

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

MONDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2024
6.00 PM

Bourges/Viersen Room - Town Hall

AGENDA

Page No

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

At this point Members must declare whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, or other interest, in any of the items on the agenda, unless it is already entered in the register of members' interests or is a "pending notification " that has been disclosed to the Head of Legal Services

3. Minutes of the Meetings Held on 22 November 2023	3 - 10
4. Update from Foster Carers	11 - 14
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6. Annual Corporate Parenting Report 2022-2023	19 - 88
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9. Members Issues	

Members that are not part of the core CPC membership, but hold Corporate Parenting responsibilities, are invited to raise any issues they have with regard to the services provided to Children in Care.



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Committee Members:

Councillors: Allen, Bi (Vice Chairman), Bisby, Bond, Cole, Howard, Jones (Chairman), G Nawaz, D Over, Sainsbury and Seager

Substitutes: Councillors: Barkham, G Casey, Hemraj and S Lane

Further information about this meeting can be obtained from Karen Dunleavy on telephone 01733 452233 or by email – karen.dunleavy@peterborough.gov.uk

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING (FORMAL)
HELD AT 6:00PM, ON
WEDNESDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2023
BOURGES/MIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillor Jones, (Chairman (Chair), Councillor Bi (Vice Chairman) Councillors Jackie Allen, Casey, Cole, Howard, Sainsbury, Nawaz, S Bond and Seager

Other Councillors in attendance: Cllr Bisby, Cabinet Member for Children Services

Officers Present: Gary Jones, Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support
Myra O'Farrell, Head of Corporate Parenting
Shalina Chandoo, Quality Assurance Lead, Participation and Independent Visiting
Zoe Lattimer, Head Teacher, Peterborough Virtual School
Katie Liddle, Designated Nurse for Children in Care
Dr Aslam, Consultant Paediatrician, Designated Doctor for Looked After Children
Sue King, Fostering Service Manager
Karen S Dunleavy, Democratic Services Officer

Also Present: Glen Crossland, Foster Carer Committee Representative

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Over and Lane. Councillor Casey was in attendance for Cllr Over as substitute.

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

17. MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 JULY 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

18. UPDATE FROM FOSTER CARERS COMMITTEE

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to updates from the Foster Carer Committee.

The purpose of the report was to update the Committee about the activities of the Foster Carer Committee (FCC). Members were also updated about the decoupling process for

Foster Carer Services, which was shared with Cambridgeshire County Council. In addition, Members were updated about the ongoing transport issues for foster families.

The Foster Carer Representative introduced the report and asked Members to note the contents and raise any queries they had with representatives.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- A workshop on 6 December 2023, had been organised to explore the transport issues and review the arrangements.
- The Foster Carer Committee information pack was being finalised and would be shared with Members when completed.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the contents of the report.

AGREED ACTION

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the contents of the report, it was also agreed that the Foster Carer Committee would share the foster carer information pack with the Committee once completed.

19. CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL (CICC) PARTICIPATION REPORT

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the work of the Children in Care Council and the outcome of their discussions at meetings and events organised.

The purpose of the report was to update Members on the Children in Care Council activities and participation services. Members were informed about the various projects and events that were undertaken and a recent award won for the Every Word Matters project.

The Quality Assurance Lead for Participation and Independent Visiting introduced the report and asked Members to note the contents and raise any queries they had with Officers.

The Quality Assurance Lead introduced the report and asked Members to note the update and raise any queries they had with officers.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members commented on the work undertaken in conjunction with the Anglian Ruskin University and Care Leaders and advised that further opportunities could be explored with other organisations for public speaking to build confidence.
- Care Leaders had been working on assessments for young Social Worker students, training and attending lectures at ARU.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the contents.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and agreed that:

1. The Participation Team would inform the Leaving Care Service that there could be work experience opportunities available through Council departments and partners to support their public speaking project.

20. PETERBOROUGH VIRTUAL SCHOOL

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the Peterborough Virtual School Annual Report.

The purpose of this report was to provide Members with additional or background information on Exam results, the position for Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and the position for Children in Care with Special Education Needs

Head Teacher, Peterborough Virtual School introduced the report and asked Members to appoint to the relevant Champion positions.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- There were pupils in Key stage 3 and 4 with larger numbers compared to younger children and this was because there were more teenagers coming into care later in life. In addition, Members were advised that the situation was a nationwide issue.
- Members felt that it would be helpful to look at the destinations of young people in education moving into further education, such as moving to university and to track their journey. Members were advised that two young people had moved onto university and others, to a level three qualification. Furthermore, there was an issue in retrieving this type of data and whether it could be shared, but work could be undertaken to explore ways to track older students' education journey.
- Members were also advised about the decrease in figures from 27 to 6 for year 13 students that had withdrawn from further education, which was considered a successful project undertaken in conjunction with Stamford and Peterborough College.
- Teachers would be made aware of potential education difficulties children and young people in care were struggling with and this varied from school to school. Furthermore, most of the challenges faced by children in care were in relation to social and emotional mental health, which were masked by an underlying cognition and learning difficulties. The VS would need to work out what these issues were.
- Support for foster carers with children suffering from emotional mental health (SEMH) needs, were being addressed by provision of an eLearning suite, which intended to help foster carers support their children with homework.
- There was an opportunity for foster families to link in with Family Voice, a parent carer group, in relation to Special Educational Needs (SEND) support.
- The model of VS was changing to focus on specific needs to track children through their education and SEND needs. There was also an opportunity for schools to use the Pupil Premium (PiP) Plus grant to provide support for CiC with SEND needs and this option was being explored.
- It would be unusual to identify SEND needs in young babies and children in care unless there was an obvious severe disability. In addition, there would be very low numbers of Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) issued for very young babies and children in care, because language gaps would not be identified until the child had reached the age of eight.
- Children with Alcohol Fetal Syndrome (FASD) was a hidden disability and would not automatically qualify for an instant (EHCP).

- The reference in 4.3.1 of the report, three attend alternative provision, was in relation to children where an educated provision could not be met by a child's school and other sources such as the Barns Academy, who would meet their alternative needs.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to the appointment of Corporate Parenting Committee Champions and roles.

ACTION AGREED

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to the

- Head Teacher, Peterborough Virtual Schools would explore whether the education journey for young people in care could be tracked and included in virtual school future reports.

21. CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE MEETING START TIME 2024-2025

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the Corporate Parenting Committee Meeting Start Time 2024-2025.

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and asked Members to note agree the start time for final approval at Full Council.

AGREED ACTION

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the contents and agreed the Start time as follows: formal to start at 6pm and informal to start at 5.30pm for final approval at Full Council.

22. PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to Performance Data for Children in Care and Care Leavers.

The purpose of the report was to update Members in respect of the numbers of children and young people being looked after by the Council as of September 2023 and to provide a breakdown of the types of homes in which they were living in. The report also provided information about the age, gender and ethnicity of those children and young people. Members attention was drawn to several issues, which included:

- Home stability, where children had experienced three or more homes in a 12-month period, which was higher than expected. There would be some analysis undertaken by officers to explore the reasons why this was happening.
- Health assessments which were causing a concern as there were unreasonable delays in conducting these for children and these issues had been escalated to the Cambridgeshire Community Services, with immediate mitigation being requested to resolve the issues.
- There had been further work undertaken on the provision of dental assessments being conducted on time and Partners were being consulted. Work was also underway to explore the reasons why children go missing.

The Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support introduced the report and asked Members to note the contents and raise any queries with Officers.

The Corporate Parenting Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- The Health Service Standards figures collected in the performance report had not captured how many children had not completed an assessment, however there could be some further analysis to undertake in this area.
- Of the 412 children in care, 27% were in assisted living in residential care, which related to an older cohort and only a few younger children. Officers were undertaking a review of the foster carer recruitment and transformation of the fostering provisions as part of the Cambridgeshire County Council decoupling exercise. There could be further work undertaken to drill down into age groups and how long they had been in residential care to also include their journey, compared year on year.
- There was a good interface with commissioning for homes for children in care and any concerns raised would be investigated.
- It appeared following a recent visit by a Member to the Welland Family Supervised Contact Centre, there were capacity issues which needed to be captured in the scorecard and the issues addressed. Members were advised that the types of interaction and capacity constraints could be included in the performance report going forward. The report could be provided quarterly to align the work being undertaken by the Young Inspectors.
- Members asked for consideration to be given to ensure that appointments to officer posts for foster carer recruitment included skills for recruitment to support the diverse fostering communities.
- There could be a whole range of reasons why the figures for the timeliness of adoption were concerning, for example, if an adoption was being contested or child of a certain age proved difficult to find a home for.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the content and agreed a number of alternations to the performance scorecard.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report and **AGREED** that the Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support and Head of Corporate Parenting would include the following in future scorecards:

1. Health Service Standards figures data in the performance report to capture how many children had not completed an assessment.
2. A drill down into age groups for children in assisted living residential care to show how long they had been in this type of care and their journey, compared year on year.
3. To undertake a piece of work to provide quarterly figures in the performance report in relation to the types of interaction and capacity constraints being experienced by the Welland Family Supervised Contact Centre, to align the work being undertaken by the Young Inspectors.
4. To include further detail in the scorecard around the delay in the timeliness of adoption figures.

23. HEALTH REPORT

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report on the performance of the health needs of children and young people in care.

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with update on health and dental services for children in care (CiC). The report also provided an overview of the Integrated Care Board's (ICB) activities to ensure robust monitoring and quality assurance systems were in place to meet the health needs of Peterborough's Children in Care, which included those with a disability.

An update was also provided on the dental provision for young and children in care, which was being provided by Bushfield dental practice. The practice had also assessed a lot of children in care from other areas outside of Peterborough. In addition, Members were advised that recent national data for children in care between 13 to 17 years of age, had shown there was a lack of treatment undertaken, due to them making their own choices, and the issue would increase for ages 17 to 24. Members were asked to note that work was being undertaken by the Authority, to encourage young people to attend regular dental checks.

Designated Nurse for Children in Care introduced the report and asked Members to note the contents and raise any queries with officers.

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note the contents.

AGREED ACTION

The Corporate Parenting Committee, noted the report and agreed that the Designated Nurse for Children in Care would:

- Liaise with the Chairman, to produce a letter of thanks to Bushfield Dental Practice for providing a volunteer service to children and young people in care.
- Provide Members with the latest figures on dental treatment take up from the teenage cohort 13 to 17 and 17 to 24.

24. MEMBERS ISSUES

Members that were not part of the core CPC membership, but held corporate parenting responsibilities, were invited raise issues they had in relation to the services provided to Children in Care (CiC).

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered and **RESOLVED** that there were no issues to raise.

25. WORK PROGRAMME

The Corporate Parenting Committee received a report in relation to the work programme for 2023/2024.

The purpose of the report was to enable the Committee to discuss its objectives and priorities for 2023/24 and highlight any further areas for consideration.

The Chairman introduced the report and asked Members to highlight any areas of work they wished to be included in the work programme. Members were also asked to consider moving the meeting from 6 March 2024 to 26 February 2024.

AGREED ACTION

The Corporate Parenting Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** (Unanimously) to note and agreed to move the 6 March 2024, to 26 February 2024.

CHAIRMAN
END 7:14 PM

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CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 4
26 FEBRUARY 2024	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	John Gregg, Executive Director for Childrens Services	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Ray Bisby, Cabinet Member for Children's Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Gary Jones, Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support	Tel: 01733 863624 or 07484076824

FOSTER CARER COMMITTEE REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Gary Jones, Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support	Deadline date: N/A
It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes the content of this Corporate Parenting Committee Report which updates the committee of service changes further to the decoupling between Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. 2. Raises any queries they have with the lead officers. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to the Corporate Parenting Committee as a regular work programme item from the Peterborough City Council Fostering Service.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Corporate Parenting Committee of service changes further to the decoupling between Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 2.2 This report is for the Corporate Parenting Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.4.4.6. This report is to support the Corporate Parenting Committee to monitor the quality of care delivered by the City Council and review the performance of outcomes for children and young people in care, (d) Hold meetings with children and young people in care, frontline staff and Foster Carers to inform the committee of the standards of care and improvement outcomes for looked after children.
- 2.3 *How does this report link to the Children in care Promise?*

This report links to the Children in Care Promise, pledge 5, 6, 9 - We will work to keep you in a supportive and caring environment where you feel safe and happy. We will support you to maintain a healthy lifestyle and help look after your physical and mental health. We will work with you to give you all the help and support you need to make a success of moving on from care to adult life.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 This report has been prepared to update the Corporate Parenting Committee on participation activity and collaborative working with Peterborough Foster Carers, and to provide an overview of relevant service development activity.

4.2. **Overview of fostering service and priorities post decoupling.**

The ‘decoupling’ of the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire fostering service officially took place on 1.11.23, following which the line management of staff was transferred and was completed by 8.1.24. The training and recruitment functions will remain shared until 31.3.24 as there were existing joint commitments which it was felt would prove detrimental to cease before this.

The decoupling structure identified additional posts, all of which have been progressed through the recruitment processes. Agency staff have been recruited to the assessment posts to ensure that there are no delays in the recruitment of potential foster carers or connected carers. Permanent staff have been appointed to the following posts: business support officer and 2 recruitment social workers. Interviews are planned for the remaining posts in the coming weeks.

There are several projects which have been initiated to improve the recruitment of a wider range of foster carers and to ensure that children are living in better matched local foster homes where possible. This includes the ‘Step-Down’ scheme where children move from residential homes to foster homes, in a planned way.

Additionally, Peterborough is one of 11 councils in the Eastern Region who have come together to build a regional hub. We’ll keep our local fostering recruitment team, but the hub will enhance the work we already do. The Regional Recruitment Hub is due to go live on 1 April 2024 and we are very excited about the potential foster carers it may help us attract.

As part of the same government initiative, funding has been made available for a ‘Mockingbird’ hub. A hub includes a central hub foster home, and 5 – 9 other foster homes which form a ‘constellation.’ The principle behind the scheme is to create a supportive network along the lines of a family group.

Further information about Mockingbird can be found here: [The Mockingbird programme | The Fostering Network](#)

4.3 **Fostering Working Groups – Progress Briefing**

The Fostering Service has continued to collaborate with the Peterborough Foster Carer Committee (PFCC) to ensure their participation in the development of the service.

The Peterborough Foster Carer Committee (PFCC) continues to meet bi-monthly. The AGM was held on 4.12.23 when the elected members stood down from their positions and were thanked for their contributions for the previous year. The election of new officers was held, and new appointments were made as follows: Mandy Nicholson, Chair of the Peterborough Foster Carer Community, Glen Crossland, Vice Chair, Andrea Hughes, Secretary & Events Coordinator and Lisa Callow as Treasurer. Two new positions were created for Mental Health and Wellbeing, to which Cecilia Hammond and Melanie Cato have been appointed. Additionally, the Virtual School Board representative was agreed as Donna Whybrow and the Sharefound Ambassador was agreed as Sue Stepney.

Our four foster carer Peterborough Recruitment Ambassadors have been very busy supporting the foster recruitment activity which has contributed to a steady number of enquiries and applications during the winter.

At the 16.01.24 committee meeting, representatives from the fostering service were present, who provided an update on the decoupling and transformation plans.

A number of issues were discussed, and solutions identified. Foster carers have experienced transport issues such as not knowing how to make contact with taxi firms out of hours, lending car seats to taxis and booked taxis not turning up. Consequently, the Team Manager from the supervision and support team contacted the Passenger Transport Strategy and Policy Manager to find a solution to the queries. As a result, a system has been set up whereby transport issues can be input into a shared spreadsheet by the committee members and the transport team will respond. They have also shared the best contact details which have been passed on to the committee.

Communication was raised in respect of the arrangements over the Christmas shutdown and around the situation when the finance system had a glitch resulting in late payments to carers. Whilst individual carers spoke to staff who were able to ensure emergency payments were made when needed, it was felt that a general message to foster carers would have been helpful. As a result, regular meetings between Fostering Service Managers and the committee chair and secretary will be reinstated to ensure better communication and a clearer feedback loop. Contact details of all managers have been included in the most recent foster carer newsletter from the service.

It has been a busy period for activities over the last few months. The Children's Christmas party was held on 17.12.24 with a disco, face painting, food and Santa's visit. Foster Carers were pleased to see members of the Corporate Parenting Committee at the party. Additionally, the annual pantomime visit took place on two dates between Christmas and New Year.

Tickets for Peterborough United home games were secured by the committee for the end of last season and have continued for this season. All interested foster carers are included in a ballot for the three family tickets for each home game, to make it a fair system.

Three mascot opportunities were also taken up which were again decided on by ballot. The committee was offered a corporate day at the start of season where three families won the opportunity to attend a meal, tour the stadium and meet the players. The committee is grateful for the links with PUFC and the opportunities this presents to them.

There will be a sub-committee meeting to decide on activities to take place in the next couple of months. Suggestions include cinema tickets, Hamerton zoo, Tallington lakes and Inflatabounce. The committee is keen to ensure that the activities can include as many children and family members as possible. This decision will be made shortly.

The male support group had its first face to face meeting on 29.01.2024 having met virtually for some months. This was very positive, and it is hoped it will take place on a regular basis. It was an opportunity to make relationships and chat in an informal setting.

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1 Consider how the recommendation links to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

In terms of environment impact, this is neutral since we are not proposing any change, but rather informing of PFCC work alongside the fostering service. Overall, the report does not identify any new projects or proposals but is an update on Foster Carer activity as part of the regular work pattern of the Corporate Parenting Committee therefore the carbon impact will remain neutral.

The PFCC continues to ensure that the lives of children and young people are at the centre of its work, through its continued support of the fostering community in Peterborough.

With regard to the 'Prevention, Independence and Resilience', the PFCC continues to promote fostering through meetings and social media platforms, and work alongside the service to ensure that the educational, social, emotional and health needs of children and young people are met to a high standard. This enables us to support the 'Sustainable future' our young children and young people in the city.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 None

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

7.1 N/A

8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

8.1 None: this is an updated from the Fostering Committee only

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None to be considered

10. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

10.1 None

Legal Implications

10.2 None

Equalities Implications

None

Other Implications

This report relates to the services provided for Children in Care and Care Leavers and ties into the Pledge and Charter that the Local Authority respects the differing wants and needs for all.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

11.1 None

12. APPENDICES

12.1 None

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
26 FEBRUARY 2024	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	John Gregg, Director of Children's Services	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education	
Contact Officer(s):	Shalina Chandoo, QA Lead	Tel. 01733 452540

YOUTH VOICE COORDINATOR REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Gary Jones, Service Director, Children's Services	Deadline date: N/A
<p>It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Notes the content of the report.</i> 2. <i>Raise any queries they have with the lead officers.</i> 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to each formal and informal Corporate Parenting Committee.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update from the Children in Care Council and the Participation Service.

2.2 This report is for the Corporate Parenting Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference:

2.4.4.1 To act as advocates for looked after children and care leavers.

2.4.4.6 To monitor the quality of care delivered by the City Council and review the performance of outcomes for children and young people in care.

(a) Raise the profile of the needs of looked after children and care leavers through a range of actions including through the organising of celebratory events for the recognition of achievement.

(b) Ensure that leisure, cultural, further education and employment opportunities are offered and taken up by our looked after children and care leavers.

(c) Promote the development of participation and ensure that the view of children and young people are regularly heard through the Corporate Parenting Committee to improve educational, health and social outcomes to raise aspiration and attainments.

(d) Hold meetings with children and young people in care, frontline staff and foster carers to inform the committee of the standards of care and improvement outcomes for looked after children.

2.3 This report links to the Children in Care Promise under:

Respecting You: We will do everything we can to make you feel cared about, valued and respected as an individual.

Making Decisions Together: We will involve you in decision making so your views are listened to, and will explain when we make a decision you may not like or agree with.

