



## Open Report on behalf of Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service

Report to:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>18 January 2024</b>
Subject:	<b>Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service - Six Monthly Update Report</b>

### Summary:

This is the six monthly update report, provided by Barnardo's, demonstrating work undertaken within Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service. It covers the period from April 2023 to October 2023.

### Actions Required:

The Corporate Parenting Panel is invited to review and endorse the Leaving Care Service six monthly update report.

## 1. Background / Summary

This is the biannual update report to Lincolnshire's Corporate Parenting Panel to demonstrate the performance and impact of the Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service regarding care experienced young people. Areas covered within this report include:

1. Accessing and maintaining suitable, safe accommodation
2. Accessing and maintaining appropriate Education, Employment and Training opportunities
3. Care Leavers Cohort and Location
4. Participation / Fundraising
5. Mental Health and Wellbeing
6. Care Leavers Transformation Board
7. Conclusion and New Opportunities

Lincolnshire County Council's Leaving Care Service is currently delivered by Barnardo's. The contract specification (since the 1 April 2020) is to deliver a Statutory Leaving Care Service for young people aged 18-25 and to start working with the Local Authority

Children in Care / FAST Teams working with Children in Care aged 16-18. The contract is closely monitored via regular contract monitoring meetings which are attended by the Contract Monitoring Officer, the Corporate Parenting Manager, and the Head of Service (with lead responsibility for Leaving Care, Semi-Independent Living and Unaccompanied Children).

Data contained within this report demonstrates performance from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.

**1 - Accessing and Maintaining Suitable, Safe Accommodation**

**Accessing and maintaining suitable, safe accommodation**

Percentage of Care Leavers Living in Suitable Accommodation – Target 90%

Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023
248	248	248	218	213	296
96%	96%	96%	92%	91%	93%

Lincolnshire County Council, alongside a number of housing providers, offer a range of accommodation for Care Experienced Young People. As a service we aim to share information in relation to housing options available both within the County but also where the young person is currently residing. Within the service, we have a specialist post holder who specialises in housing provision for care experienced young people, and we also have the Leaving Care Workers and Team Managers who have knowledge on services available to young people. The specialist worker has worked alongside care experienced young people and their workers providing advice and support that has secured appropriate accommodation outcomes. For example, a young male who had been evicted from previous accommodations required a more specialist intervention to secure a tenancy in a supported and staffed environment. The specialist worker was able to stand alongside the young person providing practical assistance to support him to plan and prepare for his next move. The young person remains in their accommodation; we are pleased to report that this is the longest period of stability that he has experienced.

Barnardo’s and the Local Authority monitor and review all young people in ‘unsuitable’ accommodation monthly, via contract monitoring reports to ensure appropriate plans are in place and support is offered in a timely way.

There are a number of housing options available for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People who are open to Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service. Housing packages are tailored to meet individual needs (it is never a one size fits all approach). The Leaving Care Service has excellent links with a number of housing providers who work with Lincolnshire young people.

We have developed some good links with District Council Housing Teams and the Corporate Parenting Manager and Head of Service continue to offer the District Councils advice, support and assistance in relation to developing the housing offer for Care Experienced Young People. We have welcomed the joint work we have been able to undertake with the NEST Team (Care Leavers Homeless Prevention Service).

### **Barnardo's Supported Lodgings Scheme**

Members may be aware that new legislation came into effect this year that saw the regulation of supported housing options for young people aged 16 and 17 years of age. Any housing provider wishing to offer supported housing options (including Supported Lodgings) had to apply for registration with Ofsted and nominate a Registered Manager for the service.

Lincolnshire Leaving Care Supported Lodgings Service is now regulated to offer supported lodgings placements for 16- and 17-year-olds and will continue to offer placements for 18–21-year-olds.

