our young people in it.

The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations (Vol 3: Planning transition to adulthood for care leavers) identifies that, once a young person ceases to be looked after and they are a relevant child, or once they reach legal adulthood at age 18 and are a former relevant child, then the Local Authority will no longer be required to provide them with a social worker to plan and coordinate their care. In Lincolnshire, Barnardo's deliver the Leaving Care Service and appoint personal advisors to support them until the age of 21 and offer the support, guidance and resources to enable the young person to grow into an indent adult.

At present Lincolnshire have two transitional social workers to oversee Pathway Planning for young people aged 16/17 who are transferring into the Leaving Care Team, and as described above, this offer is soon to be expanded to offer more to our young people. Part of their role will continue to be about improving the quality of these Pathway Plans and make them a "live" document with clear actions and timescales to evidence a young person's progress. In addition to the transitional social workers, LCC has also appointed a Corporate Parenting Manager to oversee and develop the services offer to all of our care leavers up to the age of 25. New developments have included additional accommodation resources, council tax relief for care leavers, the growth of the Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) services offered to 21-25 year old care leavers and growing relationships with adult based services to improve transitions across the board.

There is now in place a 4 way housing protocol ensuring that every care leaver is afforded local connection to district housing, they are always allocated priority status on housing lists and can have access to suitable, clean and safe accommodation.

## **7.5 Staying Put Scheme**

The 'Staying Put' initiative in Lincolnshire is in its tenth year. It has, since its inception, enabled a total of 131 young people to remain with their previous foster carers.

Staying Put arrangements provide the young person with stability at a key stage of their life remaining until their 21st birthday. On-going support and training for carers is provided by the Fostering Service, with the young people having their own designated Personal Advisor from Barnardo's Leaving Care Service.

To further support young people in their transition to adulthood if they are ready to move on before their 21st birthday or for those who join the armed forces, each young person is given a three month window in which they are supported by their carer. For those young people who attend university and live away; carers receive a retainer in recognition of the on-going support they provide, and to enable the young person to return during holidays and continue life within their family setting.

Lincolnshire's Staying Put Service has developed and grown over the past two years with the number of Staying Put arrangements increasing from 44 young people at the end of March 2018 to 49 young people living in a Staying Put arrangement at the end of March 2019. Of these, 36 were in full time further education with 4 attending university. The remainder were in Employment, on Work Experience Placements or Apprenticeships; with 2 of these on the Care Leavers Apprenticeship Scheme.

The Staying Put offer in Lincolnshire positively reflects the current guidelines and best practice from Fostering Network. Signs of Safety is embedded in the in the referral forms, license agreement and annual review forms were used across the scheme. By further embedding Signs of Safety and introducing Social Pedagogy into practice the Staying Put Scheme will continue to develop ensuring the best outcomes are achieved for our young people and care leavers.

### **Voices 4 Choices (V4C)**

V4C continues to develop in the 4 quadrant areas of Lincolnshire. The number of young people attending is around three times the number in the old V4C Executive group which met in Lincoln.

In spite of a huge amount of work and creative thinking, engaging young people in East Lindsey continues to be a challenge. To boost engagement in all four groups Participation Officers will be working with the Senior Youth and Community Development Workers (who lead the groups) to develop a communication strategy. Part of this will be aimed at developing engagement with Foster Carers and Supervising Social Workers.

### **Step Up to Social Work (SUSW)**

Six young people co-produced and delivered a day of training to the East Midlands cohort of the Step Up to Social Work programme. The day focused on helping students better understand the experience of Looked After Children and their expectations of social workers. As in previous years the training was very well received:

"Best day of uni so far ...by a mile!"

"Very engaging whilst giving vital messages – well done."

"Inspirational, excellent role models to LAC and other young people."

"Thought provoking"

"You've taught us a lot today"

"It was brilliant to hear your voice and experiences"

### **FAB! 2019**

Fantastic Amazing Brilliant is the annual awards event for LAC and Care leavers. This year 350 nominations were received for LAC (up from 267 in 2018) and 130 for Care Leavers. These were made by staff, foster carers and schools. The event theme was 'eco-FAB!' with activities exploring renewable energy, waste plastic, upcycling and climate change. Award winners were presented with certificates and wooden medals. Around 280 children, young

people and foster carers attended. Children and young people not able to attend FAB! will receive their awards from their Social Worker or Leaving Care Worker.

### **Big Conversation**

Through the well-established 'Big Conversation', groups of Looked After Children and Care Leavers meet with an Assistant Director, Service Managers and Social Workers from Lincolnshire County Council, as well as staff from Barnardo's, the Virtual School Manager and elected members from the Council. The model is one of co-production, with priorities being determined and action plans agreed. This is followed by joint working in order to achieve the desired improvements. The cycle of 'Big Conversation' events takes place 3 times per year, typically in February, May and October. In 2018 the meetings have been scheduled around the county at Youth Centre settings to ensure that there is equal accessibility for all young people.