3. TIMESCALES [If this is not a Major Policy item, answer **NO** and delete the second line of boxes.]

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	
Date for relevant Council meeting		Date for submission to Government Dept. (Please specify which Government Dept.)	

4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Participation Team continues to promote opportunities for children and young people under the care of Peterborough City Council (PCC) through regular newsletters, as well as creating event-specific publications to encourage engagement. Recent newsletters have updated young people on the work of the Children in Care Council (CiCC), Peterborough Care Leaders (PCL), the 'Children in Charge' Youth Club and other participation groups including the Young Inspectors, Young Recruiters and Young Trainers and upcoming engagement activities. Newsletters have also promoted relevant opportunities with external organisations such as the national charity Become.
- 4.2 The Participation Team promotes the voice of children and young people in care. All feedback, including suggestions and ideas from children and young people is communicated to services on a regular basis, and responses on action taken is shared with the CiCC and PCL for final review.
- 4.3 Engagement activities have been organised for children in care in the February half term and provisional dates set and shared for Easter holidays activities. After consultation with children and carers on the annual awards, a date has been set for the event in the May half term in line with feedback.
- 4.4 The CiCC continues to be consulted by services and co-production. As well as their ongoing work with the service to refine the Child Protection consultation booklets, they also fed into a consultation about the role of corporate parenting champions alongside the PCL. The CiCC are also working with the Virtual School to look at language used by professionals when discussing Personal Education Plans (PEPs).
- 4.5 The 'Children in Charge' Youth Club has been looking at new activities and in addition to art workshops, children have recently expressed interest in music, drama and performing arts. Contact with the Music Hub, Key Theatre and other groups has been made to arrange workshops in line with the children's interests.
- 4.6 The PCL has continued to be consulted by services and the main priority the group has identified from their discussions is developing the Local Offer. A series of Local Offer focus groups and individual meetings were held with Care Leavers to collate feedback on the Local Offer. The PCL collated and prioritised ideas based on the feedback, which has been shared with the service.

- 4.7 A POD (Participation Online Discussion) session took place in December for children and young people who live outside of Peterborough, with another planned for the February half term. The session focused on language and how important it is for professionals to use the right language around children and young people. The feedback has been included in the 'Every Word Matters' glossary which will be published in the coming months.
- 4.8 The Separated Migrant Children (SMC) focus group continued to meet to discuss their experiences. The group gave a range of feedback to Children's Services covering loneliness, life skills, appointments with doctors, opening a bank account, evidence of legal status, housing, visits and bespoke support. This feedback has been shared with the service for action. After the success of the last engagement event to build SMC group membership, the Participation Team has arranged a further football session in the February half term, working in partnership with the Peterborough United Foundation.
- 4.9 The Young Inspectors have completed their interviews of professionals and corporate parents on the Promise to Children in Care. They are now in the process of creating a poster for professionals to remind them of the importance of keeping the promise, and a separate leaflet for children.
- 4.10 The Young Trainers continue to deliver training for prospective foster carers as part of the Foster Carer Training programme, and to student social workers. Children and young people have continued to develop induction and training resources for professionals, including their award winning ['Every Word Matters' video](#) and their latest [video about Personal Education Plans \(PEPs\)](#).
- 4.11 Young Recruiters have continued to be involved in recruitment of staff, most recently supported interviews for the Head of SEND. The Participation Team will be offering bespoke training for new and existing Young Recruiters in the next few months.
- 4.12 Children and Young People have been recognised for their efforts to create change through the Participation groups they are part of, by being successfully nominated for the 2024 Peterborough Civic awards. We're very pleased to report that the Children in Care Council, Young Inspectors and the Chair of the Peterborough Care Leaders will all receive Civic awards in the upcoming ceremony.

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.1 This report provides an update on activities linked the Council's Corporate Priority:

Prevention, Independence & Resilience

- *Children*

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 This report was completed in consultation with members of the Children in Care Council.

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 7.1 Improved engagement with Children in Care and Care Leavers and improved services.

8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 N/A

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 There are no changes required.

10. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

10.1 *There are no financial implications.*

Legal Implications

10.2 *There are no legal implications, as the report is for information only.*

Equalities Implications

10.3 Participation is an essential service for Children in Care and Care Leavers and this report demonstrates the level of participation in various events and activities.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

11.1 *N/A*

12. APPENDICES

12.1 *N/A*

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 6
26 FEBRUARY 2024	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	John Gregg, Executive Director of Children's Services	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Ray Bisby, Cabinet Member for Children's Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Gary Jones, Service Director, Children's Social Care and Targeted Support	Tel. 01733 863624

CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: John Gregg, Executive Director of Children's Services	Deadline date: N/A
<p>It is recommended that Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Note the content of the report and raise any queries with the lead officer. 2) Agrees that the annual report is an accurate reflection of the work of the Committee over the last 12 months. 3) Agree to submit the annual report to the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee for noting as per the Corporate Parenting Committee's Terms of Reference. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report fulfils the Council's obligation to present an annual update to the Corporate Parenting Committee on outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers, in line with the Children's and Social Work Act 2017 and The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations (2010).

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 This report is for the Corporate Parenting Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference: 2.4.4.1 To act as advocates for looked after children and care leavers.

2.4.4.6 To monitor the quality of care delivered by the City Council and review the performance of outcomes for children and young people in care.

2.4.6.4 The Corporate Parenting Committee will report to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and to the Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis or more frequently if required.

2.2.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Corporate Parenting Committee with an evaluation of how effective services have been in meeting the needs of children in care and care leavers during the reporting year 2022 to 2023. The Corporate Parenting Committee should ensure that all services directly provided for children and young people in care and care leavers are scrutinised to deliver to a high standard and to all statutory requirements.

2.3.

The annual Corporate Parenting report has been developed using the Local Government Association (LGA) effective Corporate Parenting self-evaluation tool. The tool can be used to self-assess against all the principles or can be adapted to support focus on specific areas.

- 2.4 This report links to all the Children in Care Promises and provides evidence of how well these were achieved during the reporting year, and actions to improve during the next reporting year.

This report links to all the pledges in the Children in Care Promise. The formal and informal Peterborough Corporate Parenting Committees have strived to ensure that children and young people in our care have had their needs understood and met throughout this period. There is a great deal to undertake in 2023-2024 to ensure that our children and young people receive excellent care to enable them to thrive and achieve their potential in all areas of life as they transition from children through to adult life.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Please see the Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022-2023 attached.

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.1 *Consider how the recommendation links to the Council's Corporate Priorities:*

1. The Economy & Inclusive Growth

- *Environment*
- *Carbon Impact Assessment: The report contains no proposals for changes to service delivery and therefore there is no decision to take which may impact carbon emissions of the council or the city.*
- *Homes and Workplaces*
 - *Jobs and Money* – providing higher education, apprenticeship opportunities for care leavers enabling them to secure employment and to reduce our NEET cohort.

2. Our Places & Communities

- *Places and Safety (including any rural implications)* We will need to find ways to accelerate high quality and energy efficient affordable housing provision in and around our City so that our Care Leavers are afforded the opportunity to be prioritised for local housing, considering they have protected characteristics.
- *Lives and Work* Unemployment is particularly stark amongst our young population (aged 18-24) and we expect this demographic group to struggle finding well paid employment as the economy falters and as their skill set and experience do not match future job opportunities.
- *Health and Wellbeing* - many children and young people experienced a considerable negative impact during the first lockdown of 2020, with increased loneliness and social isolation – this is reflected in the number of mental health referrals amongst our younger residents. Our young people need access to mental health services in accordance with their need.

3. *Prevention, Independence & Resilience*

- *Educations and Skills for All*
- *Children* - our children still lag the national average at every level of qualification, creating a possible wedge between supply and demand for those future higher skilled, higher income jobs – if not addressed, this trend is likely to create a productivity gap within our future City workforce, slowing down growth opportunities.

4. *Sustainable Future City Council*

- *How we Work*
- *How we Serve*
- *How we Enable*

Further information on the Council's Priorities can be found here - [Link to Corporate Strategy and Priorities Webpage](#)

6. **CONSULTATION**

6.1 The Children in Care Participation lead, Shalina Chandoo noted that the information within the report has been shared with the Children in Care Council and Peterborough Care Leaders through the Informal Corporate Parenting Committee and their regular meetings.

Peterborough Care Leaders Chair noted:

"A good corporate parent is passionate about making a difference, specifically about being proactive in children's rights rather than caps on services and costs. You can tell who is there to make a difference and who is there to just turn up."

6.2 Suggest here other consultation(s) which could be undertaken.

6.3 *Has this recommendation been considered by the below? If not, please provide reasoning.*

The annual corporate parenting report is considered at Corporate Parenting Committee and then Education and Scrutiny Committee.

- *Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)*
- *Cabinet Policy Forum (CPF)*

Please also consider whether the recommendation should also be considered by the following:

- *Financial Sustainability Working Group (FSWG)*
- *Group Leaders' Meeting*
- *All Party Policy (APP)*

Guidance on the items each group should see can be found here - [Meetings Pathway Guidance Link](#)

7. **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

7.1 To provide a robust overview of the impact of corporate parenting activity over the reporting year and to provide a clear focus for improvement for the next year. If the Corporate Parenting Committee agrees the recommendations in this report, it will be presented to the next Children and Education Scrutiny Committee in March 2024.

8. **REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 Strengthen and improve the corporate parenting responsibilities for our children in care and care leavers and ensure that the Committee and the Council discharges its corporate parenting responsibilities effectively.
- 8.2 It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee review and provide comment on the contents of this report. This ensures the Corporate Parenting Committee are fulfilling their responsibility to monitor and scrutinise the activity of Peterborough City Council and its partners services over the past year, thus ensuring that adequate care and support is being provided to children in care and care leavers in the borough.
- 9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**
- 9.1 N/A
- 10. IMPLICATIONS**
- Financial Implications**
- 10.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.
- Legal Implications**
- 10.2 There are no legal requirements. This report is an evaluation of corporate parenting activity over the reporting period 2022-2023
- Equalities Implications**
- 10.3 This report provides information on how Children in Care and Care Leavers have been supported to achieve their potential in all areas of need.
- The report sets out priorities that will ensure our Children in Care and Care Leavers receive the support they need.
- 11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**
Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
- 11.1 Corporate Parenting score card
Corporate parenting committee papers for the informal and formal committee meetings
Participation annual report
IRO annual report 2022-2023
CIC promise
Corporate parenting strategy 2022-2023
JSNA
Virtual School annual report 2022-2023
Annual Adoption report 2022-2023
Annual Fostering report 2022-2023
Annual Health report 2022-2023
PCC Market Position CiC
PCC Market Position addendum
The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations (2010).
- 12. APPENDICES**
- 12.1 Appendix 1 - Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022-2023
Appendix 2 – Our Promise to Children and Young People in Care
Appendix 3 – Corporate Parenting Strategy



Annual Corporate Parenting Report

2022-2023

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FOREWORD SUMMARY



The Peterborough Corporate Parenting Committee (CPC) oversees the duties of the Council and its partners' duties in respect of children in care and care leavers to ensure these are being fulfilled. It also seeks to improve the life chances of children in care and care leavers in Peterborough.

During 2022-2023 our children in care (CiC), care leavers, their carers, and the services that support them, have faced challenges because of the economic impact of COVID-19 and the impact that this had on emotional, mental, and physical well-being as well as the services that were in place to support and respond to need. Despite this there has been a great deal of activity progressed during this year including the development and publication of our

CiC promise, a corporate parenting strategy to ensure that we continue to focus on ensuring that our children and young people can achieve their potential in all areas of development, and initiatives to increase our recruitment of foster carers.

The formal and informal Peterborough Corporate Parenting Committees have strived to ensure that the children and young people in our care had their needs understood and met throughout this period. There is a great deal to undertake in 2023-2024 to ensure that our children and young people receive excellent care to enable them to thrive and achieve their potential in all areas of life as they transition from children through to adult life.

GOVERNANCE AND BACKGROUND

Peterborough City Council (PCC) and relevant partners hold corporate parenting responsibilities set out within the Children Act 1989 and The Children and Social Work Act 2017. This means that there is a shared responsibility by the councils, the elected members, employees, and partner agencies to support children and young people in care or care leavers to have the best start in life.

Being a good Corporate Parent means:

- we accept children in our care are our responsibility
- we provide them with the same outcomes as any other reasonable parent.
- prioritise their needs.

This is achieved by working closely with the Children in Care Council (CiCC) and the Care Leaders Forum (CLF) to ensure we are listening to and acting on their views to continuously improve our services to ensure that we care and support all children and young people that we look after and our care leavers.

Every child needs to be loved, cared for, and to feel safe, and PCC's corporate parenting responsibility is to provide that care, protection, love and safety to the children and young people we look after and our young people who are care leavers. Statutory guidance 'Applying corporate parenting

principles to looked after children and care leavers' (2018) notes the following:

the critical question that local authorities should ask in adopting a [corporate parenting] approach is: 'would this be good enough for my child?' (pg 5 para 1.1)

DfE (2018) report noted that nationally sixty percent of children in care were received into care because they had suffered abuse or neglect and as an impact of this many have poorer educational and health outcomes than their peers.

To ensure that PCC fulfils its statutory duties towards children in care and care leavers our Corporate Parenting Committee meets quarterly to hold PCC and relevant partners to account for delivering on all their corporate parenting responsibilities. The Corporate Parenting Committee is chaired by Councillor Dennis Jones and informal meetings of the Corporate Parenting Committee are co-chaired by young people who are care experienced. Meeting attendees include young people from the CiCC and the CLF, Health colleagues, and representatives from across the council where services are relevant to improving the opportunities for children in care and leaving care young people.

The PCC Corporate Parenting Strategy 2022-2023 sets out the vision for our children and young people in care and identified measurable improved outcomes to be achieved aligned to seven priority areas that we will deliver for our children and young people:

- Keeping you safe
- Respecting you
- Being honest
- Making decisions together
- Where you live
- Your health
- Your relationships

Our priority areas for our care experienced young people also include:

- Respect
- Helping you be the best you can
- Clear communication
- Finding a home
- Support

The implementation of the strategy has been overseen by the Corporate Parenting Committee during 2022-2023. Oversight has included quarterly feedback reports 'You Said, We Did' led by the participation service and our Children in Care and Care Leavers to ensure that the strategy remained a relevant and live document during the year. The Corporate Parenting Strategy aligns to the Seven Principles of Corporate Parenting, which have been developed to ensure that all core requirements for children to thrive are in place for all children in care and care leavers. The seven principles ensure that our children in care and care leavers are at the centre of every decision made for them when planning, delivering, or evaluating services.

Seven principles of corporate parenting:

Health and Wellbeing of Children in Care and Care Leavers

1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of children and young people.

The Voice of Children in Care and Care Leavers

2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
3. To consider the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people.

Aspiration and Achievement

4. To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.
5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for children and young people.

Quality, Planning, Stability and Permanence

6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.

Care Leavers and Transition

7. To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independence.

This annual report will provide an evaluation of the work completed with our children in care and care leavers matched to the seven principles of corporate parenting, that have been overseen and scrutinised by the Corporate Parenting Committee between April 2022 and March 2023.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS

Principle 1: To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of children and young people.

Achievements

The Children in Care Council (CiCC) completed a project designed to destigmatise mental health and highlight the importance of seeking help and support for young people. This culminated in an animation video with an original spoken word piece that will be shared across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire schools and services in June 2023. The purpose of this was to strengthen mental health awareness and encourage young people to talk about their mental health.

During an informal meeting of the Corporate Parenting Committee in January 2023, the Chair of Health Scrutiny and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health, and Public Health, noted that they had raised questions with the NHS about what actions were being undertaken to improve mental health services and support. This topic remained on the Scrutiny Committee's agenda to ensure that actions were being completed.



YOUUnited, an NHS service that provides a central front door for referrals for children and young people aged 5-17 presenting with concerns for their emotional well-being and mental health, was launched in 2021. YOUUnited comprises of four partners: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT), Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust (CCS), Ormiston Families, and Centre 33. The service receives referrals from professional, parents, carers, and young people and assesses the level of need and intervention required and refers to the most appropriate services. Data regarding the number of referrals received and the impact of services was not captured within 2022-23, however this will be reported on in next financial year 2023-2024.

Centre 33 has offered services to children and young people in Peterborough outside the YOUUnited central front door since October 2019. The service, 'Someone to Talk to', offers holistic support to 13-25 year olds, including, but not limited to, housing,

sexual health, relationships and domestic abuse, with a large proportion of these young people also presenting with some mental health difficulties. Since its inception in October 2019 there has been a steady increase in the number of young people accessing the support offered. During 2022-2023 985 young people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough accessed the someone to talk to support area of the service offer. Of those young people 496 accessed the higher-level flexible support aspect of the someone to talk to service, which is an increase of 98 young people compared to the previous year, and an increase of 187 compared 2020-2021.

In January 2020 a five-year national initiative was rolled out to provide support for mental health through the implementation of mental health support teams. The teams offer 1:1 short term intervention to young people; provide support to the mental health lead within schools; and provide support to develop a whole school approach to responding to mental health. In 2022, 50% of Peterborough schools were





included within this initiative and 100% will be part of this by 2025. This service provides early support to young people and schools to reduce unnecessary escalation of emotional and mental health concerns. This means that young people have their needs responded to quickly and other targeted services are not overwhelmed.

There was an improvement in timeliness of Annual Health Assessments with 89.7% of young people receiving their assessment within statutory timescales in comparison to 83% in March 2022. We aim to achieve 93% of annual health assessments in timescale during the next financial year.

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a document that is required to be completed prior to a Health Assessment being completed and this had not been the case in most health assessments completed. During the first quarter of 2022 the Children in Care Council reviewed the SDQ and made amendments to the document so that it was more relevant and accessible to children and young people. The 22 changes that had been suggested were all accepted and embedded within the revised SDQ and it is anticipated that this will be completed prior to health assessments because young people have a better understanding of the questions and the purpose of the SDQ.

Health Passports are completed for all young people who are leaving care aged 17 and 100% of young people have a health passport with 66 provided to young people during this reporting year. The Health Passport provides the young person with important information about their health, including a health chronology, and all immunisations dates which could be useful when a young person is entering adulthood and when planning to have their own children or applying for a job.



In addition, a wallet passport is provided, which holds the young person's NHS number, details of their GP, dentist, opticians, and any known health conditions, which are provided to support the young person to transition smoothly into adulthood. Young people who decline a health assessment are contacted to seek consent for the health passport to be completed with the support of their carer, the social worker and the health professional, and the health passport is then given to the young person by the most appropriate professional. An audit of the impact of Health Passports on transition for young people was undertaken, but due to a lower than expected return on questionnaires, this is something that will be further considered during the next financial year.

During the third quarter of this reporting period the Children in Care Council provided feedback on the priority areas identified by Peterborough to ensure that services and care are high quality and focused on improving lives for young people. The Children in Care Council fed back

noting that there was a 'huge shortage of mental health support.

A Mental Health 3–5-year strategy was developed and launched in July 2022. The strategy included the requirement to understand the level of demand for Mental Health services across Peterborough with an expectation that this would be fed into the JSNA. This work will provide specific information regarding the needs of our children in care and our care leavers. The work will enable a better understanding of the service offer matched to demand. In March 2023 foster carers were provided with trauma informed practice training to improve their understanding and care for children and young people living with them. The Mind of My Own One App has continued to be available for young people to express their wishes and feelings and support them to engage with their reviews and shape the services that they receive. This year has seen the App being used less than previous years, which may be linked to the strength of the participation work that has enabled young people to share their views in different ways.

Areas for development 2023-2024

Timeliness of Initial Health Care Assessments (IHA) was poor with only 24.5% completed within timescale compared to 41% for the same period last year. This was linked to referrals being made late and the capacity of health practitioners to undertake the IHAs. Joint working between Health and Children Social Care will begin in 2023 to agree a process that will improve this area of practice. This is an important area because the IHA helps us to ensure that physical and mental health needs are identified as soon as a child is cared for by PCC and services identified to address need.