This scheme gives young people the opportunity to develop independence skills whilst living in a home environment. Advice and guidance are offered in relation to cooking, undertaking household tasks and maintaining education / employment. We have had some excellent outcomes for several young people who have accessed this scheme. An example of service impact relates to a young person whose trauma responses were in danger of being criminalised as he was frequently arrested. He was supported by his Leaving Care Worker and the Specialist Wellbeing Worker to move into a Supported Lodging Placement for seven months, whereby he received assistance from the provider in a nurturing environment that prepared him further for independent living. The Specialist Wellbeing Worker has worked with the young person by supporting him into the workplace alongside introducing him to other specialist workers within the service, such as the Accommodation Worker. He is currently living and maintaining a tenancy in his own one-bedroomed property and has recently been promoted to Crew Trainer working for McDonald's.

Young people live with providers as lodgers – paying rent and a contribution towards utilities and food. Children's Services pay a support fee dependent upon the level of support required; housing benefit /universal credit is also claimed (where appropriate). The scheme caters for Care Experienced Young People - Looked after Children over 16- and 16/17-year-olds who are homeless and require an 'assessment bed'.

Within Lincolnshire (in October 2023), we were working with 12 providers who could offer 21 lodgings across the County (some full-time and some respite). The team provide vacancy information over to the Local Authority monthly but have officers available to deal with referral enquiries five days / week.

Barnardo's has continued to run its supported lodgings panel throughout 2023 and have representatives both from the Local Authority and Barnardo's. This panel not only reviews current providers but also considers new applications.

## **New Initiatives in relation to housing options for Lincolnshire Care Leavers:**

Lincolnshire County Council and a number of partners have been successful in applying for Government Funding through the 'Staying Close Bid'. Within Barnardo's, this sees the introduction of a new Team Manager and two new practitioners. These new post holders will work alongside the Local Authority Social Workers and Leaving Care Workers to either assist Lincolnshire Young People to seek housing options within the County or help ensure their Leaving Care offer is as good as they would receive if living within the County. Whilst this funding stream is in its infancy, we have similar posts in the service that have benefitted the young people we are working with.

## **2 - Accessing and Maintaining Appropriate Education, Employment and Training Opportunities**

Open Allocated Cases – Target 65 %

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
109	109	109	134	129	131
53%	53%	53%	57%	38%	56%

Within the service, we continue to target Lincolnshire Care Leavers who are not accessing education, employment or training (EET) opportunities. In March 2022, Barnardo's commissioned some work whereby we have reviewed all Care Experienced Young People who fit into this category and explored alongside the allocated Leaving Care Worker the reasons why this cohort are finding it difficult to access opportunities. Data was presented at the Corporate Parenting Panel meeting in July 2022.

We have a team of practitioners who work alongside the Leaving Care Workers where they target young people not accessing education, employment or training opportunities. The team structure is noted below:

- 1 FTE EET Coordinator
- 2 x 0.5 EET Workers
- 1 FTE Mental Health Specialist – funded through health partnerships / staying close funding
- 1 0.8 Well-Being Worker

It is unfortunate that since April 2023 there has been a full-time vacancy in the Mental Health Specialist post and whilst interviews took place in October 2023, the new team member will not be starting their induction until January 2024. We are hoping with the

addition of the two new Staying Close / Staying Connected Workers, the Well-Being Worker and the Mental Health Specialist, we can offer an extended wellbeing service that will target those young people in need of some additional intensive support.

Our Well-Being Worker has been involved in providing Wellness Recovery Action Plan [WRAP] training to care experienced young people. It is hoped that this programme will equip care experienced young people to devise a recovery plan that they can use when experiencing heightened anxiety because of their individual lived experiences of childhood trauma.

Our Project Worker 1 [PW1] post holder has been working with care experienced young people that have received warnings from their colleges, meaning that their courses have been placed at risk. For example, a young person received a warning related to time management and was informed that without improvement, they would be suspended from their course. The PW1 was able to identify that the young person was not confident when accessing public transport and was able to accompany them to catch the college buses, working with them over a few days to build their confidence.

Lincolnshire also benefits from having the Virtual School; however, the majority of Care Experienced Young People can only access the support of this service up to the age of 18. Over the next six months we are going to be reviewing how we can work together with the resources we have to support care experienced young people with their education, employment and training aspirations. The Virtual school is advertising for a post to support with job coach skills for young people.