The following issues have been discussed:

- Caring 2 Learn
- Support for LAC and Care Leavers in education (Virtual School)
- Young people profiles to help ease placement transitions
- Planning for FAB! 2019
- Integrated Children's Services pledge to children and families

### **Tell Us**

'Tell Us' surveys are issued to children across the three age groups in alternate years (under 5-7yrs and 8-11yrs one year and 12yrs and over the next) to provide a sound overview of their experiences of being Looked After.

The 2018 survey was completed by the younger age groups. The survey was incentivised with a prize draw for book tokens and the offer of free activities for the older group which were used to introduce them to V4C.

### **5-7 years Summary**

57 (35%) returns with mainly positive responses:

- 80% like where they live
- 90% have carers who help them
- 75% feel they are doing well at school
- 90% feel their Social Worker listens to them

- 100% feel their IRO listens to them
- 80% feel happy most of the time

Areas for development:

- 50% said having more friends would make school better
- 85% do not go to their review meetings

### **8-11 years Summary**

114 (37%) returns with mainly positive responses:

- 88% are happy with where they live
- 95% say their carers make them feel part of the family
- 100% say their carers support them to make good choices
- 93% say they are getting the help and support they need at school
- 97% say their Social Worker helps them
- 100% say their Social Worker wants them to do well
- 80% usually go to their review meetings
- 83% feel their IRO listens to their views and feelings
- 92% feel that Children's Services listens to them and makes decisions in their best interests

Areas for development:

- 10% are not interested in contributing to their PEP
- 22% don't know what a PEP is
- 23% said their Social Worker is not easy to contact
- 31% do not feel their IRO makes it easy for them to take part in their review meetings
- 62% do not know about Voices 4 Choices

## **8. ADVOCACY AND COMPLAINTS**

As soon as a child starts to be looked after by the local authority they are provided with a "coming into care kit." This provides them with information as to how they can express any feelings of dissatisfaction they may have including making formal complaints. There are however a number of informal dispute resolution options which are available to children and young people who are in the care of the local authority. These include the following:-

**Independent Reviewing Officers:** The Independent Reviewing Officer has a duty to engage with children and young people to ascertain their views in respect of their care plans and also to advise them of their entitlements including their right to complain. Children are encouraged to attend their reviews in order that they are aware of their plan and are

able to comment on this. Where children's wishes are contrary to the plan, the Independent Reviewing Officer is able to escalate matters on behalf of the child in order to resolve matters in a timely manner. Where children and young people continue to be dissatisfied, the Independent Reviewing Officer is able to support young people in making formal complaints.

**Regulation 44 Visits:** The Regulation 44 Officer is an Independent Visitor who visits all residential homes within the authority on a monthly basis. An integral part of the role of the Independent Visitor is to talk to children, young people and their families about their experiences of the residential home. The Regulation 44 Visitor is able to engage in discussions with the homes manager in order to resolve any issues which the child may identify. Where this early attempt at resolution is unsuccessful, the Independent Visitor is able to support the young person in making a formal complaint.

**Social Workers:** Social Workers meet with children on a regular basis. A fundamental part of this visiting is ascertaining the wishes and feelings of children and young people. Where children are unhappy with the level of care which they are receiving, their social worker will in the first instance work with the child to see whether changes are able to be made which would comply with the child's wishes. Social Workers are able to direct children to the advocacy service if they wish to pursue a formal complaint.

Level of complaints for children who are looked after have remained very low. For the year 2018-19 there was only one formal complaint made by a child who was looked after, which was the same level as for the previous year.

This complaint was made on 1 April 2018 by a 17 year old. The complaint was received from a young person (YP) who was a national of Afghanistan and entered the UK in 2015. An age assessment was carried out and at that time he provided his date of birth. However he then requested a second assessment as he was considered to be a 16 year old by Children's Services rather than a 14 year old as he stated. During this period he had a Social Worker who soon left and then another and felt neither took responsibility to resolve the situation. He stated he found this particularly distressing given what had occurred in his country of origin. The young person was dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response and escalated to Stage 2. Neither of his two complaints were upheld and as such he did not receive an offer of financial compensation which was his desired outcome as he also recognised he was at no financial loss. The complainant requested an escalation to Stage 3 however once asked to provide the reasons for the request there was no further communication and subsequently the case was closed.

There were a further 3 complaints however these were not made by children or young people under the care of the authority they were from relations.

One of these complaints was in relation to a mother who was unhappy around the lack of communication she was receiving from her children's new Social Worker. This complaint was found to be unsubstantiated due to a lack of evidence to support the mother's claims of attempts made by her to contact the Social Worker. Although there was nothing to support the mothers claim she was provided with the Social Worker's Line Managers contact details in case of future issues.