Only 79.4% of our CiC received a dental health check within expected timescales. The impact of COVID has meant a reduced availability of NHS dentists locally and nationally. Identifying accessible NHS dental treatment for our CiC and care leavers is a priority area in 2023.

The Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire (SDQ), which is expected to be completed for every CiC to support the completion of a Health Assessment, had not been completed to the level required prior to the

assessment, with only a small percentage being returned prior to a Health assessment being completed. This meant that time within the assessment was taken up completing the SDQ rather than assessing the young person's health needs. This will be addressed by Children Services and Health in 2023-2024 to ensure the correct person with the most knowledge of the child supports with the completion of the SDQ prior to the health assessment being completed.

During 2022-2023 there continued to be significant pressures on Tier 4 CAMHS services, which can be linked to the impact of COVID-19 and lockdown. During that time there was an increase in demand for mental health services for children, and waiting times increased. Compounding this was the limited availability of staff as some of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust (CPFT) staff had been redeployment to support the COVID vaccination response. These pressures resulted in waiting lists for the CAMHS service. This was responded to through the introduction of a new assessment process to identify young people that would need a short intervention (1-2 sessions), to respond to need.



THE VOICE OF CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS

Principle 2: To encourage young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.

Achievements

A total of 1012 Child Care Reviews (CCR) were held and 99.3% took place within statutory timescales. Most of these meetings were held using a hybrid model with the social worker and IRO meeting with the child face to face.

All children over the age of four participated in their CCR to inform the shaping of their plan, in the way that best suits them, attending part or all their meetings, using the paper consultation booklet, the Mind of My Own app, or sending their views through their IRO or another trusted adult.

48% of children over the age of four years attended part or all their meeting in person which is 17% more than the previous year. Of the children who did not attend their review, 36% sent their views in advance and 16% briefed their advocate with their views. Others gave their views via other means including meeting with the IRO prior to their review.

In response to feedback from our children and young people the Participation Service held face-to-face and virtual events with our CiC and care leavers during school holiday.



The events were designed to:

- Build relationships
- Get ideas for engagement and service improvements
- Give young people a chance to connect with others in a similar situation
- Increase awareness of and involvement in the CiCC
- Recruit to other participation groups and opportunities.

In late July 2022 a CiC Awards and Celebration Day, designed by young people from the Children in Care Council and Awards Planning Committee, was held to recognise the skills and attributes held by our children in care and care leavers that included helpfulness, resilience, bravery, strength, hard work, and passion.

The annual virtual art exhibition was launched during the summer on themes chosen by the CiCC. Young people and foster carers were invited to watch the video alongside members of the Corporate Parenting Committee and Social Work teams.

The participation team 'get your voice heard' leaflet details participation opportunities for young people who are cared for, or care experienced and include activities to help children and young people to:

- Meet other children and young people.
- Build confidence and transferrable skills including communication skills
- Gain valuable experience which can be included on CVs.
- Share their knowledge and expertise of Children's Social Care
- Improve services for children and young people

The Children in Care Council met predominantly face to face over the last year and received regular updates from all participation groups. Activities including the 'Children in Charge' Youth Club, Young Inspectors, Young Recruiters, Young Trainers, and other feedback are discussed with the CiCC, who identify action for themselves as well as overseeing the service response to feedback.

The Children in Care Council was involved in creating the Ideal Worker and Ideal Foster Carer animation videos, to explore further ways to improve training for professionals in Children's Social Care and continue to work on the recent Every Word Matters project, looking at the language used around children with social care experience.

The Children in Care Council drafted a new version of the Children in Care Promise, which has been printed and shared with Children in Care, Children's Services and Corporate Parents. The young people made sure the promise was realistic, relevant and that the language and style were child friendly. The Children in Care Promise was also translated into six other languages to reflect the needs of Children in Care.

Members of the Children in Care Council attended a regional youth voice conference hosted by the British Youth Council in February 2023, alongside the Peterborough Youth Council. During the day, they participated in public speaking workshops and developed their campaigning skills through a mock simulation.

The Participation Team established a Care Leaders Forum (CLF) for Care Leavers to look at issues specifically relevant to them. The group has met both virtually and face to face to maximise opportunities for care leavers to participate.

Feedback from the CLF included:



The participation team developed an offer to young people who are placed out of area to enable them to share their views and feed into the Children in Care Council and CFL forum. This offer was virtual and is being developed to enable face to face meetings.

Young Inspectors reinspected supervised contact centres across Peterborough during October and November 2022 following their initial inspection in 2021. As a result of this work and being involved in some of the improvements including the painting of a mural at one of the centres, the Inspectors won the 2023 National Coram Participation Award. Feedback from the young people involved in the project included:



Young Inspectors completed an inspection of a local authority children's home in February 2023, which offers short breaks and shared care placements to children and young people with severe disabilities between the ages of 5 and 19. The subsequent report and action plan was shared with the Corporate Parenting Committee.

Feedback from the group included:



Young recruiters were involved in interviewing more than 60 candidates for roles across Children's Services throughout the year. This included a recently established working relationship with Anglia Ruskin University. Young people's involvement in recruitment strengthened the service's decision-making and demonstrates to candidates the local authority's commitment to hearing the voice of the child.

As part of the foster carers annual review, the views and wishes of children and young people are obtained. Both the positive feedback from children and any areas of development for the carer are acted upon and shared as part of this process

Areas for improvement during 2023-2024

Participation is a strong area of practice within Peterborough, however an audit of CiC in September 2022 identified that although our children and young people had a good understanding of their plan, they were less aware of why they had been separated from their families, with a small number of those audited

evidenced that this had not been discussed. This position was corroborated by the young people who raised this through their feedback to the informal corporate parenting committee in 2022. Children and young people have asked to be better informed, and we need to strengthen this area.

Children and young people have asked for us to act on what they say, and progress actions agreed in a timely manner. This is an area that needs strengthening to ensure that we are clear when there are delays and that there are valid reasons aligned to timescales for completion.

Contact centres were improved with the oversight of the young inspectors, however contact centres will require further improvements in 2023 to ensure that there is capacity to ensure all children have contact that require this. CiC and Care Leavers who live in homes that are 20 miles or more from Peterborough do not always have the same opportunities to engage in participation activities. This is an area to be strengthened within the next reporting year.



THE VOICE OF CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS

Principle 3: To consider the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people.

Achievements

After the success of their ideal foster carers video, Young Trainers worked with the Children in Care Council to launch a video on what makes the ideal workers, including Social Workers, IROs and Designated Teachers, for use in recruitment, induction, and training of workers. Feedback on both videos was overwhelmingly positive, including:

Please pass on a huge thank you on behalf of us all in our fostering service to everyone who gave up their time to put this together and share their thoughts on what makes an ideal foster carer. It is a really excellent video, so thoughtful and thought-provoking - I can almost hear the conversations in Foster Carer training that will flow from this...

I've watched it this morning and wanted to say that I thought it was brilliant. It is really clear and explains all the really important messages. I think it's really important to remember about when we arrange meetings so it doesn't interrupt lessons that are important, and having time afterward to feel ready to go back into learning.

"EVERY WORD MATTERS!"

words that you don't like?



**FOSTER CARER
FOSTER CHILD
PLACEMENT**



NAMES & LABELS



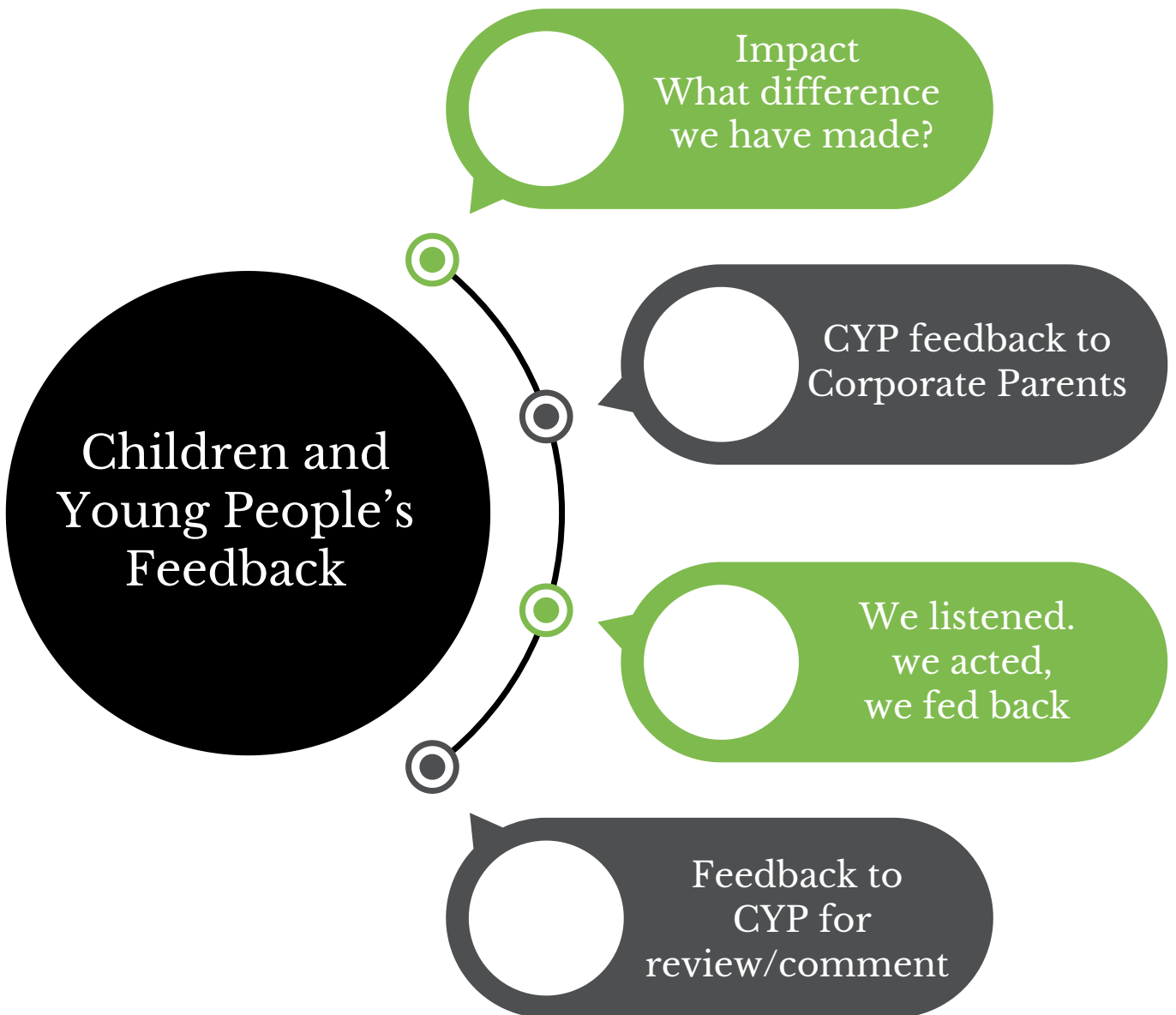
PARTICIPATION

Young Trainers were involved in each new foster carer training course in 2022/2023, sharing their expertise to improve the knowledge and skills of new and prospective foster carers. They also delivered training to the ASYE social workers in February 2023.

reviewed by young people. The group ensures that the feedback loop is maintained and has driven service engagement in participation opportunities including a focus on young people recruitment, team champions, and consultation work with the CiCC.

The Participation Strategic Group is attended by Children’s Social Care Service Managers and Heads of Service across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. This group has ensured participation activity is on the agenda at all levels and that each service has a Participation action plan, which is

A strong and effective Corporate Parenting feedback loop is in place to ensure that the voice of our young people and care leavers is heard, listened to, and acted on. This feedback loop includes CPC, Fostering Service, Senior leaders, virtual school and is facilitated through the participation service.



ASPIRATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

Principle 4: To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the Local Authority and its relevant partners.

Achievements

The Children in Care Council has continued to consult on key issues important to children and young people to help improve services for Children in Care, and enjoy having the opportunity to do so and knowing what action has been taken as a result:

We get to have an impact on things that young people need and could help other young people.

I'm here... to give young people a voice and to give young people what I never had which is my passion.

Consultation work in the year included:

- Participating in a focus group around mental health and wellbeing with the Youth MP.
- Coproducing the new Virtual School website.
- Consulting on Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and the PEP process.
- Reviewing the Young People's Booklet about Child Protection Meetings.
- Being consulted and involved in Peterborough's plans for a Youth Zone, including visiting Barent Youth Zone to tour facilities.
- Sharing feedback on the review meetings and booklet.



Peterborough Virtual School (PVS) support children and young people in care between the ages of 2 and 18. The Virtual School brings together information about children and young people who are cared for by Peterborough as if they attend a single school.

Additionally, Peterborough Virtual School provides information and advice for children previously in care including those who have been adopted from care and those under special guardianship and child arrangement orders. Peterborough Virtual School is responsible for children previously in care attending a Peterborough school or education setting.

Statutory reporting regarding Children in Care educational achievements focuses on children that have been Children in Care for a year or more. In key stage 4, out of 34 young people, 7 achieved a grade 4 or higher in Maths and, seven young people achieved a grade 4 or higher in English. Of these young people, six achieved both English and Maths at grade 4 or higher and 3 of these achieved both at grade 5 or higher. Three young people achieved attainment 8 grades of 52, 57 and 58 respectively.

Analysis of the group of six young people who achieved good grades shows common characteristics of their journeys:

- No disruption to secondary education – all attended 1 secondary school only.
- All achieved age related expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6
- School attendance was high >97%
- Pupil premium plus grant was spent on academic interventions including tuition.
- Minimal changes of homes – 4 had only 1 home, 1 had 2 and the 3rd had 3 homes.
- On average they had been in care for 8 years.
- All have progressed onto level 3 courses.

A range of additional qualifications were gained by young people beyond GCSEs. These included functional skills qualifications in both English and Maths, BTEC level 1s and 2s and AQA single awards. One young person with complex SEND achieved her functional skills in English, City and Guilds for Working Life and a double WEJEC Humanities Pathway



A student may appear in multiple columns.

Academic Cohort 2022-2023	ESOL Courses for EAL Students (including pre-entry & transition courses)			Functional Skills (English & Maths Courses)		Individual Curriculum Education	NVQ, BTEC and other Vocational Courses			GCSE / A-Level	
	Pre-entry or Transition	Pass	Withdrew or did not pass	Pre-entry or Transition	Withdrew or did not pass	Course ongoing	Grade awarded	Course ongoing	Withdrawn or not recorded	Grade awarded	Withdrew or not recorded
Year 12	15	6	2	6	2	2	10	1	6	8	2
Year 13	13	10	6	2	-		7	-	19	12	-
Total Post-16 Cohort	15	16	8	8	2	2	17	1	25	20	2

Two young people have progressed onto Higher Education courses are undertaking degrees in initial teacher training and nursing. The table below shows the destinations of young people at the end of Years 12 and 13.

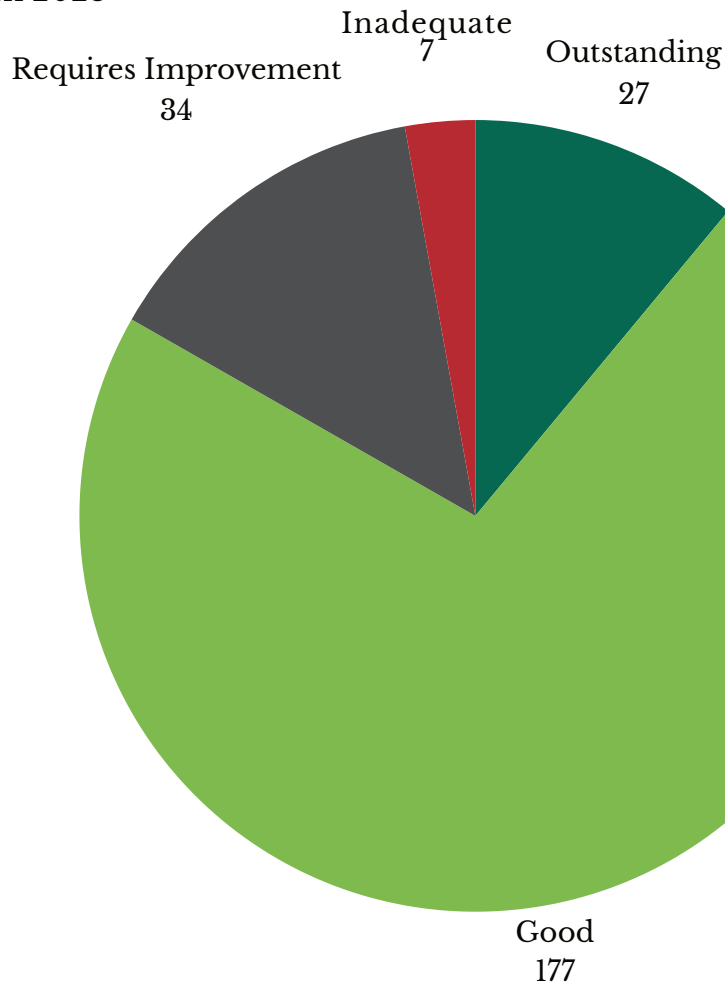
Academic Cohort 2022-2023	Year 12	Year 13
UK higher education institution	-	2
Further education	33	25
Other education destinations	4	-
Sustained employment destination	-	1
Not recorded as sustained destination	-	2
Activity not captured	10	25

% CLA attending school judged to be good or better	
Year 2	83% (5 of 6 pupils)
Year 6	82% (18 of 22 pupils)
Year 11	89% (40 of 45 pupils)

The lower percentage of children attending a school judged to be good or better in Years 2 and 6 is due to several of the schools converting to academies and have not been re-inspected yet, therefore previous judgements remain. It is expected that conversion to an academy and membership of a multi academy trust will drive improvements. Peterborough Virtual School monitors all children, but those in schools judged to be less than good, are subject to closer scrutiny.

Ofsted Judgement - Reception to Year 11

January to March 2023



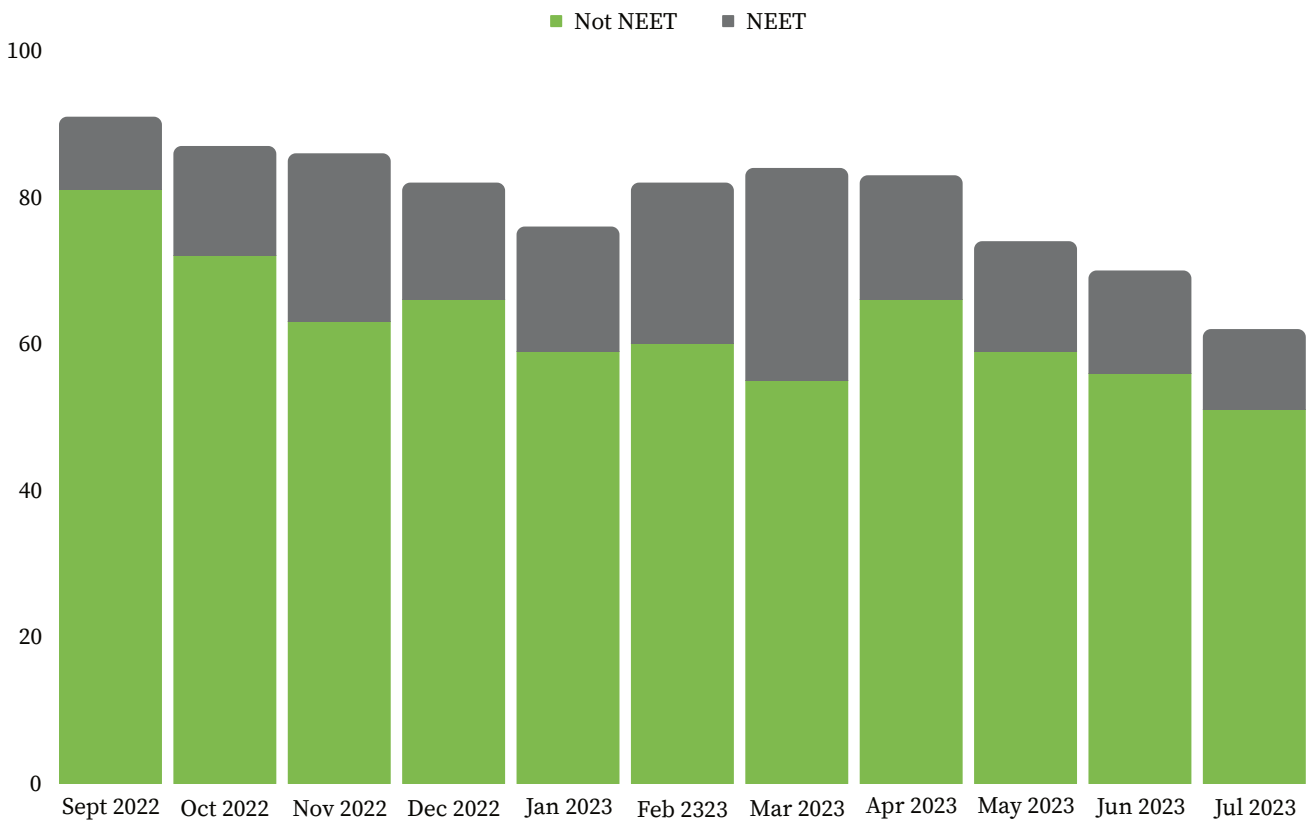
Next academic year an enhanced offer will be made for schools and settings who are not good or outstanding to ensure that any children attending are not disadvantaged.