*“Care Leavers in England are over ten times more likely than their peers to be not in education, employment, or training (NEET) in their 21<sup>st</sup> year, major new analysis shows. Overall, nearly one-third were NEET compared to just 2.4 per cent in the general population and 13 per cent of 21-year-olds.”*

The study was funded by the [Nuffield Foundation](#) and based at the Rees Centre at the University of Oxford. It was led by Dr Neil Harrison (now at the University of Exeter) and Jo Dixon (University of York).

[Care leavers' transition into the labour market in England - Nuffield Foundation](#)

Barnardo's has a common mission of **'Increasing Aspiration and Outcomes for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People'**. Employment and Training continues to be a challenging concept not only in Lincolnshire but nationally. We have developed some excellent partnerships with DWP and Job Centres to help target our Care Experienced Young People. Within Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service, we have developed a new programme called 'Success in Six' that helps young people who are wishing to seek employment (rather than expand their educational knowledge). We also offered some tailored individual sessions to help young people prepare for the workplace; this traditionally was delivered for some groups of young people but is now more tailored to the individual. These courses are now run more frequently, to small groups of up to two care experienced young people at a time; these are run at a venue in their local community. We have found that this has encouraged and enabled greater participation.

We have embarked on a review of the services we offer to our Care Experienced Young People in relation to our Education, Employment and Training offer. We want to review the education, employment and training pathway from 16-25 years of age and consider what gaps we have and how to improve partnership working for Care Experienced Young People so to improve outcomes and aspirations. We have noted a significant difference in the emotional wellbeing of Children in Care as they transition into our service and we already recognise that work has to be more targeted and individualised to encourage some young people to be 'work ready'. We are seeing significant personal achievements in some of our young people after they have benefited from individual work from specialist well-being workers. For example, a care experienced young person frequently attempted to end her life resulting in regular presentation at hospital for emergency treatment. She was referred to our Specialist Wellbeing Worker by her Leaving Care Worker and during the last six months, has been supported to complete the Wellness Recovery Action Plan programme and self-confidence training. As a result of this, she has reported a huge improvement in her emotional wellbeing and has expressed her desire to gain employment. She has been supported by the Education, Employment, and Training Team to apply for her dream job working as cabin crew with a well-known airline and is waiting to hear whether her application has been successful.

A further example relates to a young person who reported that she was unable to attend work preparation training owing to the sizes of the groups run. As mentioned earlier within this report, the Education, Employment and Training Team has adjusted the delivery of this course and are now providing locality based, targeted training. The impact of this training resulted in the young person successfully gaining employment in a hospitality setting and as such, they are now working.

### **3 – Care Leavers Cohort**

Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service is working with approximately 470 young people. Over the last financial year, alongside the Local Authority, we have seen a significant increase in the number of Unaccompanied Young People allocated to Lincolnshire because of the 'National Transfer Scheme'. Working with young people who are unaccompanied and seeking asylum requires staff to have a good working knowledge of the Leaving Care Act and Immigration processes and procedures, adding an additional complexity to the role.

Current figures indicate:

- There are 90 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking young people aged 18 – 25 years of age in the service, all of whom have a named Leaving Care Worker.
- There are an additional 72 Unaccompanied young people aged 16 and 17 who have an allocated Social Worker within the Local Authority and a named Leaving Care Worker.
- 24 young people are still awaiting decisions on their Immigration Status:

- 13 in the appeal process.
  - 10 awaiting a decision.
  - 1 trying to establish whether a decision has been made and served.
- 18 is the average age that a young person is receiving their asylum decisions.