Another complaint was received by grandparents about the way Children's Services were treating his son and family. The complaint was partially held, not because of the removal of the overnight support service but because this hadn't been effectively communicated. The grandparents requested a Stage 2 but the Complaints Manager liaised between them and Children's Services and the case was closed. The fourth LAC complaint was made in relation to the same case but came from the child's father who received a Stage 1 response.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

There has been reduction in the numbers of looked after children/young people in 2018/19 which appears to be at variance to national trends. Resources have been allocated to bolster preventive services in order to sustain that trend. In 2018/19 this has included the development of the Futures4me service, a multi disciplinary team focusing on preventive work with older children on the cusp of care. Nevertheless older children comprise a greater percentage of the looked after cohort and meeting their needs remains a significant challenge due to complexity of behaviour and limited placement options.

This report incorporates full year health data, which enables a better understanding of the essential characteristics of looked after children/young people. The partnerships across health and social care within Lincolnshire remain strong, with a determination to continue improving the effectiveness of services in order to reduce the disadvantages that these children and young people are acknowledged to experience. The associated workforce is committed and skilled in supporting looked after children/young people.

The health data indicates that in many areas, we are achieving better than the national average in meeting the health needs of our Looked after Children/young people. The health assessment questionnaire continues to provide a valuable source of data about the health profile of our Looked after Children/young people. The annual data during future years will enable comparative information to inform services and commissioning.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2019-2020**

- 1) LLA, Lincolnshire CCGs and LCHS to continue to work together to improve the number of Initial Health Assessments completed within the statutory timeframe.
- 2) LCHS to continue employing GP's for the Urgent Care Centre's (UCC's) to complete the IHA's to enable firmer governance regarding timescales for completion and return to the LA in time for the first looked after review.
- 3) LCHS LAC/YP Nurses to continue to meet with LA FAST teams to support and advise regarding the importance of the correct consent forms to enable the IHA to be completed within statutory timescales.
- 4) The annual report will be presented to LSCB with a view to improving multi agency engagement.
- 5) The annual report to be shared with the IRO service to promote improvement in constructive challenge.
- 6) Social care to streamline process for initiating health assessments in order to improve the percentage of those completed within statutory timescales
- 7) A revised multi agency approach to the management of and support provided to children with above average SDQ scores

APPENDIX 1

2018 - 2019 Data from the Looked after Children/Young People (LAC/YP)  
health assessment questionnaire

Dental

COUNT OF DENTAL PROCEDURES PERFORMED [LAST 12 MONTHS]					
AGE GROUP	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 15	16 +	Unrecorded
Brace	0	0	21	11	0
Extraction	3	6	7	4	0
Filling	2	25	26	17	0
Flouride paint	7	9	24	3	0
No treatment	121	78	200	107	0
Other	2	6	17	5	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>0</b>

*Total looked after children/young people (children corporately parented by Lincolnshire County Council, and children placed by external Local Authorities)*

COUNT OF DENTAL PROCEDURES PERFORMED [LAST 12 MONTHS]					
AGE GROUP	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 15	16 +	Unrecorded
Brace	0	0	14	5	0
Extraction	3	4	5	3	0
Filling	1	17	18	13	0
Flouride paint	6	2	16	2	0
No treatment	80	52	121	67	0
Other	2	3	9	4	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>0</b>

*Total for Lincolnshire looked after children/young people*

COUNT OF DENTAL PROCEDURES PERFORMED [LAST 12 MONTHS]					
AGE GROUP	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 15	16 +	Unrecorded
Brace	0	0	7	6	0
Extraction	0	2	2	1	0
Filling	1	8	8	4	0
Flouride paint	1	7	8	1	0
No treatment	41	26	79	40	0
Other	0	3	8	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>0</b>

*Total for External Local Authority looked after children/young people*

% SEEN BY / % WHO HAVE							IMMUNISATION UP TO DATE				GP INFORMED		
OPTOMET	AUDIOL	DENTIST	GLASSES	REFERRED	AGE RANGE	TOTAL CHILDREN	% YES	% NO	% REFUSED	% Blank	% YES	% NO	% Blank
20%	48%	32%	4%	1%	0 - 4	292	89%	10%	0%	1%	80%	17%	3%
78%	2%	86%	34%	3%	5 - 9	90	91%	6%	2%	1%	100%	0%	40%
81%	2%	87%	43%	12%	10 - 15	204	80%	16%	2%	1%	79%	18%	15%
68%	0%	73%	30%	5%	16 +	130	75%	22%	2%	1%	93%	7%	3%
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	Unrecorded	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
53%	21%	62%	24%	5%	TOTAL	716	84%	14%	1%	1%	85%	13%	9%

**Number of looked after children/young people who have been seen by specialists (Lincolnshire LAC and children placed by external Local Authorities)**

### Development /Disability

AGE RANGE	TOTAL CHILDREN	% CHILDREN WIH		% RECEIVING SPECIALIST TREATMENT	
		DEV PROBS	DISAB	DEV PROBS	DISAB
0 - 4	362	28%	6%	17%	6%
5 - 9	140	41%	12%	36%	12%
10 - 15	337	29%	21%	22%	19%
16 +	189	29%	32%	25%	27%
Unrecorded	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1028</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>15%</b>

**Development / Disability issues for all looked after children/young people (Lincolnshire looked after children and external)**