Nationally, attendance has improved for all children including those in care over the last academic year, however it is still significantly lower than pre-pandemic levels. Attendance data always runs a year behind the other data releases, the 2022-23 data is not due for release until March/April 2024.

Peterborough children in care have an absence rate of 7.2%; this compares favourably against the Eastern Region (8.5%) and statistical neighbours (8.09%) averages.

The cohort of young people not in education or training (NEET) fluctuates across the academic year; to be determined as NEET a young person must be beyond statutory school age (Year 12 and upwards) and not accessing any education, employment, or training. Specific trigger points include the end of October which is the point at which colleges review engagement and officially enrol the young person, and a second trigger point is Christmas.

Total Post-16 Cohort - 2022-2023 Academic Year



The above table shows number of NEET young people (aged 16 and 17) in care over the 2022-2023 academic year. This year the average percentage was higher than previous years due to high number of withdrawals and disengagement sometimes linked to emotional mental health. It should be noted that the decline in numbers within the total cohort declines over the academic year when young people reach their 18th birthday.

The number of care leavers in March 2023 that turned 18-21 during this reporting year was 115 and of those 41 were (35.7%) were identified as NEET. This includes those young people that are pregnant, teenage parents, have a disability and have presenting illness as well as those in prison. Although this is 0.7% off the 35% target set for the year, Peterborough’s performance is above statistical neighbours, and England.

The Peterborough Virtual School offered a range of training opportunities for foster carers; the fostering service is shared across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and therefore some of these sessions were completed in collaboration with Cambridgeshire Virtual School. This year courses were attended by an average of 65% of those booked, with some sessions reaching attendance of 90%.

77% of session evaluations (of which 60% completed) highlighted an improvement in knowledge. All courses were delivered virtually. Fostering shared their Carer training survey results with PVS and the PVS intends to deliver e-learning and a Foster Carers Conference in the next academic year.

Below is the training delivered in this reporting year:

- How to support your child with their education – Early Years/Preschool
- How to support your child with their education – Primary
- How to support your young person with their education – Secondary
- How to support your child with their education – Post 16 (for young people in Y9-Y13)
- How to support your child/young person with transitions (Primary to Secondary school)
- Supporting school readiness and transitions to school (Early Years)
- Supporting your child as a reader (FS and KS1)
- How to support your Separated Migrant Child (SMC)
- My future self - How to support your child to develop high aspirations.
- Supporting your younger child as a writer (KS1)
- Supporting Children with Maths at KS1 and KS2

The Peterborough Virtual School Educational Psychologist is also available for consultation.

During the academic year 2022-2023, 1108 Personal Education Plans (PEP) meetings were held. PEP meetings are led by the Designated Teacher in

settings and attended by Social Worker, Carer and the child/young person if they wish to. 100% of Peterborough's CiC had a Personal Education Plan (PEP) in place throughout the year. This is reflective of the strong partnerships between PVS, Designated Teachers, carers, and social workers.

All PEPs are quality assured by Peterborough Virtual School staff and those judged to be below an acceptable standard trigger additional support and challenge from the VS team. Most PEPs (95%) are judged to be 'on target' meaning following quality-assurance, the PEP meets the expected standard in all areas. For those that fall 'below target,' PVS staff will provide support, training, and challenge to the relevant professionals to ensure rapid improvements are made.

An audit of ePEPs undertaken in April 2022 identified good practice in completing PEPs ensuring that all areas of a child's needs in relation to learning were addressed with evidence of effective and collaborative multi-agency working to meet children's educational and developmental needs.

Throughout the year there was a significant increase in the numbers of separated migrant children coming into the care of Peterborough City Council.





In March 2023 Peterborough was caring for 47 separated Migrant Children, which is an increase of 19 compared to March 2022. This is attributable to an increase in the National Transfer Scheme allocation from 0.007% to 0.01% of the total child population. This has placed a significant strain on college places due to limited ESOL (English as a Second Language) places. Typically, the number of separated migrant children arriving increases in the Spring due to improving weather conditions and therefore NEET figures peaked in March 2023. Considerable strategic work was undertaken by Peterborough Virtual School in partnership with Further Education providers at this point and almost all young people requiring ESOL provision were able to start on a bespoke ESOL Transition programme by Peterborough College in April 2023. The limited availability of ESOL provision remains a priority for the forthcoming year.

An additional educational psychologist for CLA and children recently adopted was recruited to strengthen the response to CLA within education. The areas of focus for this post are:

- **Developing team confidence – Change management**
- **Relational practice – trauma informed to support a culture shift within schools.**
- **Child level consultancy**
- **Stabilise school places - Team around children**

Areas for improvement 2023-2024

To continue to recruit foster carers to offer caring and stable homes to our children and young people they care for.

To continue to strengthen the offer from the Peterborough Virtual School so that children in our care are supported to achieve their potential within education.

Strengthen the support offered to our leaving care young people to ensure that they have the correct skillset, support, and direction to enable them to transition into adult life. This will need to include regular face to face visits with their Personal Advisors, as feedback from our care leavers highlighted that face-to-face added value to them.

To ensure equality of educational support and quality regardless of the school or educational provider for all Children in Care and Leaving Care Young People.

Although audit identified that children were offered support within school, those children placed outside a 20-mile radius of Peterborough do not have the same access to support from the clinical team that is offered to young people living within a 20 mile radius of Peterborough and this will require further consideration to ensure equality of service regardless of your home.

ASPIRATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

Principle 5: To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for children and young people.

The Participation Service commissioned two Leadership Training events for Children in Care across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. The training, facilitated by the British Youth Council, was open to children and young people from the CiCCs, CLF, Young Inspectors, Young Trainers and Young Recruiters as part of their ongoing training and development. The sessions were followed by lunch for participants and fun activities. Feedback from the group included:

I plan to use the skills I have learned at school and at my army cadets

I made a new friend and I really enjoyed it.

It was good – I learned a good way to solve problems using the ABCD method.

I like how it was for us and helps us get better skills.

It was enjoyable, interesting and inspiring

I plan to use the skills for future groups I teach.

The decision making was really good, I can use that straightaway and actually it would have helped me make decisions quicker if I'd known before.

The Fostering service supports foster carers to have high aspirations for children and young people to enable them to meet their potential. Every new foster carer is allocated an experienced foster carer mentor who guides them through their first year of fostering. There are facilitated support groups where foster carers can share their experience and knowledge in addition to attending training to ensure that they are able to support children and young people achieve best outcomes.

A thematic audit of Children in Care in September 2022 identified that there was evidence that most young people in foster homes were having their needs met in relation to forming relationships, receiving affection, and being nurtured, a critical component for children especially when supporting them to seek high and achievable aspirations for themselves.

Where children were living in residential or semi-independent placements, there was some evidence that the majority had positive relationships with trusted adults. However, for these children, records could be improved by evidencing how their needs, relating to relationships, affection and nurture were being met.

ASYEs were invited to lead on relationship building with the participation team. This was to raise awareness of the work of the participation team and embed the

importance of working alongside children and young people from an early stage in the career of the social worker.

Areas for improvement 2023-2024

Supporting Children in Care and care leavers with their emotional and mental health has been an area of focus for 2022 and will be for 2023 to ensure that there is a proportionate response to the needs of our CiC and care leavers at point of need.



QUALITY, PLANNING, STABILITY AND PERFORMANCE

Principle 6: For children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.

Local Authorities are required to take steps to secure, as far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation for children in care within their local area. The Peterborough sufficiency statement was published in 2021 and since the sufficiency statement was published Peterborough has seen significant pressures occurring both nationally and locally, affecting the sufficiency of provision across children services including (but not limited to), COVID -19 Pandemic, Brexit, and the recent cost of living crisis. Despite current pressures, Peterborough City Council has remained committed to securing the best possible outcomes for children and young people in Care, leaving care, or at significant risk of coming into care.

Peterborough's Children in Care Population has increased by 15% since April 2021, from 369 to 412 (in March 2023). Similarly, Peterborough has seen increases to the number of children placed in externally commissioned homes (18% increase, from 185 in April 2021, to 219 in March 2023); this use of external provision continues to constitute 52% of Peterborough's homes.

Achievements

Peterborough City Council operates a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) (in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council) for the provision of Children's External homes (including Independent Fostering Agency [IFA] placements).



As of March 2023, there were 44 IFAs on the DPS, 90% of whom are rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. This is an increase since March 2020. Good and outstanding carers are more likely to offer stability of care for our children and young people and to be willing to work with support services so that challenges in homes can be addressed to reduce the risk of breakdown in homes through the offer of meaningful and targeted support. Stability meetings are held as soon as issues are identified, and these meetings include partner agencies and commissioners to ensure that the correct support is given to reduce the risk of breakdowns in homes and increase the likelihood of strong and supportive care. Data shows that Peterborough performs well in this area with only 6.8% of our children experiencing three or more home moves in a one-year period compared to a national figure of 10%. Care plans for children and young people that have experienced high homes moves are reviewed to ensure that the care plan provides the necessary support to mitigate against further placement breakdown.

Of the 412 Children in Care in March 2023, 109 (26%) were placed outside the 20-mile radius of Peterborough.

An audit undertaken in September 2022 identified that children placed out of area received the same service that children in area received. The audit found that, in the main, children and young people were placed in good quality, stable out of area homes that met their individual, often complex, needs and risks. There was evidence that interim support was put in place or panel funding agreed to mitigate any delay in meeting children's education or health needs in their placement area. For a small number of children, progress to their care plan was impacted by them being placed out of area, relating to access to resources and support. There was evidence that practitioners were working hard to mitigate and address this, but the impact on care planning was evident.

When children were missing, return home interviews were completed and appropriate risk assessment tools used to understand risk. For a small number of children, progress to their care plan was impacted by them being placed out of area, relating to access to resources and support. There was evidence that practitioners were working hard to mitigate and address this, but the impact on care planning was evident.





Peterborough has seen 66% growth in residential homes, from 9 (including Local Authority Secure Welfare and Short Break homes) in January 2021, to a total of 15 homes in March 2023. This far exceeds the growth seen across England (7%) and the Eastern Region (15%) and comes at a time where sufficiency nationally is in crisis. This provision is not PCC Local Authority owned, rather private sector business creating additional residential provision in the region.

During this financial year the fostering service recruited four new fostering households, however during that same period 12 fostering households resigned leaving a net loss of 6 households. In March 2023, 58% of our Children in Care were living with in-house foster carers and this can be linked to the investment in a dedicated Fostering Resource Team, which has improved sufficiency of use of in-house carers, which has increased the number of children living with in-house carers. Although several fostering households resigned, the focused retention activity, led by the Fostering Resource Team, saw a reduction overall in resignations of foster carers.

Our Fostering Community is supported by a locally delivered extensive training programme, locally delivered peer support groups, locally based experienced Foster Carer Mentors, and well-established Foster Carer forums across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough which provide invaluable support, advice, and guidance to Foster Carers and to the service. The training programme for in house foster carers across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, ensures foster carers have the knowledge and skillset to keep children and young people safe, and mentoring support to strengthen the fostering community and enable effective learning and support for new foster carers. The training offer has included safeguarding children and safer care practice, keeping children safe on social media, Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation, and self-harm. Foster carers work closely with therapists, schools, and health services to ensure that they can support children to a high standard and keep them safe. During 2022-2023 97 training courses were offered through face to face, Teams, and e learning. In total 911 foster carers attended across the year.

In addition to this, three six-week courses were offered to exploring the foundation for attachment and 40 foster carers attended.

A strategy to improve recruitment of foster carers was developed and is being implemented. The purpose of the strategy is to increase the number of foster carers that can offer quality care and support to teenage children, and to increase diversity, skills, and experience of foster carers to ensure that we have the correct foster homes to meet the needs of our children. As part of this, our corporate parenting champions spoke on Salam Radio, a Muslim community radio station based in Peterborough that also streams live on social media, regarding the need for diversity in foster homes to support our young people that need care. This resulted in two prospective carers contacting the fostering service to express an interest in fostering, one of whom is progressing through the assessment process.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is responsible for investigating allegations which are made against an adult who has responsibility for and care for a child. The LADO investigated 12 referrals relating to foster carers during the reporting period. Four of the referrals were regarding Independent Fostering Agencies and eight were regarding in house foster carers.

All referrals were timely, and the meetings were attended by the supervising social worker and the team manager. Of the 12 LADO investigation in this reporting year 3- remain ongoing, 2 were substantiated, 4 were unfounded, and 2 were a mixture of unfounded and unsubstantiated.

In August 2022 a threshold decision dip sample was undertaken, which included a review of decision making of the most recent young people received into our care, excluding separated migrant young people. The review identified that children were received in to care appropriately with the correct threshold applied. Some children entered care following a period of Pre-Proceedings (PLO) and Interim Care Order applications to Court. When a child was received into our care in an unplanned way such as through Police Protection, there was evidence of timely multi-agency information gathering to contribute towards threshold decisions and to secure appropriate homes for them.

Where S20 of the Children Act 1989 had been agreed, there was clear approval and communication between senior management to discuss the plan for the child. For children where reunification with parents was the preferred plan, consideration was given to the length of time that would be required to address



specific concerns and ensure a safe and lasting transition home. In a small number of cases the planned length of time under S20 had to be extended due to unforeseen circumstances and revised plans and authorisation was added to the child's record as appropriate.

However, completion of profile and matching forms was noted as being delayed in almost all child cases reviewed, with forms remaining in draft for extended periods beyond their stated due date.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Annual Adoption report 2022 – 2023 identified that 28 children in Peterborough had a plan for adoption and of those 17 children were made subject to a Placement Order. The Adoption Agency has a success rate of being able to place 71% of those children who had a placement order with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough adopters. Those placed outside the timescale of 1 year from the Placement Order being granted were harder to place with seven being part of sibling groups and the other four being over 4 years old or with complex developmental needs. This was fed into the marketing strategy for 2023-2024.

Over the year 21 children were adopted in Peterborough, which meant that 19% of Peterborough's Children in Care left care via adoption. This is a higher achievement nationally (10%), and Eastern Region (12%)

There are close relationships between the Recruitment & Assessment team and the Family Finding Teams which has enabled early identification of matches within the agency. This has also enabled early identification of children where an interagency match will be needed.

The Family Finding Team Manager for adoption attends the Permanency Planning Meetings that are held by the Safeguarding teams. These meetings track all children subject to Public Law Outline and Care Proceedings and this ensures that the Family Finding team is aware of all children that have a parallel plan for adoption and ensure any adoption links are started early in the child's journey. The Team Manager is also able to support and influence plans for children to ensure adoption is considered as a parallel plan at the earliest opportunity.

Peterborough has made positive progress over the year to improve the time elapsed from a child entering care and being placed for adoption. In March 2022 the average number of days in care was 478 and in March 2023 the elapsed time reduced to 415 days. This can be linked to the following practice:

- Increasing the use and promotion of early permanence placements.
- Early referrals to the family finding team, which allows earlier linking.
- Family finding attending the permanence planning meeting chaired by safeguarding, as allowed for the earlier identification of children.

The adoption agency reported that there had been no adoption breakdowns within the reporting year. The adoption panel met on 35 occasions within the year and all but one match was approved.

There was a slight increase in number of children and young people missing from care in this reporting year from 56 in March 2022 to 61 in March 2023 having at least one episode of missing in the year. An audit completed in April 2022 to understand the quality of service response to children that go missing identified that there was improvement in practice since



the previous audit, noting that exploitation risk assessment tools were used to understand current risks, MACE was referred to when that was required, children were offered a return home interview (RHI), and the voice of the young person was evident within those recordings, and strategy meetings captured the reason for a strategy meeting. However, the audit identified some areas for improvement to ensure that our young people that go missing are safeguarded and that there is a plan in place to mitigate further episodes of missing and risk.

During 2022 Peterborough developed a job description for a child exploitation co-ordinator with a responsibility to ensure that children may be at risk or are at risk of exploitation receive appropriate support and intervention. This post will be recruited to during the next financial year. The Safe Team provides practical advice and support to our Children in Care that are at risk of child exploitation. A child exploitation risk assessment tool was developed and rolled out, however audit identified that this was not consistently completed for all children at possible risk of exploitation. Training on the completion of the tool was undertaken with schools to support appropriate and timely identification of risk and emerging concern.

A critical area for all our children and young people cared for by Peterborough is to ensure that children and young people are rehabilitated home if there is a plan for this and it is safe and stable enough to do so. In April 2022 a business case was put forward to build a reunification team that would sit with the corporate parenting service, with a focus on reunification of young people who were in care that would be able to return home if support was provided. The team was agreed, and recruitment started. The impact of this area of activity will be reported in the next reporting year.

Areas for improvement 2023-2024

In March 2023 6% of our care leavers were in unsuitable accommodation. Working to achieve sufficiency of suitable accommodation is a priority and we will work together as a partnership to improve the offer available to care leavers.

Peterborough is working to ensure that we have sufficiency of foster carers to meet the demand for our children to live locally in Peterborough. Despite the sharp focus on this area there was a reduction in capacity of 4 households, and 7 beds fewer than the March 2022. A fostering, recruitment, marketing, and communication strategy 2022-2023 has been launched to increase the number of in house foster homes and to encourage people from all communities to consider fostering so that we can match the children that we care for with the best carers to meet their needs.

In March 2023 35.7% of our care leavers were not in education, employment, or training. Although this is a high percentage, we remain in a better position than statistical neighbours, England and nationally. We will continue to maintain a focus on this area to ensure that our care leavers are provided with the opportunity to

achieve potential.

The percentage of children in care that received a timely statutory child in care visit in year was 90%. This falls below our target of 98% and managers will work closely with social workers to ensure visits to our children are completed in timescale.

Homes stability for long-term children in care with stable homes over 2 years deteriorated over this year from 81% in March 2022 to 69.5% in March 2023. Peterborough remains committed to providing stable and secure home lives to the children that we care for, and we will work with providers and carers over the next year to ensure that children and carers are supported appropriately. A foster carer recruitment strategy has been developed and implemented with a key focus on recruiting local in house foster carers especially able to respond to our 11+ young people.