**Where Do Our Care Leavers Live? (figures correct as of December 2023)**

CEYP AGE	DISTRICT	COUNTY	NUMBER OF YP	
16	Out of County	Cambridgeshire (MAJORITY PETERBOROUGH)	6	
		Nottinghamshire	2	
		Leicestershire	1	TOTAL 9
17	East Lindsey	Lincolnshire	1	
	Out of County	Cambridgeshire (MAJORITY PETERBOROUGH)	8	
		Nottinghamshire	3	TOTAL 12
18	Boston	Lincolnshire	11	
	East Lindsey	Lincolnshire	9	
	Lincoln	Lincolnshire	18	
	North Kesteven	Lincolnshire	7	
	South Holland	Lincolnshire	8	
	South Kesteven	Lincolnshire	7	
	West Lindsey	Lincolnshire	6	
	Out of County	Cambridgeshire (MAJORITY PETERBOROUGH)	26	
		Derbyshire	3	
		Greater London	1	
		Leicestershire	4	
		North East Lincolnshire	3	
		Northamptonshire	1	
		Nottinghamshire	8	
		Scotland	1	
	South Yorkshire	1		
	Sussex	1		
	Wales	1		

		Warwickshire	1	
		West Midlands	2	
		West Yorkshire	4	
		Wiltshire	1	TOTAL 132
19	Boston	Lincolnshire	5	
	East Lindsey	Lincolnshire	11	
	Lincoln	Lincolnshire	33	
	North Kesteven	Lincolnshire	4	
	South Holland	Lincolnshire	3	
	South Kesteven	Lincolnshire	5	
	West Lindsey	Lincolnshire	6	
	Out of County	Cambridgeshire (MAJORITY PETERBOROUGH)	15	
		Derbyshire	1	
		Greater London	1	
		Humberside	2	
		Leicestershire	2	
		North East Lincolnshire	5	
		Nottinghamshire	2	
		South Yorkshire	2	
		West Midlands	1	
		West Yorkshire	1	TOTAL 99
20	Boston	Lincolnshire	7	
	East Lindsey	Lincolnshire	7	
	Lincoln	Lincolnshire	18	
	North Kesteven	Lincolnshire	1	
	South Holland	Lincolnshire	3	
	South Kesteven	Lincolnshire	9	
	West Lindsey	Lincolnshire	3	
	Out of County	Cambridgeshire (MAJORITY PETERBOROUGH)	9	
		Greater Manchester	1	
		Greater London	1	
		Hampshire	1	
		Kent	1	
		Leicestershire	2	
		North Yorkshire	1	
		Northamptonshire	1	



		South Yorkshire	2	
		Tyne and Wear	1	
		Wales	1	
		West Midlands	1	
		Wiltshire	1	TOTAL 71
21	Boston	Lincolnshire	2	
	East Lindsey	Lincolnshire	4	
	Lincoln	Lincolnshire	9	
	North Kesteven	Lincolnshire	2	
	South Holland	Lincolnshire	3	
	South Kesteven	Lincolnshire	3	
	West Lindsey	Lincolnshire	2	
	Out of County	Cambridgeshire (MAJORITY PETERBOROUGH)	8	
		Derbyshire	1	
		Devon	1	
		Greater Manchester	3	
		Greater London	4	
		Northamptonshire	2	
		Nottinghamshire	3	
		Scotland	1	
		South Yorkshire	1	
		Tyne and Wear	1	
		Wales	1	
		West Midlands	1	
		Wiltshire	1	TOTAL 53
22	Boston	Lincolnshire	2	
	East Lindsey	Lincolnshire	7	
	Lincoln	Lincolnshire	6	
	North Kesteven	Lincolnshire	3	
	South Holland	Lincolnshire	1	
	South Kesteven	Lincolnshire	4	
	Out of County	Cambridgeshire (MAJORITY PETERBOROUGH)	5	
		Buckinghamshire	1	
		Greater Manchester	1	
		Greater London	2	
		Leicestershire	1	