AGE RANGE	TOTAL CHILDREN	REFERRED TO SPECIALIST	
		DEV PROBS	DISAB
0 - 4	362	13	0
5 - 9	140	1	0
10 - 15	337	6	2
16 +	189	1	0
Unrecorded	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1028</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>

**Development / Disability issues and referrals for Lincolnshire County Council looked after children/young people**

AGE RANGE	TOTAL CHILDREN	% CHILDREN WIH		% RECEIVING SPECIALIST TREATMENT	
		DEV PROBS	DISAB	DEV PROBS	DISAB
0 - 4	362	28%	6%	17%	6%
5 - 9	140	41%	12%	36%	12%
10 - 15	337	29%	21%	22%	19%
16 +	189	29%	32%	25%	27%
Unrecorded	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1028</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>15%</b>
AGE	TOTAL	% REFERRED TO SPECIALIST			

RANGE	CHILDREN	DEV PROBS	DISAB
0 - 4	362	4%	0%
5 - 9	140	1%	0%
10 - 15	337	2%	1%
16 +	189	1%	0%
Unrecorded	0	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1028</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Prevalence of Development / Disability issues, percentage receiving specialist treatment and percentage of referrals to a specialist, for Lincolnshire County Council looked after children/young people (Prevalence has increased in all age groups since last year's reporting)**

AGE	TOTAL	% CHILDREN WITH		% RECEIVING SPECIALIST TREATMENT	
RANGE	CHILDREN	DEV PROBS	DISAB	DEV PROBS	DISAB
0 - 4	70	41%	3%	17%	3%
5 - 9	50	44%	10%	36%	10%
10 - 15	133	31%	26%	23%	23%
16 +	59	51%	53%	49%	51%
Unrecorded	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>21%</b>

AGE	TOTAL	% REFERRED TO SPECIALIST	
RANGE	CHILDREN	DEV PROBS	DISAB
0 - 4	70	9%	0%
5 - 9	50	2%	0%
10 - 15	133	2%	2%
16 +	59	0%	0%
Unrecorded	0	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>

**Prevalence of Development / Disability issues, percentage receiving specialist treatment and percentage of referrals to a specialist, for externally placed looked after children/young people (Prevalence has increased in the all age groups except the 10-15 age group where there has been a slight decrease since last year's reporting)**

NUMBER OF CHILDREN WITH PARTICULAR DISABILITY - BY AGE GROUP					
DISABILITY	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 15	16 +	Unrecorded
Autistic	0	7	37	40	0
Learning	15	15	60	54	0
Physical	13	4	7	3	0
Visual	5	2	2	0	0
Other	0	1	2	0	0

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>0</b>

**Breakdown of disabilities by age group for Lincolnshire County Council looked after children/young people**

**Medical**

AGE	TOTAL	% NUMBER OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIFIC, LISTED LT CONDITIONS				
RANGE	CHILDREN	ASTHMA	ECZEMA	OTHER	EPILEPSY	BLANK
<b>0 - 4</b>	<b>362</b>	4%	8%	12%	2%	77%
<b>5 - 9</b>	<b>140</b>	4%	5%	12%	1%	80%
<b>10 - 15</b>	<b>337</b>	7%	4%	11%	3%	78%
<b>16 +</b>	<b>189</b>	4%	4%	8%	6%	78%
<b>Unrecorded</b>	<b>0</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1028</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>78%</b>

**Total Looked After Children/young people (LLA LAC and External)**

AGE	TOTAL	% NUMBER OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIFIC, LISTED LT CONDITIONS				
RANGE	CHILDREN	ASTHMA	ECZEMA	OTHER	EPILEPSY	BLANK
<b>0 - 4</b>	<b>316</b>	4%	7%	14%	3%	69%
<b>5 - 9</b>	<b>85</b>	2%	4%	7%	0%	86%
<b>10 - 15</b>	<b>178</b>	7%	4%	9%	0%	92%
<b>16 +</b>	<b>77</b>	5%	4%	6%	0%	139%
<b>Unrecorded</b>	<b>60</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>87%</b>

**Total for Lincolnshire Looked After Children/young people**

AGE	TOTAL	% NUMBER OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIFIC, LISTED LT CONDITIONS				
RANGE	CHILDREN	ASTHMA	ECZEMA	OTHER	EPILEPSY	BLANK
<b>0 - 4</b>	<b>70</b>	0%	11%	0%	0%	89%
<b>5 - 9</b>	<b>50</b>	12%	6%	12%	0%	78%
<b>10 - 15</b>	<b>133</b>	12%	5%	12%	0%	75%
<b>16 +</b>	<b>59</b>	8%	5%	8%	0%	69%
<b>Unrecorded</b>	<b>0</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>78%</b>