Our response to children missing from home and care requires strengthening. An audit undertaken in April 2022 identified that the response to children missing was not consistent and there is a requirement to have a strong focus on this area to support improvements and safeguard our children.





Children cared for out of area do experience some inequality of support because they are not within a 20-mile radius of Peterborough, and this included access to resources and support. This is an area that will require further development to ensure that children placed out of borough are placed in areas where resources are available. Child Sexual Exploitation risk assessments were completed, however there was evidence of risks not being updated and this is practice which requires strengthening.

Support for children placed out of area when there is evidence of exploitation is not as strong as for a child placed within the area. The Safe Team does not offer support to young people out of area and Return Home Interviews are completed by the allocated worker and not the Met Hub. This will require further scrutiny in 2023-24 to ensure all children receive the correct services regardless of where their placement is.

The exploitation team will review the child exploitation tool in the next reporting period to ensure that is fit for purpose and easy to use. A data analyst will be recruited to in the next financial

55

year to better understand exploitation and missing within Peterborough to support all partners to act to reduce risks to young people.

The exploitation team will develop a contextual safeguarding framework to support all partners to know how to identify contextual safeguard and what to do to support a young person at risk of exploitation. This will include all children and hold a specific focus for our CiC.

In February 2023 the National Regional Adoption Agency released the National Standards for Early Permanence and these are standards that all Local Authorities are expected to achieve. Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Adoption Agency has developed a working group, headed up by the Head of the Regional Adoption Agency, to develop an action plan to ensure successful implementation of the standards. This has started internally with the RAA, however this will be broadened to include colleagues in the Safeguarding & Children in Care services so there can be a joined up approach.

CARE LEAVERS AND TRANSITION

Principle 7: To prepare children and young people for adulthood and independence

Achievements

As part of the Care Leaver offer, PCC has partnered with Right Resolution, a local organisation that supports young people leaving care. Right Resolution and the Leaving Care team co-deliver monthly drop-in sessions for care leavers where they offer holistic support to young people to reduce social isolation, provide a valuable support network and help them achieve their individual aspirations. This offer has supported up to 45 care leavers between the age of 16-24 at any one time.

The Care Leavers Forum has shared feedback on pathway planning and is working with the Leaving Care Team to co-produce training materials on money management for young people and consult on areas to be included in foster care training, including a focus on a trauma informed approach.

The Care Leavers Forum has engaged with a Housing Officer to share ideas around support needed for young people entering independent living. Attendees from the forum have also worked with Anglia Ruskin University to attend Social Work Lectures and talk about positive social work practice and support the interview process for students applying for the social work degree.

The fostering service and Children in Care Service has worked hard to ensure that young people wishing to remain with



their foster carer in a Staying Put arrangement is able to do this during this financial year. Twenty-eight children between the ages of 17 and 24 remained with their foster carers under staying put arrangements, which is a slight increase to the previous year (21/22). There is specific training for foster carers related to supporting young people to develop their independence skills within staying put arrangements.

A thematic audit of Leaving Care young people undertaken in August 2022 identified that transitions for young people leaving care were planned well and unexpected changes were responded to swiftly, however better contingency planning is required to mitigate against unexpected changes. Pathway plans were initiated when a young person reached the age of 16, where appropriate. Some young people commenced in care later, mainly because they came into care after their 17th birthday, however all Pathway Plans were started within three months of the young person being received into care. While the majority of Pathway plans identified short, medium, and long-term aspirations for young people, several plans audited were not clear and they were not always linked to timescales.

For the vast majority of 19–21-year-olds pathway plans were updated within timescales and all plans had review dates within them, however, in a small number of records, changes had occurred for the young adult that should have triggered an earlier review, and this had not happened.

In November 2022 Pathway Plan training for Social Workers and Personal Advisers was delivered and trainers included young people from the Care Leaders Forum (CLF). Members of the

CLF had previously reviewed and made changes to the pathway plan format and training was delivered to support the roll out of the new pathway plan.

In all the young people's files audited accommodation was appropriate and included in planning. All homes were deemed suitable and evidenced the ability of the home to meet the young person's needs. Visits to our leaving care young people occurred at least within the 8-week statutory time scale unless there had been agreement with the young person to alter the visiting frequency. There was evidence within visits that pathway plans were reviewed in 50% of the records reviewed and pathway plans were updated using the voice of the young person.

An audit of care leavers undertaken in June 2022 identified that there was good evidence to show that children in care and care leavers were supported to obtain, or had important documents such as national insurance numbers, birth certificates and passports. However, this was not the case for separated migrant children / separated migrant care leavers.

Areas for improvement 2023 to 2024

To work alongside our young people transitioning to independent living to ensure that they are provided with good quality advice regarding money management, planning, accessing housing support, and independent living.

To ensure that plans for our leaving care young people include contingency planning to mitigate against unexpected changes that can impact negatively on their transitions.

Pathway plans to be strengthened and to include SMART actions with realistic timescales.

Assessments and plans need to include the voice and views of the young person.

To review the capacity of the Leaving Care service to ensure that there is sufficiency to meet the service demands appropriately.

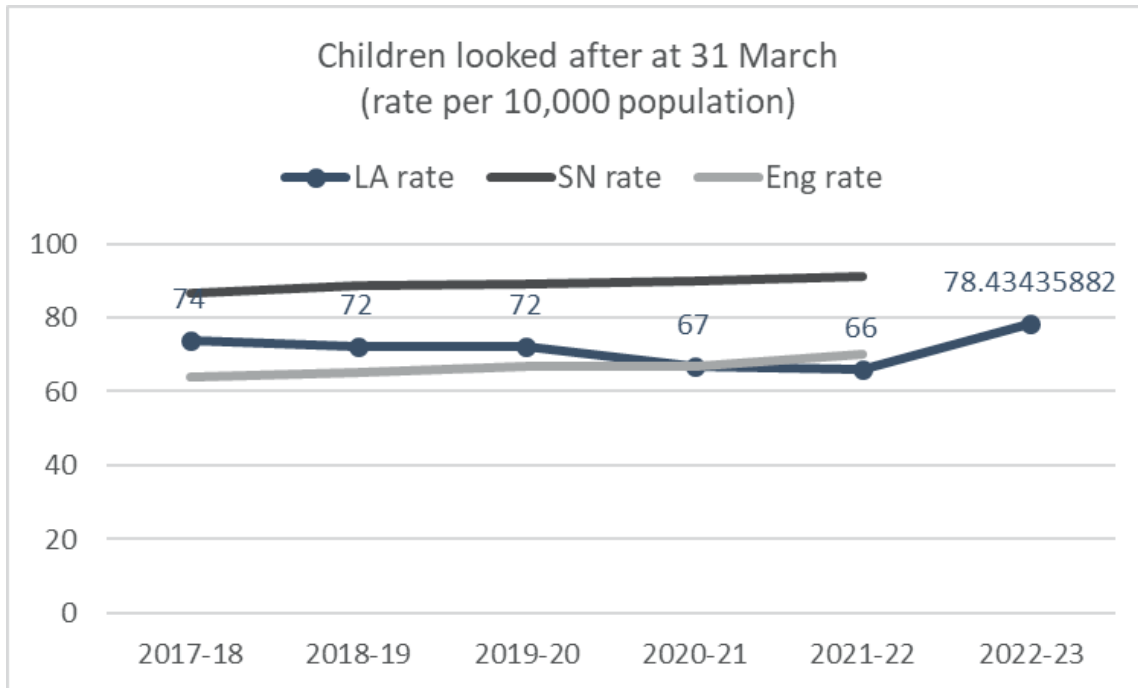
Although audit in June 2022 identified that all important documents were available to young people leaving care, this was not the case for our separated migrant young people. This area is complex and further work will be required to ensure that we have done all that we can to support all young people to transition into adulthood as smoothly as possible.

Areas for focus in 2023-24

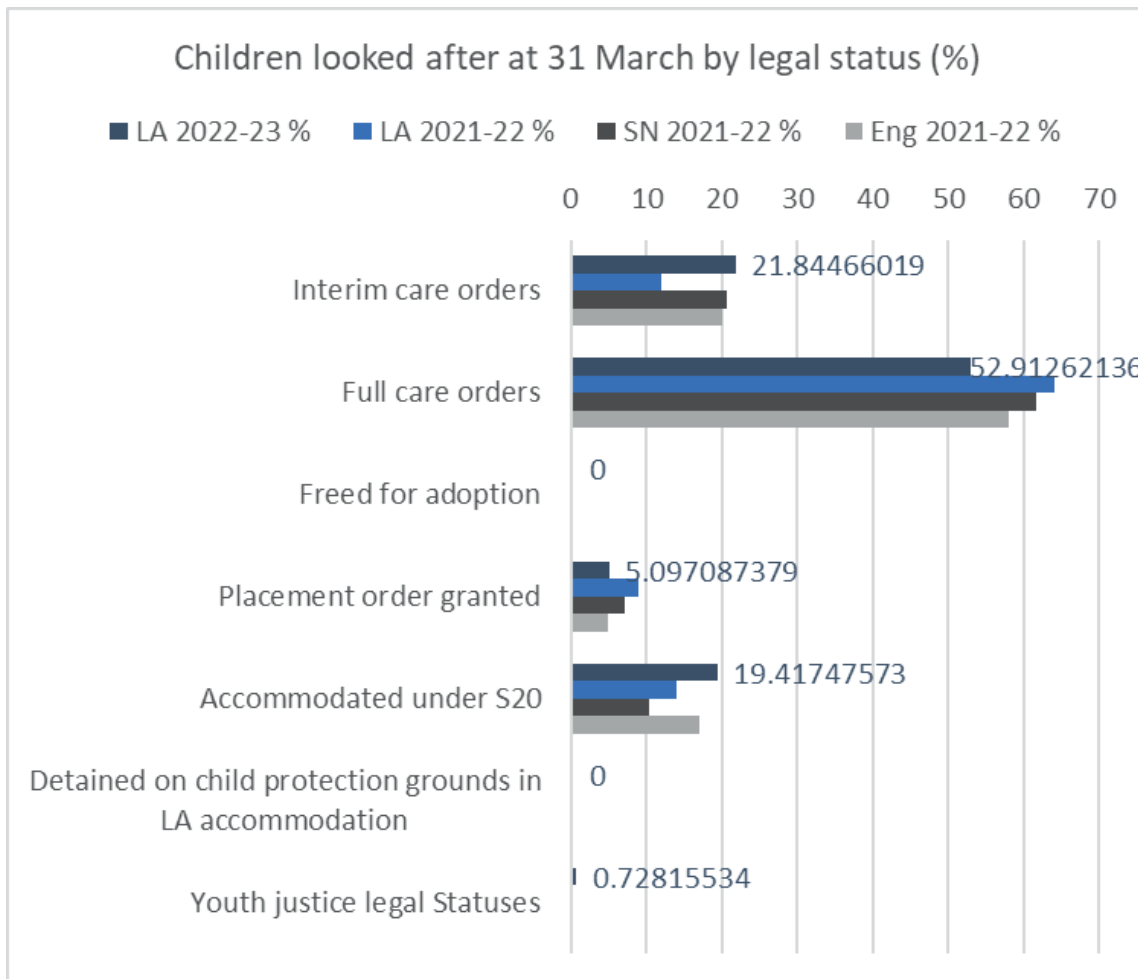
- To undertake an effective corporate parenting self-assessment using the Local Government Association self-assessment tool.
- To review the focus and workplan of the Corporate Parenting Committee following the completion of the self-assessment.
- Review the Corporate Parenting scorecard data to ensure that it provides an overview of the areas of focus as well as usual business.
- To strengthen the role and remit of the Corporate Parenting Champions.
- To review the membership of the Corporate Parenting Committee to ensure that all areas of the council are represented that can improve the lived experiences of our children looked after and care leavers.
- Recruitment and retention of foster carers.
- Strengthen the support offered to our care leavers and ensure that the service is sufficient to meet the needs of these young people.
- Strengthen the way in which our young people can engage with and have access to key resources and activities who are living in homes 20 + miles from Peterborough.
- Review and strengthen the local offer of services available for children and young people requiring mental health support to ensure sufficiency to meet demand across the spectrum of need.
- Strengthen the health data reporting for mental health support to our CiC and care leavers. To include the impact of the service offer on improved outcomes for CiC and care leavers.
- Maintain a strong focus on physical health of our children in care and care leavers to ensure there are no delays in accessing dental care and health assessments / subsequent treatments.



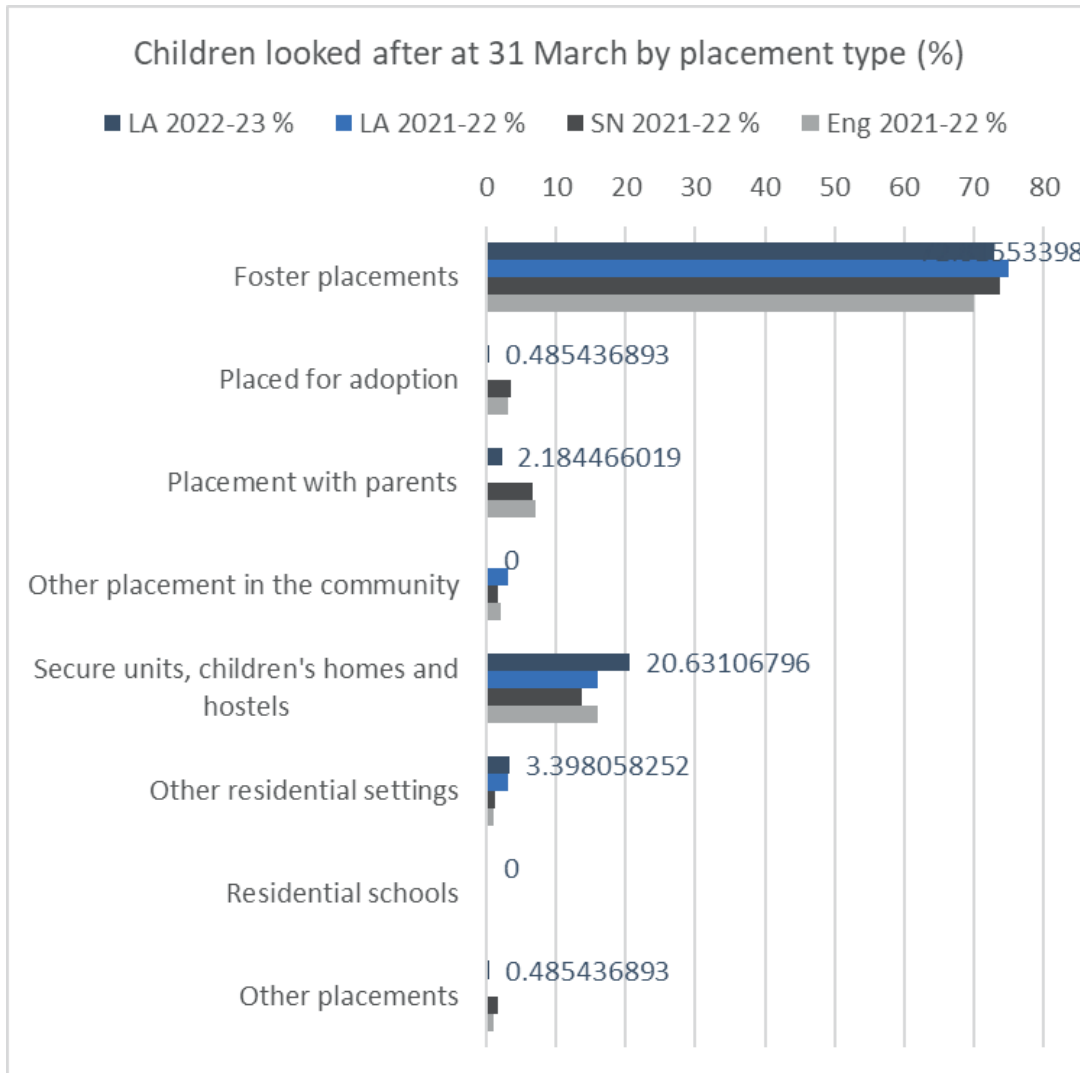
CHILDREN’S SOCIAL CARE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REPORT EXTRACT MARCH 2023



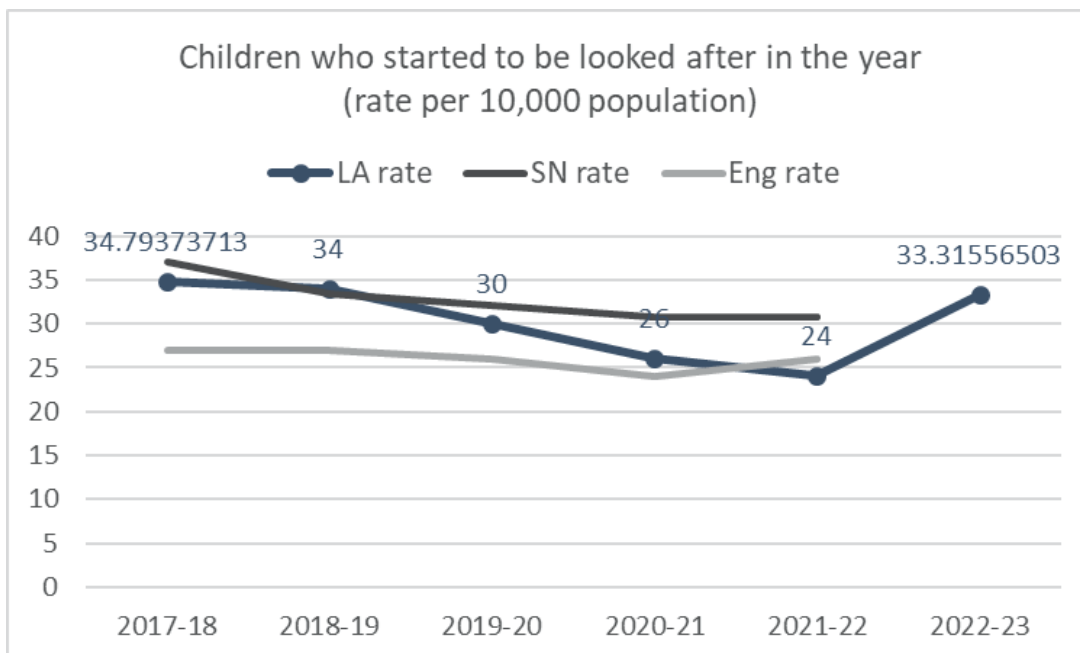
During this reporting year PCC saw an increase in the number of children looked after by PCC. This increase placed PCC above England and below our statistical neighbours.