		North East Lincolnshire	1	
		North Yorkshire	1	
		Nottinghamshire	5	
		Sussex	1	
		Wiltshire	3	TOTAL 45
23	East Lindsey	Lincolnshire	2	
	Lincoln	Lincolnshire	3	
	North Kesteven	Lincolnshire	1	
	South Kesteven	Lincolnshire	2	
	West Lindsey	Lincolnshire	3	
	Out of County	Cambridgeshire (MAJORITY PETERBOROUGH)	4	
		Avon and Somerset	1	
		Belgium	1	
		Devon	1	
		Essex	1	
		Greater Manchester	2	
		Greater London	1	
		NE LINCS	1	
		North Yorkshire	1	
		Nottinghamshire	2	
		Tyne and Wear	1	
		West Midlands	1	TOTAL 27
24	Boston	Lincolnshire	1	
	East Lindsey	Lincolnshire	1	
	Lincoln	Lincolnshire	3	
	South Holland	Lincolnshire	2	
	South Kesteven	Lincolnshire	2	
	West Lindsey	Lincolnshire	4	
	Out of County	Cambridgeshire (MAJORITY PETERBOROUGH)	1	
		Avon and Somerset	1	
		Buckinghamshire	1	
		Greater Manchester	2	
		Greater London	2	
		South Yorkshire	1	
		Wales	1	
		West Midlands	1	

		West Yorkshire	1	TOTAL 24
25	Boston	Lincolnshire	1	
	Lincoln	Lincolnshire	1	
	North Kesteven	Lincolnshire	1	
	West Lindsey	Lincolnshire	1	
	Out of County	Cambridgeshire (MAJORITY PETERBOROUGH)	1	
		Nottinghamshire	1	
		South Yorkshire	1	TOTAL 7
Unknown Address, Confidential Address				TOTAL 25

#### **4 – Participation/ Fundraising**

Barardo's participation offer is good. We not only offer the support and guidance of an allocated Leaving Care Worker but we also have a dedicated Participation Worker who has developed a number of forums and opportunities for Lincolnshire Care Experienced Young People to participate in. Below is a list of some of the events Lincolnshire Care Experienced Young People have taken part in over the reporting period.

- The Big Conversation
- FAB Awards
- LGBTQ Group
- Cooking Lessons (Louth, Lincoln and Peterborough)
- These cookery lessons focussed on providing cheap, nutritional, and easy to cook recipes. Attendees were able to take home the food that they had made and in some instances, through local partnerships such as the Community Initiative in Louth, they were provided with cookery equipment such as slow-cooker that would help them to manage and maintain their independence.
- Triangles Project (a group of Care Leavers have worked with Barnardo's to create a presentation / event for representatives from the Leaving Care Service, Barnardo's, and Local Authority Commissioners).
- Football Sessions at Peterborough.
- Bank of England Event where a number of Lincolnshire Care Experienced Young People attended a round table event at the Bank Of England and met the Governor of the Bank of England.
- Consultation of transformation workstreams.

We have secured some additional funds and gifts for Lincolnshire Care Leavers, these have included:

- Mobile phones courtesy of Vodafone and Tesco.
- Food Donations from Tesco Lincoln – we created a great partnership with Tesco’s; we had regular food donations that were distributed across the County. Whilst this partnership has now ceased, we have secured hampers for Christmas distribution.
- We were able to distribute additional Christmas Gifts to all Care Leavers who are parents (and their children).
- We have continued to expand our community presence in Louth that has led to food and cash donations. Barnardo’s has also been nominated as Eastgate Union’s Chosen Charity for the year. This again will lead to cash donations over a 12-month period. Other donations from our Louth Community have included: £1700 from Eastgate Union Church; £300 from a fundraiser quiz; £2000 from Platform Housing; £600 from the Louisa Dickinson Trust; approximately £20 / month from church donations; and regular food donations from Lighthouse and Trinity.
- The Orthodox Church in Lincoln continues to be an avid supporter of Barnardo’s and has donated money and gifts for distribution.
- We have had cash donations from individual sponsors and St Hughs Catholic Primary School.
- Hand knitted goods for Care Experienced Young People who have had babies.
- Barnardo’s Young People’s Grant Team gave a 21+ Care Experienced Young Person a grant for £5,700 to pay for her post graduate degree.