**Total External Local Authority Looked After Children/young people**

## Lifestyle Indicators

CHILD HAS EXPERIENCED/ SUFFERED / BEEN SUBJECTED TO							SEXUAL HEALTH - CHILD EXPERIENCED/ SUFFERED / BEEN SUBJECTED TO							
SUBSTANCE MISUSE	SELF HARM	HOUSEHOLD SMOKING	FGM	DOMESTIC ABUSE	HEALTH PROBLEMS	MENTAL	AGE RANGE	TOTAL CHILDREN	SEXUALLY ACTIVE	UNDERSTANDS SAFE SEX	CHLAMYDIA SCREENED	WAS TREATED FOR STIs	IS CURRENTLY PREGNANT	TERMINATED PREGNANCY
0	0	42	0	1	2		0 - 4	338	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	25	0	0	0		5 - 9	183	0	1	0	0	0	0
15	32	58	0	3	23		10 - 15	367	10	114	6	0	0	0
17	29	66	0	3	37		16 +	201	47	159	26	1	7	2
0	0	1	0	0	0		Unrecorded	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>32</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>62</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1094</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>

0%	0%	12%	0%	0%	1%		0 - 4	338	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
0%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%		5 - 9	183	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4%	9%	16%	0%	1%	6%		10 - 15	367	3%	31%	2%	0%	0%	0%
8%	14%	33%	0%	1%	18%		16 +	201	23%	79%	13%	0%	3%	1%
0%	0%	20%	0%	0%	0%		Unrecorded	5	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>3%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>6%</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1094</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Total Looked After Children [LLA LAC, External]**

## Long Term Conditions

AGE	TOTAL	LTC - SPECIALIST TREATMT		AGE	TOTAL	FOR LTC - CHILDREN WHO'VE BEEN IN/ NEED/ REQUIRE				
RANGE	CHILDREN	GIVEN	REFERRED	RANGE	CHILDREN	EMOT/ BEHAV PROB	MEDICAT	EQUIP	ALLERGIES	ADMITTED
0 - 4	70	5	3	0 - 4	70	11	10	0	1	3
5 - 9	50	8	3	5 - 9	50	29	14	3	1	5
10 - 15	133	20	13	10 - 15	133	78	51	4	7	8
16 +	59	15	2	16 +	59	38	32	4	12	2
Unrecorded	0	0	0	Unrecorded	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>

**Lincolnshire County Council looked after children with long-term conditions having specialist care**

## 11. GLOSSARY

Looked After Children = LAC

Local Authority = LA

Clinical Commissioning Groups = CCGs

Lincolnshire Local Authority = LLA

Lincolnshire Community Health Services = LCHS

Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust =LPFT

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment = JSNA

Independent Reviewing Officers = IROs

Child Sexual Exploitation =CSE

Multi Agency Child Exploitation = MACE

Initial Health Assessments = IHA's  
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services =CAMHS

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**Open Report on behalf of Janice Spencer OBE,  
Interim Director of Children's Services**

Report to:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>14 November 2019</b>
Subject:	<b>Voices for Choices (V4C) Update Report</b>

**Summary:**

This report gives a summary and overview of activities with regard to V4C between July and October 2019. V4C is Lincolnshire's Children in Care Council with the aim being to share experiences of being looked after in Lincolnshire and to inform teams who support Looked After Children what does and does not work for them. V4C meetings are held within Children's Services locality quadrants and are delivered by Senior Youth and Community Development Workers and supported by Children's Services Participation Officers.

This report also provides Corporate Parenting Panel with an update with regard to the planning and progress, further to discussions at previous panel meetings, that has taken place to develop V4C in terms of utilising new and alternative venues to those that have been historically used.

**Actions Required:**

The Corporate Parenting Panel is requested to consider and comment on the report and highlight recommendations regarding:

- Planning and use of future venues outlined in the report
- Future use of LCC youth centres for delivery of V4C meetings and activities

## **1. Background**

The following items are discussed within this section:

- V4C update and venue planning:
  - Lincoln and West Lindsey
  - East Lindsey
  - North and South Kesteven
  - Boston and South Holland
- Summary of V4C venue planning and visits
- Use of Royal Air Force venues for V4C meetings
- Use of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service venues for V4C meetings
- V4C budget summary

- The 'Imps Trail' – potential new V4C project
- The Big Conversation

V4C activities and planning are detailed below and have been outlined within the 4 quadrant areas:

### **Lincoln and West Lindsey**

A summary of attendance is provided below:

Month of meeting	Venue	Number of children and young people attended
June	Welton Youth Centre, Lincoln	12
July	Welton Youth Centre, Lincoln	12
August	No V4C meeting due to holiday youth work activities held	Not applicable
September	Washingborough Bowl (10 pin bowling)	10
October	Washingborough Bowl (10 pin bowling)	12

The following venues are timetabled to be utilised between November – March 2020:

November	The Escape Room, Lincoln. Outcome to support the group to work as a team and communicate more effectively
December	Christmas meal – venue to be confirmed
January	Ice skating venue
February	Gainsborough Leisure Centre
March	To be confirmed

After the summer break the first meeting took place at Washingborough Bowling as a 'Welcome Back' providing the opportunity in a relaxed atmosphere to get the group back together and discuss positive events over the summer and any issues the young people had come across over this time and welcome any new members.

The change of venue went down well with the young people and one new member attended.