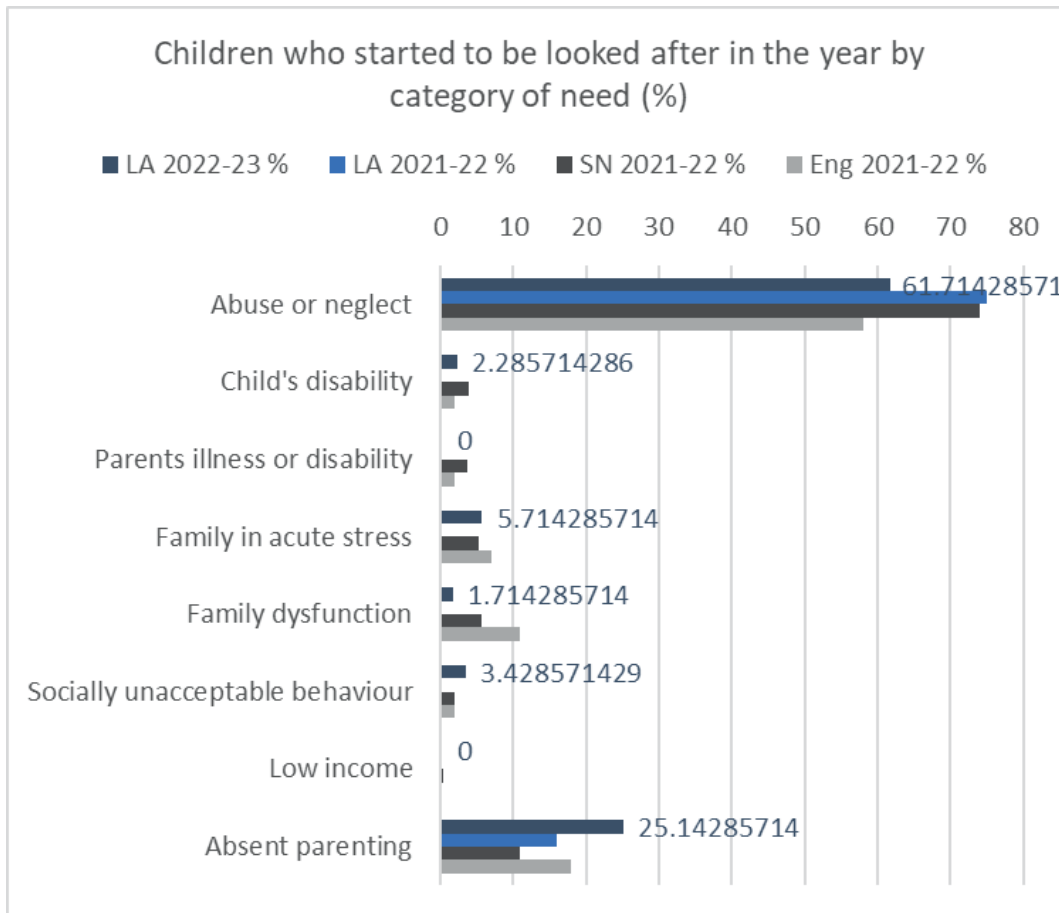
The table above shows that almost 80% of our Children in Care have a legal status that has been agreed through family court processes.



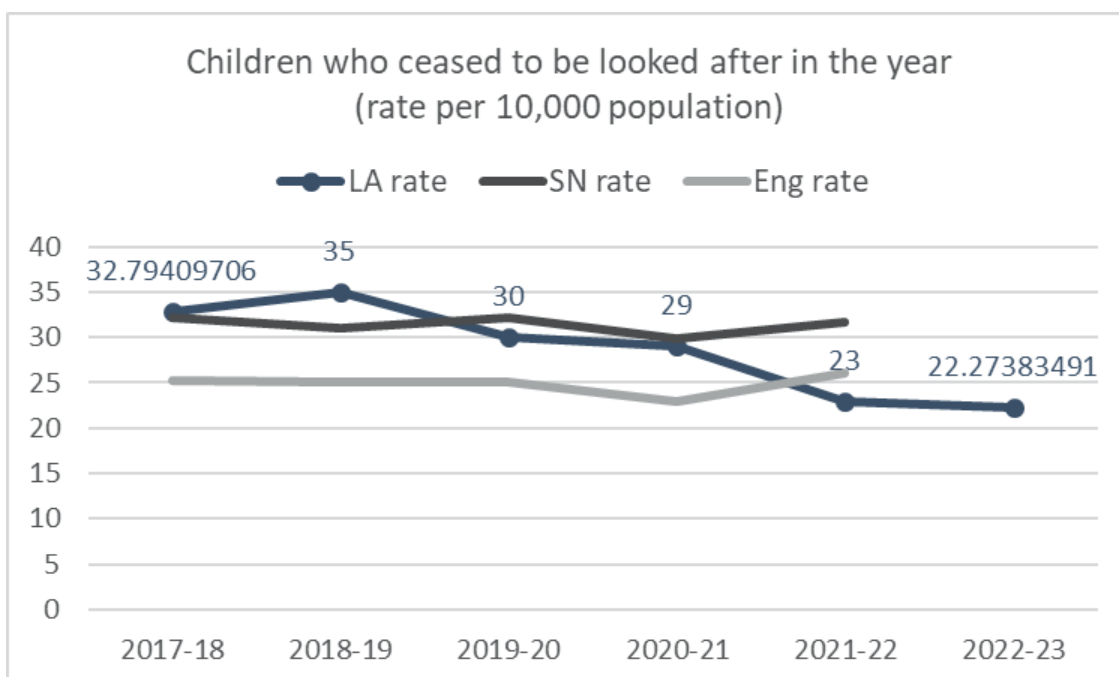
The table above shows that the majority of our Children in Care are cared for within foster homes.



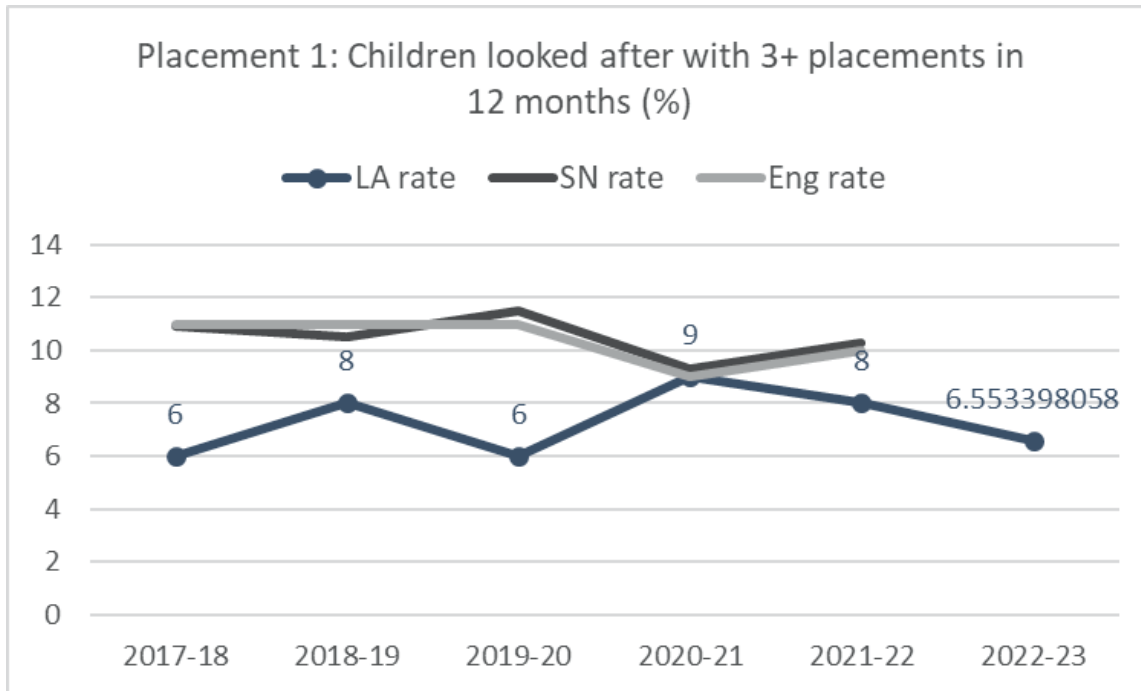
There was a significant increase of children being cared by PCC in this reporting year with an increase of 43 children and young people from 369 in March 2022 to 412 in March 2023



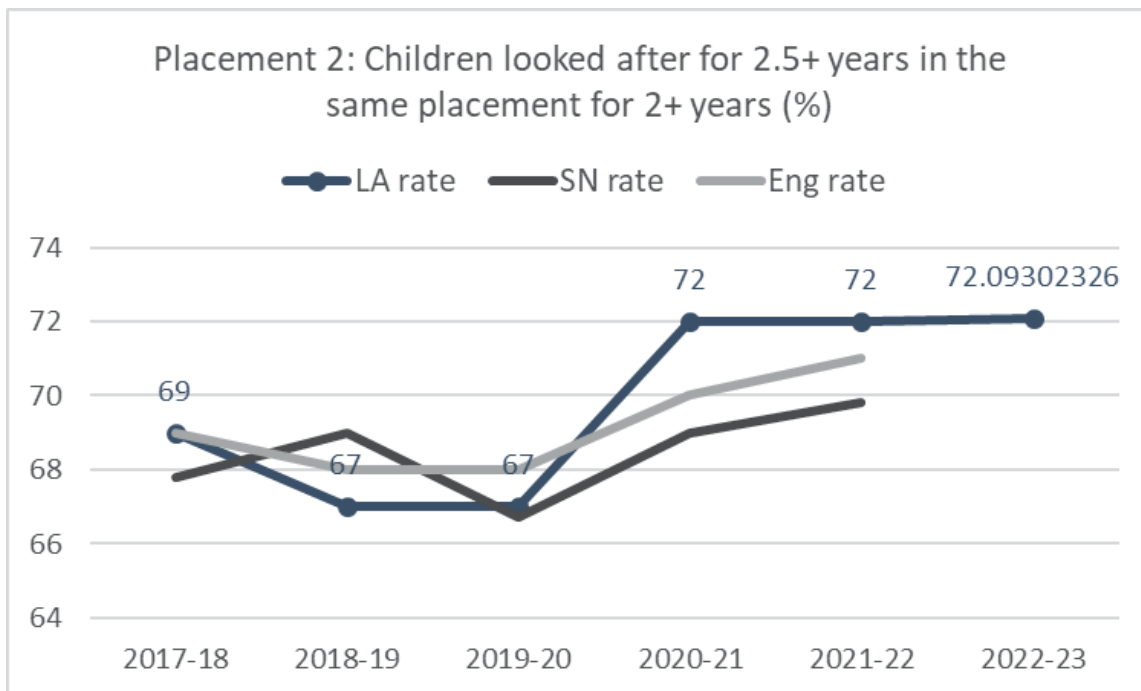
The table above shows that the majority of our Children in Care are received into care because of abuse or neglect (62%) and 25% of our children and young people were received into our care due to absent parenting. This number is higher because PCC has seen an increase in the number of separated migrant young people coming to PCC.



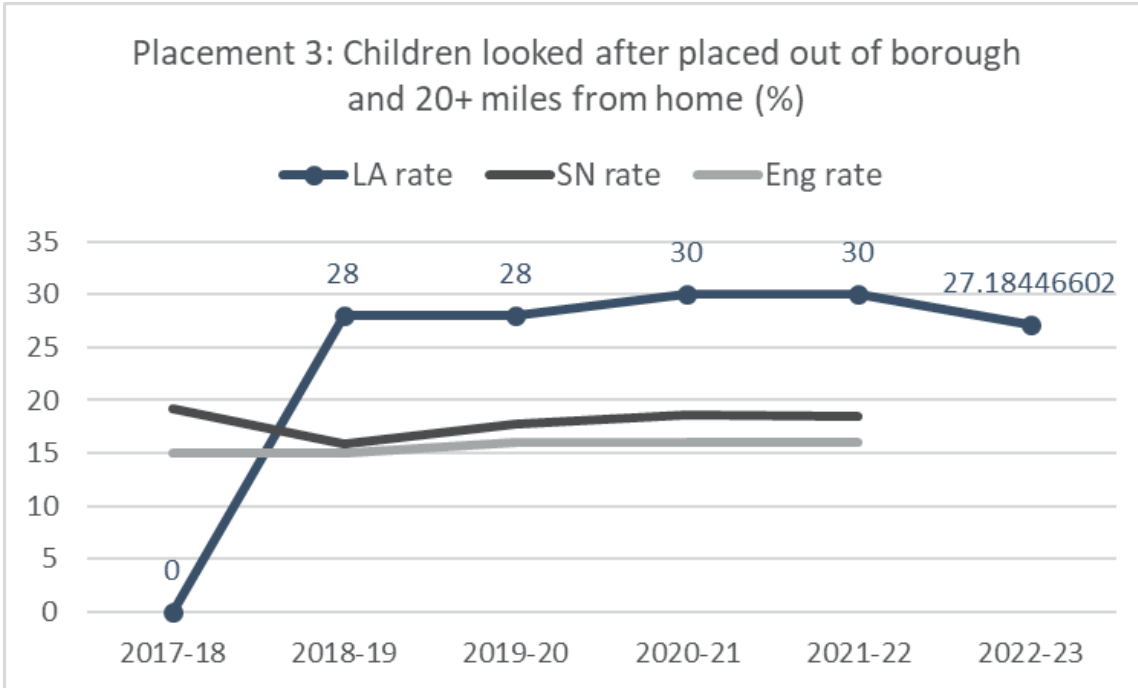
The table above shows that there was a reduction in the number of children and young people ceasing to be cared for by PCC in this reporting year. Data for England and statistical neighbours has not been released for 2022-2023.



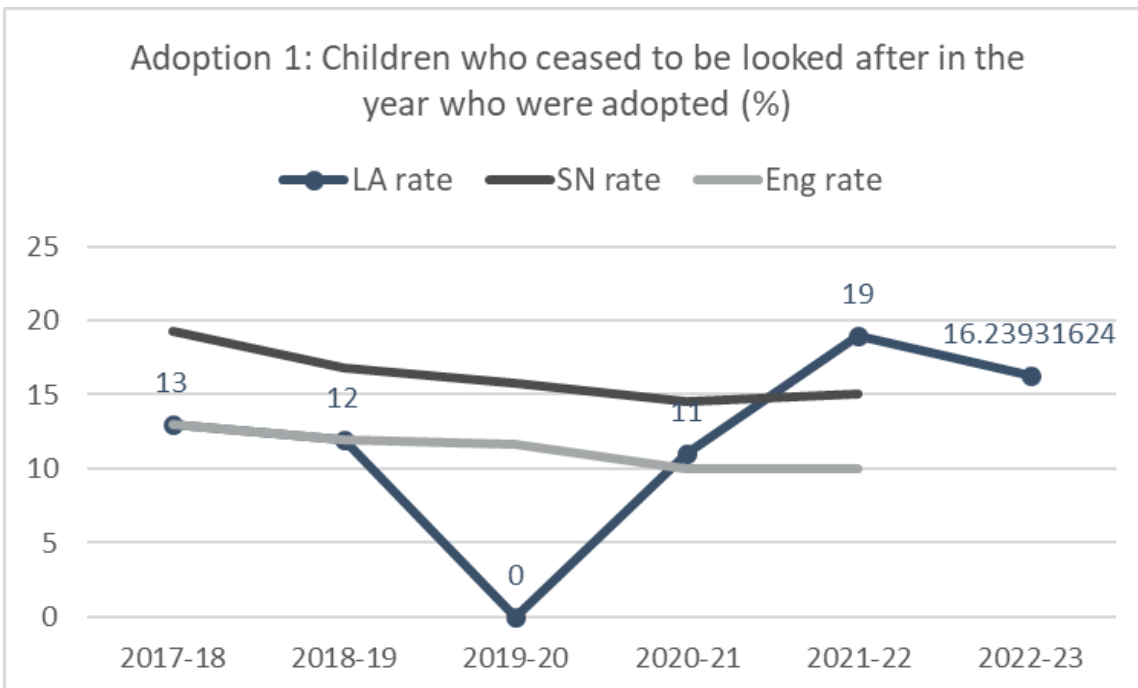
The table above shows that 6.5% of our Children in Care experienced three or more placement moves in a year. This is lower than statistical neighbours and the national rate.



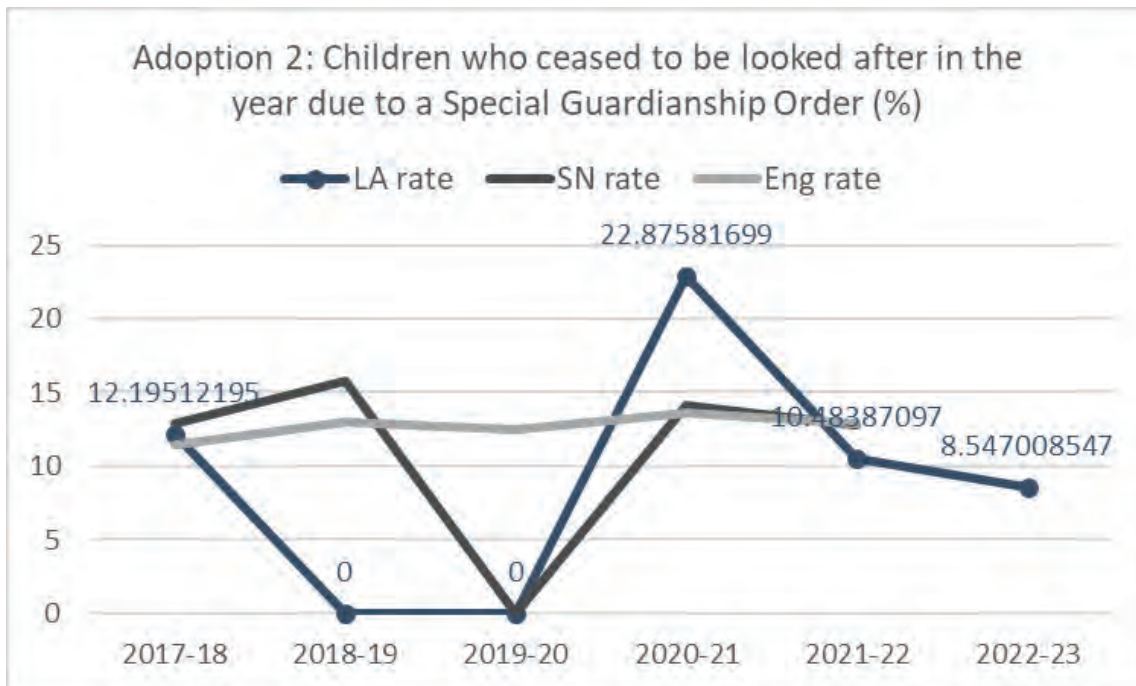
The table above shows that PCC has maintained a good level of stability for our Children in Care with 75% of all Children in Care living within a stable home for 2+ years. This is above statistical neighbours and England data for the last financial year: there is no comparable data available for this reporting year.



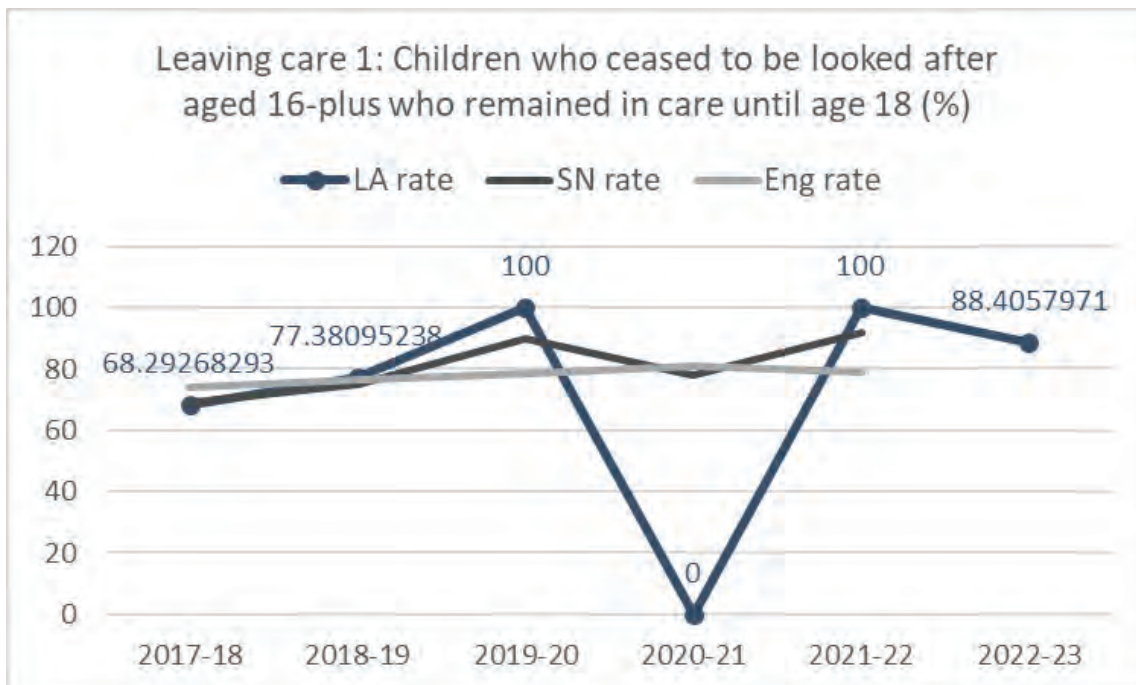
27% of our Children in Care are living in homes that are 20+ miles from PCC. This is higher than statistical neighbours and England. PCC is actively working to recruit foster carers within Peterborough so that our children can be cared for in an area that they know. There is no comparable data available currently.