## **5 – Mental Health and Wellbeing**

### **Trauma informed practice**

The whole Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service has completed a trauma informed training by Beacon House to support staff to:

- Gain confidence in their ability to identify and understand how repeated trauma affects children and adolescents.
- Understand the breadth and complexity of Developmental Trauma and associated difficulties.
- Develop their empathic understanding through ideas for experiential learning.
- Understand the principles of a trauma-informed approach to supporting traumatised children and adolescents.
- Learn a range of practical strategies to help regulate distressed children.

### **WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan)**

To allow the staff to give their best to care experienced young people, Barnardo’s believes we need to create an open culture and culture of wellness – the roles that leaving care workers complete can be complex and trauma reducing or a stressor or triggering for staff and impact their own wellbeing. All members of the Leaving Care Service and the Head of Service for Leaving Care have completed their level one WRAP programme, and some

have gone on to complete level two WRAP – so within the service we can now deliver WRAP programmes to Care Experienced Young People.

### **Specialist Post Holders**

As mentioned earlier in this report, as a service we have recognised the need for a new type of worker in the service who, alongside the allocated Leaving Care Worker, can offer some intensive support to improve mental and physical wellbeing. Leaving Care Workers have a duty to visit Care Experienced Young People once every eight weeks, which for some Lincolnshire Care Leavers does not provide the type of support required to help them achieve their goals and ambitions.

Within Lincolnshire Leaving Care, we currently have the Specialist Mental Health Worker, the Wellbeing Worker and the new Staying Close, Staying Connected Workers who are all able to undertake more complex interventions with young people.

### **6 - Care Leavers Transformation Board**

Following the Ofsted Inspection in April 2023, some recommendations were made in relation to the offer made to Lincolnshire Care Experienced Young People. The Local Authority and Barnardo's have been working together to establish a Care Leavers Transformation Board. The Board has created a number of work streams to hopefully improve the Leaving Care Offer and experience for Lincolnshire Care Experienced Young People.

The Transformation Board is working on the following practice areas:

- Leaving Care Offer
- 21+ Offer
- Transition
- Pathway Plan Improvement
- Training
- Records
- Quality Assurance Processes
- Management Oversight

April to October saw the establishment of the workstreams and November onwards was when the developmental work progressed.

The Leaving Care Service is already seeing a closer alignment to teams based within the Local Authority including the Quality Assurance Team. A named Practice Advisor has been linked to the service and Barnardo's is looking to strengthen working arrangements with the new Corporate Parenting Manager who has management oversight of all groups within the transformation project.

## **7 - Conclusion and New Opportunities**

This report reflects the progress and achievements during a six-month period for the Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service.

The current staffing establishment (as of the 30 September 2023) is noted below:

- 1 Programme Manager
- Children's Services Manager (new post - post holder started work 4 December 2023)
- 4.2 FTE Team Managers
- 1 Senior Administrator
- 6.1 FTE Administrators
- 1 Project Worker 3 – Specialising in Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers
- 1 Project Worker 3 – Specialising in Education, Employment and Training opportunities
- 1 Project Worker 2 – Specialising in Participation
- 1 Specialist Accommodation Worker
- 2 Supported Lodgings Workers
- 2 Education, Employment and Training Specialist Workers
- 1 Well-Being Worker
- 1 Specialist Mental Health Worker
- 26.6 FTE Leaving Care Workers

Barnardo's has been working with the Local Authority prior to this review period and more recently since the Ofsted Inspection reviewing the staffing establishment in the service and looking to develop a stronger offer for Care Experienced Young People aged 21+. Over the summer period and into October, the management capacity was temporarily reduced, however as we move forward into winter, we can see a stable and expanded management team. The Local Authority have enabled the service to increase the senior management capacity by adding a Children's Services Manager and we have also benefitted from a new Team Manager who will oversee the Staying Close / Staying Connected initiatives.

This report was written by Lisa Adams, Programme Manager - Barnardo's who can be contacted on [lisa.adams@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:lisa.adams@barnardos.org.uk) or 01522 575 955