Since this meeting it has been agreed that the V4C groups will meet in different venues each month although the subsequent meeting was again held at Washingborough Bowl due to limited time to book another venue.

Discussions about the use of different venues and possible places the group could meet in the future were held. The young people indicated they are keen on visiting different venues and came up with the venues outlined above.

The group discussed the Big Conversation and its structure and purpose and the importance of joining in with the discussion, and undertook some further review of the Care Pledge in terms of its content.

Discussions have been held about how the sessions are to be run including content, delivery methods and the balance between fun social time and constructive discussion and work.

As a result the group agreed they will develop their own pledge in terms of V4C to outline what staff expect from the group and what the group expect from the staff with the aim being to help provide that effective balance between fun activities and more formal discussion.

It was also agreed that young people will take the lead on some sessions to help develop their confidence in leading and taking part in more formal discussion.

**East Lindsey**

A summary of attendance is provided below over the reporting period:

Month of meeting	Venue	Number of children and young people attended
August	No V4C meeting due to holiday youth work activities held	Not applicable
September	Skegness Youth Centre	12
October	Lazerquest, Skegness	8

The following venues are timetabled to be utilised between November 2019 – March 2020:

November	Back2Bear Outdoor Activity Centre, Kenwick Hill, Louth Meeting at the centre. Campfire cooking and tasted marshmallows on the outdoor cooking area. Followed by trust games being delivered by the Back to Bear Staff.
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December	Eastside Ceramics, Mablethorpe  Paint activities - Christmas pottery. Finished items will be delivered back to young people in time for Christmas. Meeting/discussion to take place during activity.
January	Christmas pantomime trip
February	North Sea Observatory and Chocolate Workshop.
March	Chequered Flag Karting, Holton le Clay Meeting before activity in activity room.

Feedback about the above schedule from the children and young people has been positive overall and there has been acceptance that at times some activities may be more suitable than others for different age groups. The group also suggested that some activities should be specific for future regular attendees and contributors.

From a staff perspective the October meeting and activity progressed well although it was difficult at times to maintain the attention of attendees due to the amount of distractions.

### **North and South Kesteven**

A summary of attendance is provided below over the reporting period:

Month of meeting	Venue	Number of children and young people attended
July	North Hykeham Youth Centre	6
August	No V4C meeting due to holiday youth work activities held	Not applicable
September	Sleaford Children and Young Persons Centre	5
October	Ancaster Leisure - Bowling	7

Planning for future venues and activities is to be confirmed:

November	Pottery Painting Café, Sleaford
December	Planned Christmas activity – ice skating
January	To be confirmed
February / March	To be confirmed, Bowling at Grantham to be planned in one of these months

During the September meeting Andrew Garbutt, Participation Officer, discussed the 'My Placement' game, and this was played with the young people to gauge their interest in learning more about the game and how they could use this as a training tool with workers.

Discussions were held with the young people around their Christmas celebration activity, and what they would like to do. The young people expressed a desire to do an activity, and then have a celebration at North Hykeham Youth Centre with snacks and presents similar to last year.

The October meeting was held at Ancaster Leisure for ten pin bowling. Andrew Garbutt attended again to discuss further with the young people in more detail the 'My Placement' game, and began to highlight young people who may be more interested in training, and also who would be suitable for this.

Some young people did become restless and slightly disruptive as they just wanted to bowl and not take part in the discussion.

For the November meeting it is planned to be held at the Sleaford pottery painting cafe, where young people can engage in discussion whilst making something for Christmas. Some of the young people had said that they have been to this centre previously and enjoyed going there.

The December meeting is expected to be an Ice Skating trip, although this is as yet unknown where, and depends on if there is the ice rink in Lincoln this year.

The Senior Youth and Community Development Worker has also attended a supported accommodation meeting to discuss V4C and will be in regular contact with them from now on and plans to visit premises to talk to young people there so that they get an understanding of V4C to encourage future attendance.

## **Boston and South Holland**

There has not been any attendance for V4C meetings in Boston and South Holland over this reporting period.

Please see the table below for planned venues to re-launch the V4C groups in Boston & South Holland. The Youth and Community Development Worker has undertaken communications with teams, children and young people to publicise the V4C meetings and activities.

October	Boston Bowl, Boston. V4C Re-Launch Session
November	Fun Farm, Spalding: Laser Storm
December	Boston Bowl
January	Alley Catz, Bowling, Spalding
February	'Play Towers' (climbing) Boston.
March	Scalextric Racing, Spalding.

## **Summary of V4C Venue Planning And Visits**

The Participation Officers and Senior Youth and Community Development Workers have undertaken a series of visits to a range of external venues. This is over and above those mentioned earlier in this report. In addition, following desk top research on suitable options, the Participation Team has a wider summative list of further venues to be explored.

Venues visited are outlined below of which a range can be considered possible options for future V4C meetings. Note: visits have been focused on Boston, South Holland and East Lindsey areas where V4C attendance has had the lowest figures of attendance.