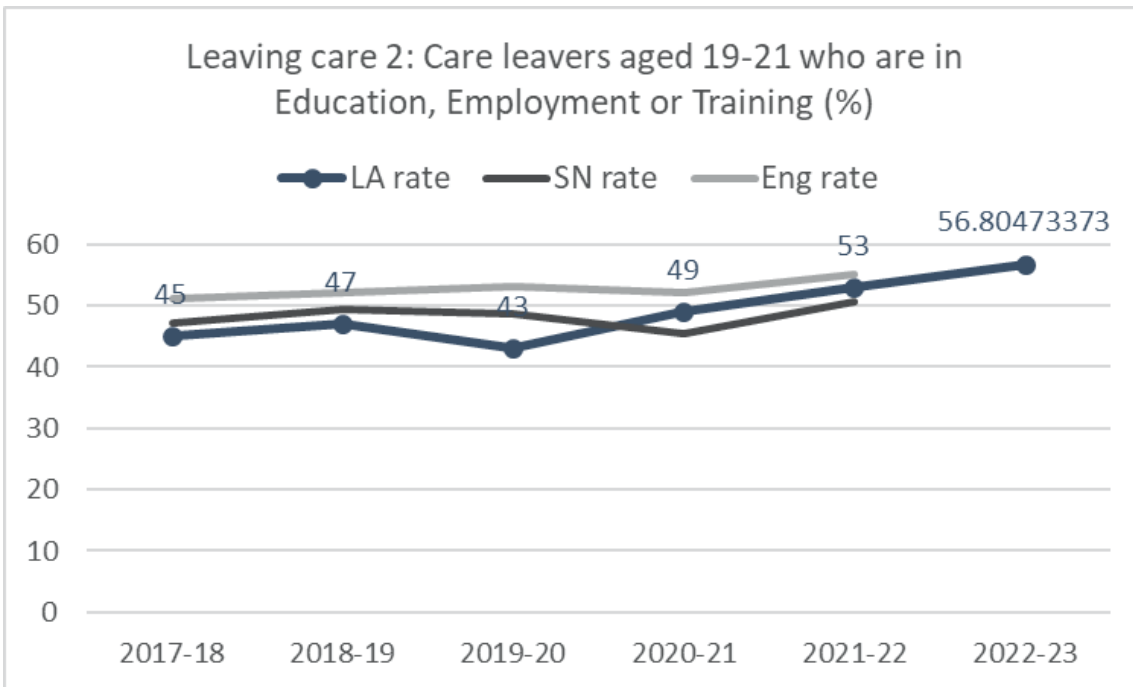
16% of children that ceased to be looked after in the year were adopted. There is no comparable data available currently.



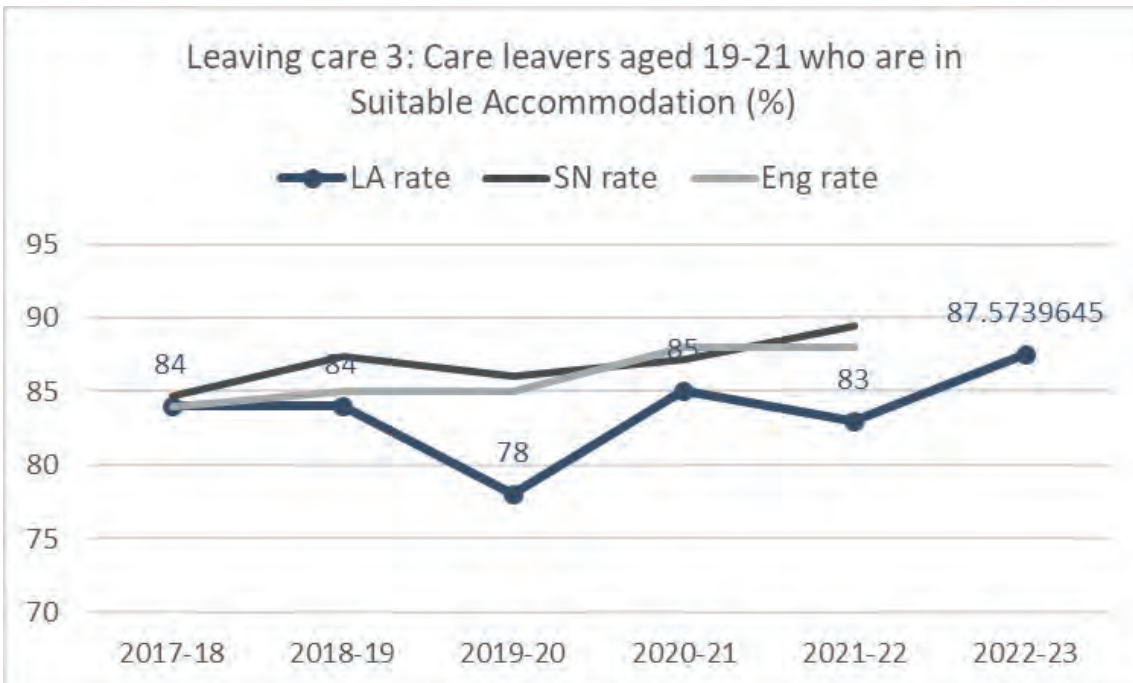
8.5% of children that ceased to be looked after in the year moved because they were subject to a Special Guardianship Order. This shows a slow decline since 2020-2021.



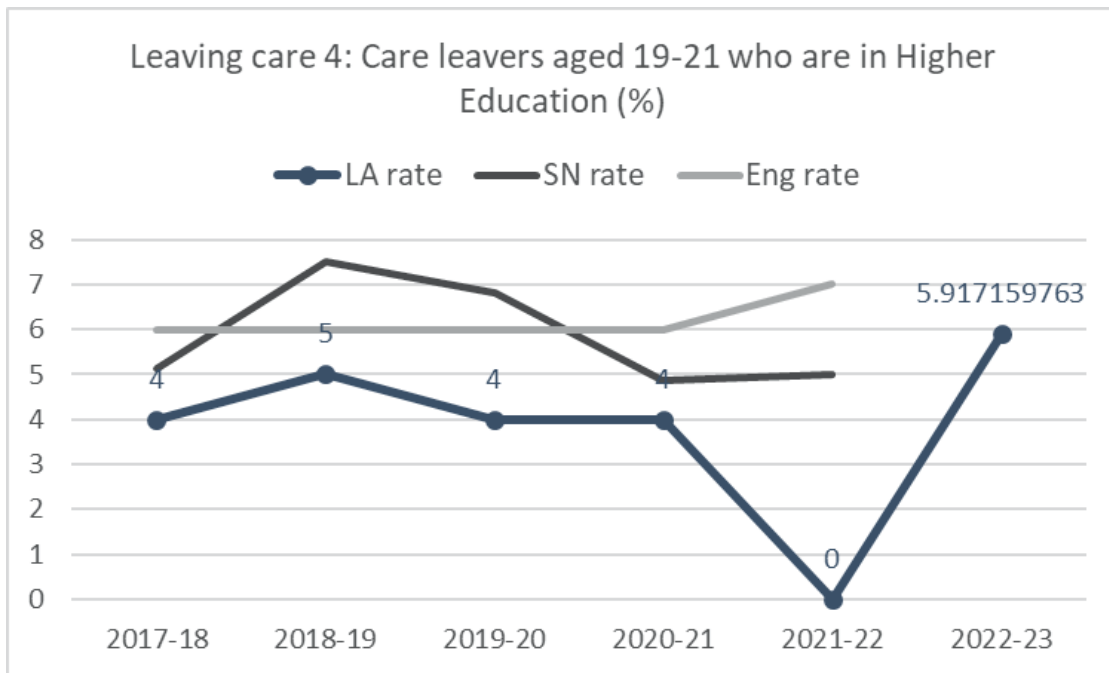
88.4% young people aged 16 remained in care until they were 18. This is a drop of 18% from the previous year, however PCC continues to compare favourably against statistical neighbours and England.



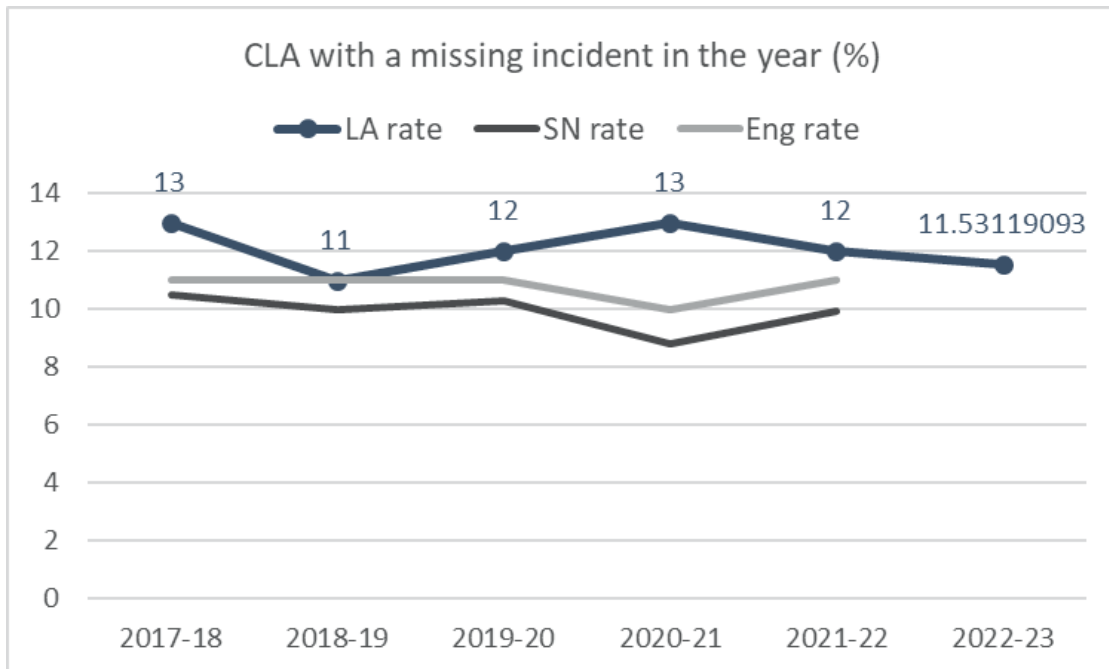
PCC has continued to improve in this area with 56.8% of our Care Leavers being in education, employment, or training. PCC compares favourably against statistical neighbours and England.



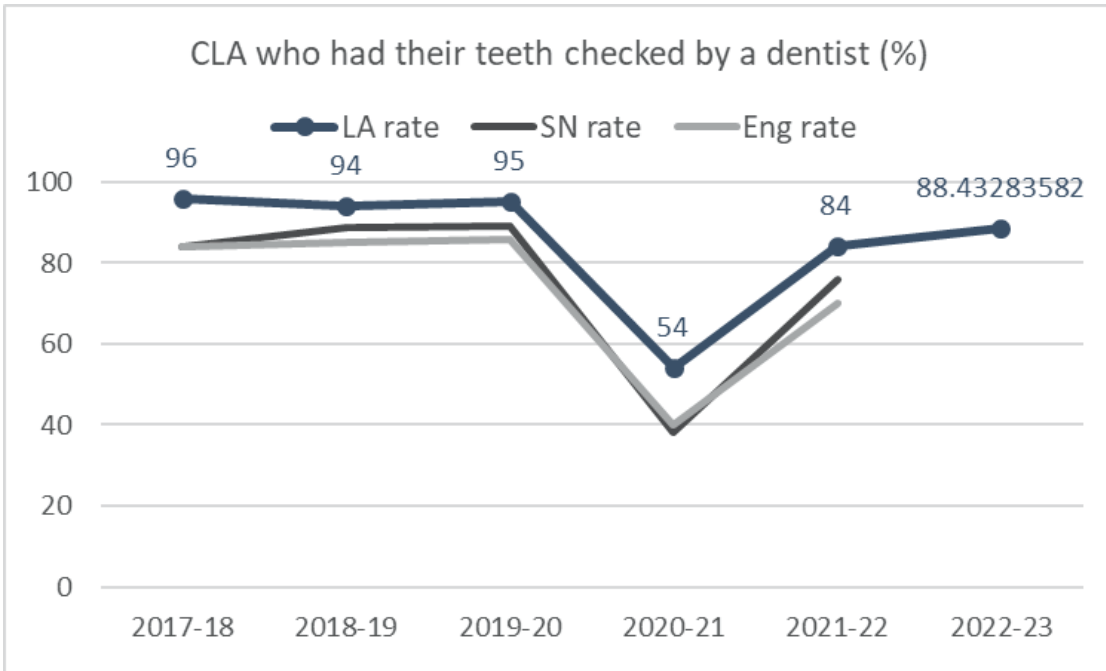
87.6% of PCC care leavers were in suitable accommodation. This is an improvement on the previous reporting period and aligns us with England and statistical neighbour trajectory.



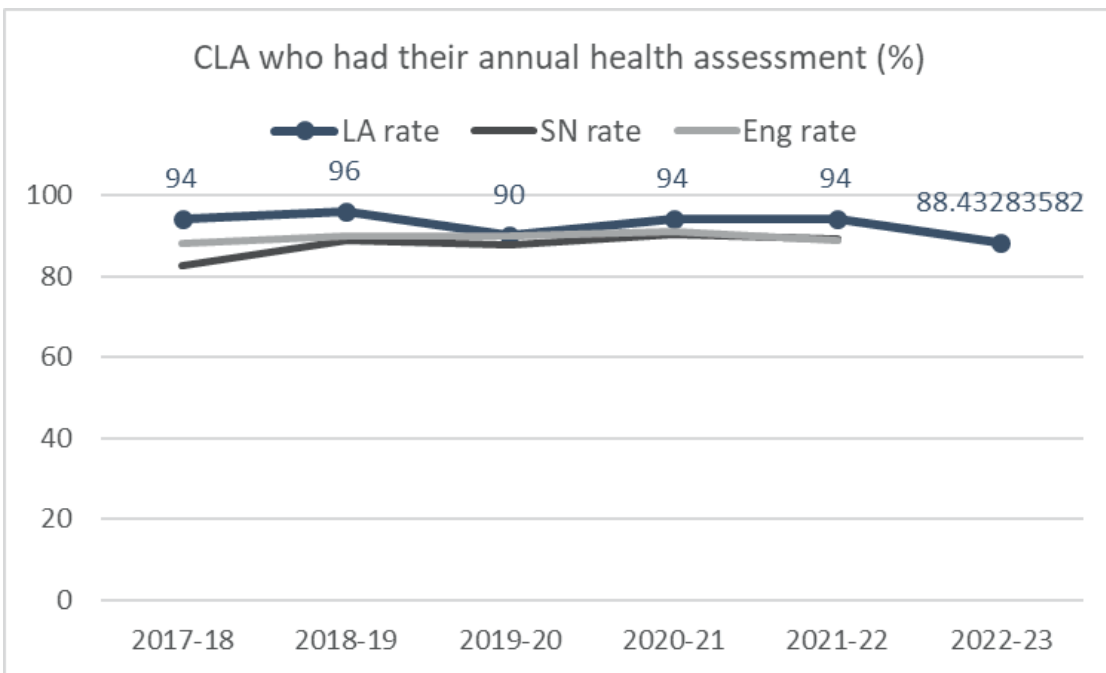
There has been a significant increase of care leavers accessing higher education during this reporting period.



11.5% of our Children in Care had one or more missing incident in the year. This is a reduction from the previous two reporting years and brings PCC to a comparable figure with England and statistical neighbours.



During 2020-2022 there was a significant drop in children accessing the dentist because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has improved gradually 2021 but is not at pre COVID number yet.



There has been a decline in the percentage of annual health assessments completed during this reporting year.

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Our Promise to Children and Young People in Care

This promise was written by your Children in Care Council and Children's Services to make sure you are getting the right services and support.



1

We will work to keep you safe and help you to keep yourself safe.



2

We will do everything we can to make you feel cared about, valued and respected as an individual.



3

We will be honest with you and explain if we are unable to do something we said we would do. We will not make unrealistic promises to you.



4

We will involve you in decision making so your views are listened to, and will explain when we make a decision you may not like or agree with.



5

We will work to keep you in a supportive and caring environment where you feel safe and happy.



6

We will support you to maintain a healthy lifestyle and help look after your physical and mental health.



7

We will help you see your family, friends and other people who are important to you. If there are people we can't support you to see, we will explain why.



8

We will support you to achieve your goals and reach your potential, in your education, hobbies and interests.



9

We will work with you to give you all the help and support you need to make a success of moving on from care to adult life.

10

We will make sure you have the up-to-date information you need, including who is working with you and how to give us your views or ask us for help.



To give us feedback on how well Children's Services are keeping these promises, contact the Participation Team:

participation@peterborough.gov.uk



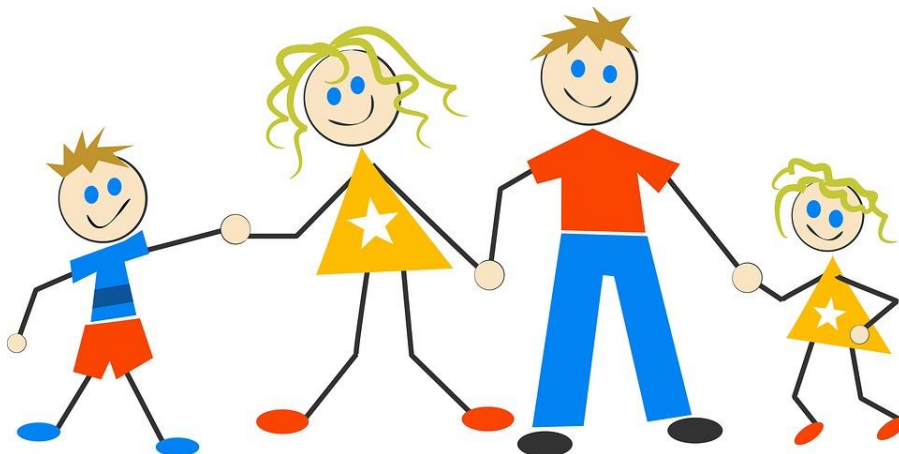
PETERBOROUGH
CITY COUNCIL

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PETERBOROUGH AND CAMBRIDGESHIRE

CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY

2022 - 2023



Document Control Sheet

Purpose of Document	To identify our priorities in relation to children in care and those that have experience of being in care. The vision, and plan to address the priorities.
Document ratified	
Equality Impact Assessment, Completed?	Not Applicable
Document Lead, author and their role	Myra O'Farrell Head of Service Corporate Parenting
What other documents should this be considered with	Sufficiency strategy Peterborough Strategic Framework Cambridgeshire Strategic Framework

Revisions

Version	Page	Description of Amendment	Date of Change
	throughout	The strategy has been amended to align the two separate Corporate Parenting strategies into one document.	December 2022

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Our Vision

At Peterborough and Cambridgeshire there is a vision to ensure children have the opportunities to reach their potential (PCC Strategic Framework 2022-2025: priority 2) are supported to have the best possible outcomes, accessing the right support to do so (Cambridgeshire Strategic Framework 2022-23)



We have a strong responsibility in ensuring that children who are in our care and who have had experience of it, are included in the priorities that shape their lives into adulthood. Our Strategy actively promotes resilience, improving life chances, developing creative approaches to care planning whilst adhering to budget requirements.