Boston and South Holland
Boston United Football Club
Fun Farm (Spalding)
Lincolnshire Wildlife Park (Friskney)
Alleycatz Bowling (Spalding)
Ark Wildlife Park (Stickney)
Scalextric (Spalding)
Doodles (Spalding)
Baytree Owl and Wildlife Centre (Spalding)
Leisure Centre (Spalding)

East Lindsey
Back 2 Bear (Outdoor activity centre at Kenwick)
Altitude 44 High Wire (Skegness)
Meridian Leisure Centre (Louth)
London Road Pavilion (Louth)
Skegness Pool and Fitness Suite
North Sea Observatory
The Seal Sanctuary Wildlife Centre (Mablethorpe)
The Storehouse (Skegness)
Hardy's Animal Farm (Ingoldmells)
Tattershall Farm Park
Tattershall Karting Centre
North and South Kesteven
Adventure Lincolnshire (RAF Cranwell)
Lincoln
Active Nation

In order to raise the profile of V4C further, activities are being undertaken to help increase awareness including:

- New leaflets and publicity are being produced which will be distributed out to Children's Services teams
- Participation Officers and Senior Youth and Community Development Workers are visiting teams and contacts within their quadrant areas to discuss and publicise V4C
- Updates regarding V4C are being given to groups such as the Children's Services Stakeholder Engagement Group for representatives to feedback into their teams

### **Use Of Royal Air Force Venues For V4C**

The Participation Team has spoken with the Public Communications Officer at RAF Cranwell who explained that many sites are Phase One (basic/initial training) Training Units and so there is an issue of safeguarding on MOD establishments which means that V4C meetings could not be held on these sites.

There is a Community Support Team that works with children with a service connection or the Community Development Officers who work with schools and groups to run selection and recruitment types of activities, although these would normally work within school hours.

Advice was given to contact the Armed Forces Careers Office to discuss any support they may be able to offer but this would not be based at an RAF venue.

### **Use Of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service Venues For V4C**

Planning is ongoing to establish V4C in potential fire stations and the Participation Team met with the Premises Officer for Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue and a representative from the Corporate Property Board in September. V4C was

explained to them along with what the requirements would be for running the groups.

The Premises Officer has since met with all of the Divisional Commanders in October and they are currently undertaking planning within each division to establish which stations will be best suited as venues and ensuring appropriate staffing is available for delivery of potential activities.

Once specific fire stations have been identified as appropriate V4C venues these will be able to be scheduled into future venue timetabling.

### **V4C Budget Summary**

There is a £3,625 annual budget for V4C activities which is located within the Quality and Standards Service Area. There is additional £2,010 annual budget for the Youth Council for youth participation and consultation work. Budget forecasting planning undertaken in October indicates that the costs of the above V4C activities along with Youth Council activities can be accommodated across both budgets, if pooled, based on maximum numbers of attendees on specific activities.

### **The Imps Trail - Potential New V4C Project**

The Senior Youth and Community Development Worker for North and South Kesteven has identified a potential exciting opportunity for V4C that could also help to promote the groups.

In recent years the Lincoln Business Improvement Group (Lincoln BIG) have run two trails around the city with painted sculptures: the Knights and Barons. They have just announced that next summer they will be doing an 'Imps Trail'.

It will be explored whether the V4C groups can submit a joint design from the young people of V4C, and then work with the organisers to bring this to life, either as part of the 30 main sculptures, or one of the 60 education sculptures. The young people can come up with a design that represents them in some way, and then paint it themselves with the support of the organisers. This could then be used to go towards both an ASDAN award, and a Bronze Arts Award for the young people.

### **Big Conversation**

The next Big Conversation is due to take place at The Showroom in Lincoln at the end of October. Currently 18 young people are confirmed to attend with 14 choosing to take part in the Climbing Wall activity being offered in the afternoon. The event will be attended by senior Children's Services staff and Councillors who chair and sit on the Corporate Parenting Panel. The agenda for the meeting is to discuss the 'Language that Cares' initiative and the refresh of the Lincolnshire Care Pledge. Refreshments, lunch and the activity are all provided as part of the event.

## **2. Conclusions**

Work has been undertaken to identify potential alternative venues for V4C meetings has been progressing over this reporting period. Progress has been made in developing:

- A summative list of potential venues and organisations across the county which can be updated on an ongoing basis
- Appropriate venues via a number of physical visits completed
- Outline schedules of V4C meetings in each quadrant to be held in a range of venues running through until the end of the financial year in March 2020
- Venues and activities that have taken place in October

It is intended that by the end of March 2020 the venues and activities that have been used and delivered will be evaluated to inform planning into the new financial year.

The use of different venues has been welcomed by attendees of V4C however there has been issues with regard to behaviour management and distractions within certain venues and it is noted that there may be difficulties to balance the fun and social activities against constructive work and discussions at times.

A V4C programme, using similar alternative venues to youth centres across each of the 4 locality quadrants over a full 12 month period will be difficult to achieve within present budgets. Further work to identify potential free to use /minimal cost venues is needed with the fire service venues will help towards this.

As a result it is recommended that consideration is given regarding the continued use of some current youth centre venues, possibly on a rota basis.

## **3. Consultation**

### **Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?**

Risk assessments carried out via the Senior Youth And Community Development Workers

## **4. Background Papers**

This report was written by Ben Lilley, Team Manager (Quality and Standards), who can be contacted on 07876 212470 or at [ben.lilley@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:ben.lilley@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

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## Policy and Scrutiny

**Open Report on behalf of Andrew Crookham,  
Executive Director of Resources**

Report to:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>14 November 2019</b>
Subject:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel Work Programme</b>

**Summary:**

This item enables the Panel to consider and comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year to ensure that scrutiny activity is focused where it can be of greatest benefit. The work programme will be reviewed at each meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to ensure that its contents are still relevant and will add value to the work of the Council and partners.

**Actions Required:**

The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to approve the work programme for 2019/20 and identify any items for future meetings.

### 1. Background

Overview and Scrutiny should be positive, constructive, independent, fair and open. The scrutiny process should be challenging, as its aim is to identify areas for improvement. Scrutiny activity should be targeted, focused and timely and include issues of corporate and local importance, where scrutiny activity can influence and add value.

Members are encouraged to highlight items that could be included for consideration in the work programme.

## Work Programme

14 NOVEMBER 2019		
Item	Contributor	Purpose
Independent Reviewing Service – 6 Month Report (April to September 2019)	Carolyn Knight, Quality and Standards Manager	Overview of LAC everyday care arrangement
Regulation 44 Independent Visiting Service – 6 Month Report (April to September 2019)	Carolyn Knight, Quality and Standards Manager	Overview of residential care addressing remedial actions
Looked After Children Performance Measures Quarter 2 2019/20 (July to September 2019)	Janice Spencer, Interim Director Children's Services	Review performance indicators relating to LAC
Looked After Children (LAC) Annual Report 2018/19	John Harris, Children's Services Manager: Regulated (North and Fostering)	
V4C The Looked After Children Council Quarterly Report (June – August 2019)	Ben Lilley, Team Manager Quality and Standards	Monitor progress of V4C and arrange visits to V4C for next quarter

23 JANUARY 2020		
Item	Contributor	Purpose
Looked After Children Placement Sufficiency Strategy Action Plan	Mark Rainey, Commissioning Manager: Commercial	Review of strategy and action plan
Leaving Care Service Six Month update report	Lisa Adams, Service Manager, Barnardo's Leaving Care Services	Overview of service and outcomes of Care Leavers
V4C The Looked After Children Council Quarterly Report (September – November 2019)	Ben Lilley, Team Manager Quality and Standards	Monitor progress of V4C and arrange visits to V4C for next quarter
Young Inspectors Project Update	Katrina Hewitt, Project Officer Lincolnshire Young Inspectors	Update on the work on the Young Inspectors Project
Fostering Stability of Placements	John Harris, Children's Services Manager: Regulated (North and Fostering)	Review of current Fostering Stability of Placements data

<b>12 MARCH 2020</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
The Virtual School for Lincolnshire Looked After Children Annual Report	Kieran Barnes, Virtual School Headteacher	Annual Report
Adoption Service Six Month Review	Yvonne Shearwood, Children's Services Manager: Regulated (South and Adoption)	Overview of service and progress and description of regulatory framework of service
Looked After Children Performance Measures Quarter 3 2019/20 (October to December 2019)	Janice Spencer, Interim Director Children's Services	Review performance indicators relating to LAC
V4C The Looked After Children Council Quarterly Report (December 2019 – February 2020)	Ben Lilley, Team Manager Quality and Standards	Monitor progress of V4C and arrange visits to V4C for next quarter
Partners in Practice Review	Janice Spencer, Interim Director Children's Services	Review of the Partners in Practice arrangements post 2020

<b>14 MAY 2020</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Legal Services Lincolnshire end of year report – April 2019 to March 2020	Nicola Corby, Acting Principal Lawyer	
Regulation 44 Independent Visiting Service – Annual Report 2019/20	Carolyn Knight, Quality and Standards Manager	Overview of residential care addressing remedial actions
Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report 2019/20	Carolyn Knight, Quality and Standards Manager	Overview of LAC everyday care arrangement
Looked After Children Performance Measures Quarter 4 2019/20 (January to March 2020)	Janice Spencer, Interim Director Children's Services	Review performance indicators relating to LAC
Looked After Children and Care Leaver Strategy Priorities Action Plan / the Corporate Parenting Strategy Engagement Plan	Andrew Morris, Corporate Parenting Manager	Review of the Care Leaver Strategy Priorities and Action Plan and Corporate Parenting Strategy Engagement Plan.

## **2. Consultation**

### **a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?**

Not Applicable

### **b) Risks and Impact Analysis**

Not Applicable

## **3. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Daniel Steel, Scrutiny Officer, who can be contacted on 01522 552102 or by e-mail at [daniel.steel@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.steel@lincolnshire.gov.uk)