The Strategy links to the corporate priorities of both Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and is part of the integral ambition of both councils to provide outstanding services to this vulnerable group.

The purpose of the Strategy is to amalgamate the two previously separate Corporate Parenting Strategies into one document as this is a shared service across both councils. The Strategy builds upon the strengths already achieved and the next steps in improving the areas identified that need further focus.

Cambridgeshire County Council Strategic Framework 2022-2023: Priority Four

Children and Young People: We are committed to ensuring Children and Young People have the opportunity to thrive, so we will:

- Focus on the early years of a child's life to provide them with the best opportunities possible to give them the Best Start in Life
- Develop the Children's Collaborative as part of the Integrated Care System in order to better align health, early help and social care support, to improve outcomes in areas including mental health and child criminal exploitation
- Work across the partnership including Health, District Councils, the community and voluntary sector to deliver targeted support at neighbourhood and district level in line with our Early Help Strategy: Strong Families, Strong Communities
- Continue the Family Safeguarding approach in our Children's Social Care Services, so that children and young people are safeguarded from harm
- Support our children and young people in care to achieve the best possible outcomes and ensure that our care leavers are able to access the support they need as they move into adult life
- Ensure that our schools have the support they need in order that all of our children, including those with Special Educational Needs succeed in learning.

Peterborough Corporate Strategy 2022-2025: Priority Outcomes 2

Prevention, Independence and Resilience Our plans:

Priority Outcomes for children and young people are safe from harm and lead healthy lives children and young people are confident, resilient, thrive in their learning and engage positively and actively in their communities.

All young care leavers can access a good, enhanced local offer that meets their health, education, housing and employment needs.

Adults react to pressing social challenges and emergencies (i.e. cost of living crisis), providing imminent help & support to those who are most at risk of slipping into crisis long-term care and support when needed is personalised and keeps people connected to their communities

Ensuring transitions between health and social care services work well.

Find ways to create job opportunities for our most productive generation, then create an environment of hope and a vision and plan that inspires the young to do more and do more locally Education & Skills for All.

Narrow the productivity gap within our future City workforce through an education strategy and plan for early and secondary years and a plan our parents and communities can get excited about.

An adult skill offering that meets the needs of our residents and existing and future employers. This includes our residents that are most at risk of exclusion from society

How this Strategy links to other activities

- A Pledge to children in care and care leavers which outlines our commitments to them and the support they can expect from us
- A Local Offer for Care Leavers, informed by the views of our children and young people
- Corporate Parenting Committee's which are well established and are co-chaired with young people who have care experience.
- The Virtual School, which works with schools, colleges, training providers, education settings and Children's Social Care to improve educational outcomes for children in care and care supported by high quality placements needed by children in care and care leavers
- A joint Social Care and Housing Strategy that focuses on plans to prevent homelessness and support delivery of the Corporate Strategy
- A commitment to ensuring that Corporate Parenting responsibilities are embedded in all applicable policies, strategies and commissioning arrangements led by the Corporate Parenting Committees.
- The Council's overarching Corporate Strategies with dedicated priorities for children in care and those with care experience.

- A Placement Sufficiency Plan, that sets out how we will deliver the range and number of high quality placements needed by children in care and care leavers
- The children in Care Council and the Care reviewed and revised the children



Our Promise

The promises made to children in care and those who have experienced care are set out below and were produced by the Children in Care Councils in both Local Authorities. These therefore are the areas they feel are the most important aspects of how those caring for them should exercise their responsibilities.

Our Promise to Children and Young people in Care

1. **Keeping you Safe means** We will work to keep you safe and help you to keep yourself safe.
2. **Respecting You means** We will do everything we can to make you feel cared about and valued and respected as an individual.
3. **Being honest means** We will be honest with you and explain if we are unable to do something we said we would do. We will not make unrealistic promises to you.
4. **Making decisions together means** We will involve you in decision making so your views are listened to and will explain when we make a decision you may not agree with.
5. **Where you live means** We will work to keep you in a supportive and caring environment where you feel safe and happy.
6. **Your health means** We will support you to maintain a healthy lifestyle and help look after your physical and mental health.
7. **Your relationships means** We will help you see your family, friends and other people who are important to you. If there are people we can't support to see you we will explain why.
8. **Achievements means** We will support you to achieve your goals and reach your potential, in your education, hobbies and interests.

Those with Care Experience: the offer

1. **Respect-** We will listen to you as individuals with an open mind, with your different needs, ideas and beliefs. We will tailor the service to fit you or make sure you have an explanation if we are not able to do something for you.
2. **Helping you do the best you can-** We will value your strengths and talents, encouraging your aspirations. We will support you with education and employment. If we can't meet your needs we will try to help you find a service that can. We will do our best to help you break-down barriers you might encounter with other agencies, to ensure you reach your goals.
3. **Clear Communication-** We will stay in touch with you, make sure you can contact your worker in a way that is best for you. We will let you know how to complain or access an

advocate if you are not happy with the service you have. We will invite you to express your views on how services can be improved.

4. **Finding a home-** We will work alongside you to prepare you for your move into independent living. We will help you think about choices available and to find accommodation and furnishings that are right for you. We will do everything we can to ensure you are happy and feel safe when you move to independent living. We recognise that at different times we might need to reconsider the plan depending on your differing needs.
5. **Support-** We will provide support set out in the current regulations and guidance. As well as information, advice, practical and financial help we will provide emotional support. We recognise that you might change your mind about what you want to do. If we cannot meet those needs we will try to help you find a service that can.

Strategic Context

The Children Act 1989 sets out Local Authority responsibilities to Looked After Children. Volume 3 of the Guidance Regulations: Planning Transitions to Adulthood for Care Leavers and gives details of how Care Leavers should be provided with support and the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 extended the responsibility of the Local Authority to young people leaving care, up to the age of 25.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 defined for the first time in law the responsibility of Corporate Parents to ensure, as far as possible, secure, nurturing and positive experiences for Looked After Children and Young People, and Care Leavers. Being a Corporate Parent means doing everything possible for every Looked After Child and Care Leaver to give them same opportunities that other children receive. This means that Corporate Parents should:

- act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those Children and Young People
- encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings, and take them into account, while promoting high aspirations and trying to secure the best outcomes for them
- make sure they have access to services
- make sure that they are safe, with stable home lives, relationships, education or work
- prepare them for adulthood and independent living

Local Authorities do not act alone in their Corporate Parenting role. The Children Act 1989 placed a duty on the NHS, Housing and Education authorities to assist Social Care Services to fulfil their responsibility by providing support and services.

What is Corporate Parenting

It means that there is a shared responsibility by the councils, the elected members, employees, and partner agencies to support children and young people in having the best start in life, no matter that starting point.

Being a good Corporate Parent means

- we accept children in our care are our responsibility
- we provide them with the same outcomes as any other reasonable parent
- prioritise their needs

We do this by working closely with the Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers forum to ensure we are listening and acting on their views in order to continuously improve our services.

Working in Partnership

Corporate Parenting works collaboratively with a range of partners to ensure children and young people have a wide range of opportunities and access to services to prevent things escalating. We do this by working closely with Fostering, Commissioning, the Virtual School, Looked After Children Team in Health called CPFT (Peterborough) and ICS (Cambridgeshire).

Local Context

The numbers of children in Cambridgeshire have reduced through targeted interventions over the last year. For Peterborough the number of children has remained relatively consistent over a number of years. Both Local Authorities have adopted the Family Safeguarding Model of Social Work Intervention, believing that the majority of children are best served in remaining with their families and where they cannot that they receive the right intervention from the point of access. As of the 31st March 2022, there were 596 children in care in Cambridgeshire and 344 in Peterborough.

Finding the right type of homes for children and young people has become more of a challenge over the last few years. This is a similar experience nationally and regionally.

Our Approach to Our Priorities:

Keeping you safe

Objective

To provide early responsive multi-agency intervention and support to prevent children and young people coming into care. Where children and young people come into care, we will use



the same approach from early help to be responsive and timely in providing services to prevent a child's living arrangements breaking down.

We will work directly to help children and young people to understand how to keep themselves safe. This will include a multi-agency approach and care planning.

We will include children and young people in preparing for adulthood so that they stay safe as they enter adulthood.

Where needed we will get the right specialist services to support children and young people's needs.

Evidence

Reduction of children coming into care by providing early help approaches, implementing the multi-agency Family Safeguarding Model of Intervention to Support Families.

Reduction of the number of contact to referrals as a marker of evidencing we are offering early, multi-agency interventions.

Impact Measures

- Reduction in the number of children coming into care
- Increase the number of children being supported through early intervention, and Early Help Services.
- Increase the use of de-escalation of need in relation to child protection to child in need.
- Reunify children and families when it is safe to do so.
- Increase Staying Put as the support for post 18 care planning.
- Offer return home interviews to all children who go missing.
- Improve stability in the homes to children in care who live further away.



Respecting You

Objective

We will ensure that every child who comes into care has a 'Welcome Pack' so that young people know what being in care is about, with key information about children's rights and what happens next. Where possible we will ensure that every child has a 'buddy' from another young person who is in care who can offer guidance and real life experience of what it is like to be in care.

We will undertake regular direct work with children and young people linked to their care plan so that children and young people are informed about their plan and can fully participate by sharing their feelings, thoughts and wishes.

We will do everything we can to make a child feel cared about. As part of this children and young people will be offered an advocate in some instances if it is felt that additional support is needed. The 'Welcome Pack' also gives children information about what it is like to be cared for away from family.

Evidence

Age appropriate 'Welcome Pack's' are in every office for Social Workers to share and support those coming into care.

Regular audits review the frequency and quality of direct work being undertaken along with the usage of direct work tools used. The learning from these will be reviewed through repeat audit activity.

Regularly review each child's care plan through the childcare review system.

Ensure that every care plan has a focus on outcomes with SMART planning to support this.

Impact Measures

- Increase permanency plans such as adoption, Special Guardianship Orders and long-term matching for foster homes.
- Increase the use of advocates and independent visitors.
- Increase young people's participation in their childcare reviews.
- Evidence in case work, that children and young people's views have been sought creatively and these inform care planning and their reviews.
- Evidence that children participate and or are offered the opportunity to participate, in a range of reviews that affect their lives, such as their Personal Education Plan, their health assessment and child care reviews.

Being Honest

There are times when children and young people's wishes cannot be fulfilled due to a number of reasons such as it not being safe, or unrealistic. Our approach is that the child's Social Worker will remain as their Social Worker for the duration of their childhood where-ever possible.

We will make sure that those working to support a child or young person has the right training to know how to explain sensitive things in the right way at the right time so that the impact of explaining such sensitive things does not have an adverse effect.

We will work with specialist services and will also listen to their advice when working with children and young people to develop bespoke Care Plans and Pathway Plans.

Evidence

Every child will have an allocated Social Worker

Every child and their carers will be offered services that are timely and responsive when required. These will be based upon need and effectiveness of the intervention.

Where a want, or wish cannot be fulfilled this is responded to clearly, sensitively explaining the situation age appropriately.

Impact Measures

- Reduce the number of changes of Social Worker unless there is a valid reason.
- Clarify further transition planning to promote smooth handover from Children in Care Team to the Leaving Care Teams.
- Incorporate specialist advice and guidance into the assessment and analysis of outcome focused Care Plans
- Monitor the number and types of complaints made by children and young people to inform practice.
- Further increase stability of the place you live in

Make Decisions Together

We recognise that children and young people have come into care due to significant issues for them at home. Therefore, making decisions together is part of the recovery process for a child and young person.

Listening to children, their views whether verbal or non-verbal is the key to understanding where they are on the journey of recovery and the services they need.

Evidence

- Every Social Worker will undertake statutory visiting within the timescales and guidelines set.
- Care planning will include the voice and lived experience of a child.

Impact Measures

- All statutory visits meet the timescales set and children are recorded as per the regulations and guidance for statutory visits.
- Direct work includes non-verbal observations of children pre speech and those that use other forms of communication.
- Decisions about children's futures and care planning will include the views of other professionals, carers and family.

Where you live

Where a child lives is important as it supports children and young people's identity, networks, and the path to successfully preparing for adulthood.



Evidence

- All children will have initial health assessments within 20 working days of coming in care unless in this time they return home.
- All children will have access to a dentist
- All children will have a strengths and difficulties questionnaire and that this is regularly updated as part of their wider health and care needs
- All young people leaving care will have health passports at the point of leaving care for them to keep
- We will ensure children and young people who need other bespoke services will have these needs assessed as a starting point to determine whether this is needed and its effectiveness

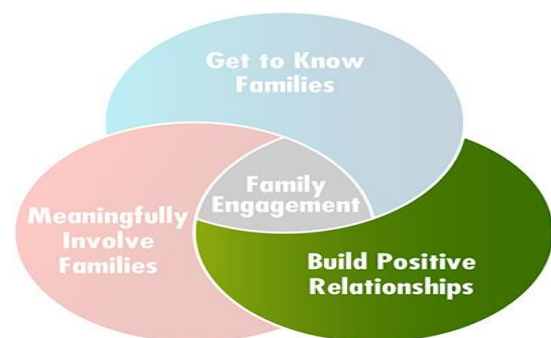
Impact Measures

- Increase in children and young people accessing dentists
- Increase in performance of initial health assessments and annual health assessments within timescales
- Feedback from Health is that the quality of initial health assessment referrals improves
- Increase in the use of clinician support and intervention to prevent instability in the places children live
- Foster carer feedback in the Annual Foster Carer report shows an improvement in 'customer satisfaction'
- Increase in young people accessing the ICASH blood borne virus service

Your Relationships

Children and young people tell us regularly who and what matters to them. Our role is to support and nurture positive and safe relationships with those that are important to them.

There are occasions where the person who is important to a child, young person may not be someone who is safe for them to see or live with. We have a duty to explain why age appropriately.



Evidence

- Every Childcare Review will review contact arrangements to assess what has changed in the last 6 months to enable face to face contact to occur
- All changes to a child's living arrangements such as being separated from their sibling must be evidenced with a Sibling Assessment before decisions are made about separating siblings

- All significant changes to a child's living arrangements will be supported by an assessment to inform care planning
- The child, young persons views on who they live with is assessed through direct work, statutory visits
- Every file has an up-to-date genogram and eco map on it updated as required per the guidelines from the moment they come into care
- All parents are offered the opportunity to participate within their child or young person's review unless their presence would be unsafe for the child
- Increase in staying put arrangements
- Reduction in young people living in unsuitable accommodation

Impact Measures

- Siblings remain together unless an assessment has underpinned the move
- Increase in reports for childcare reviews being sent to parents 5 days before a Review
- An increase in children having unsupervised contact with parents that is age appropriate and safe.
- Increase in reunifications
- Increase in Staying Put arrangements

Achievements

All children who come into care do so at different starting points in relation to their educational and emotional experiences. We know that helping children maintain their school, friends and local networks helps children and young people's resilience to the trauma they have experienced and achieve.

Our aim therefore is to support children to enjoy learning in all its forms, seeing it as the means to support self-esteem, self-worth, and life-long emotional and physical health.

As part of celebrating the achievements of children in care and those who have care experience, we hold annual events.

Evidence

- Every child who is in care will have access to education
- Every child will be offered 15 hours education whilst a school is being organised as a minimum for a short period of time
- Children who are not in education will be offered education from the virtual school to compensate
- Hobbies and interests will be supported within reason as a parent would in the community
- Apprenticeships are promoted as a viable option within the council

Impact Measures

- There is an expectation that all children should be achieving grade 4 and above in English and maths. The performance data will be monitored, reviewed annually.
- There is an increase in young people going onto higher education and apprenticeships.
- Reduction in NEET performance data.

For young adults who have had experience of being cared for.



Respect

Young adults are clear about how they would like to be communicated with based upon their wishes, feelings, experiences and what works best for them given their lifestyle. At 17.5 the Personal Adviser will start those conversations but with the understanding that face to face is the best way to stay in touch.

Evidence

- Personal Advisers will stay in touch as a minimum every 8 weeks but more if required and agreed by both
- Personal Advisers will see care experienced young people face to face at a place mutually agreed

Impact Measures

- There is an increase in staying in touch
- The starting point will be face to face is best but not always suitable for all care experienced

Helping you be the best you can

Staying in touch with those who have been in our care is important as our corporate parenting responsibilities are much more than just caring for children in care. What happens to those who have been in care matters because like any parent to see a child blossom and grow into a young adult makes us proud.

The Personal Adviser will be the key person assigned to a young person prior to them leaving care, remaining with them until 21 with the option of remaining in contact up to the age of 25 where needed. Our focus will always be about valuing strengths, talents, whilst supporting aspirations. This will take the form of practical help in some instances, offering guidance on how to navigate other agencies and situations so that those that have left care are resilient and confident to manage in the adult world successfully.

Evidence

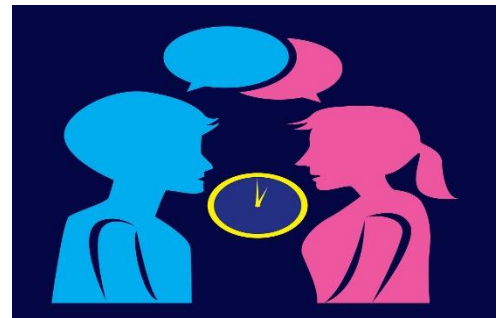
- Pathway plans include the strengths and aspirations
- Pathway plans are outcome focused promoting independence and resilience at all stages.

Impact Measures

- Pathway plans are up to date, being undertaken with the young person
- Pathway plans are S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely) and outcome focused
- Reduction in NEET (not in education, employment and training) and unsuitable accommodation
- Reduction in street homelessness and rough sleeping

Clear Communication

Communicating how the Personal Adviser and young adult will work together is the starting point of a positive relationship. There may well be times when the expectations of a person who has care experience and the Personal Adviser is at odds. There will be opportunities for those who have experienced care to raise concerns and complaints to ensure situations can be resolved early and amicably so that trust does not break down.



Evidence

- Complaints from those who have care experience reduce and are resolved at an earlier stage
- Pathway plans set out how each will communicate
- The use of advocates is evidenced within case work as part of promoting young adults rights
- Audits will evidence the quality of work as above
- Young people leaving care know about the local offer and what they can expect

Impact Measures

- Pathway plans are up to date and reflect the work being undertaken
- Case recording meets the expectations set as per guidance and links to the progression of the pathway plans

Finding a home

Our approach will be to prepare young adults for independent living as early as possible. This will include age-appropriate independence training while in care. Personal Advisers are there to support the transition from being in care to living alone. Where possible we will promote staying put as the best option to support the plan of transitioning to adult hood.

Not all young adults are ready for a home of their own, in those circumstances. It is the role of the Social Worker to ensure that where young people need ongoing support such as from adult services or mental health services that this is in place prior to them turning 18. The Personal Adviser will work collaboratively with ongoing services but will not have overall responsibility.

Evidence

- Personal Advisers will support the setting up home grant
- Pathway plans will include how young experienced young people will be supported to find homes based upon their needs, level of independence.
- The stepping out assessment tool will support the preparation for independence.

Impact Measures

- That all young people needing ongoing services have these secured prior to them being 18.
- The stepping out document is used routinely to support independence planning prior to the final pathway plan pre 18.



Support

We will continue to offer support as part of our duty under the leaving care legislation. We will provide information, advice, practical and some financial help along with listening and caring. We will always support those who have been in care to develop resilience and independence as part of that support.

Evidence

- Pathway plans are S.M.A.R.T. and outcome focussed
- Pathway plans include how those that have been in care wish to be communicated
- Pathway plans support independence development

Impact Measures

- Reduction in unsuitable accommodation
- Reduction in NEET
- Increase in apprenticeships within the council.

Monitoring of the Strategy

The Strategy will be monitored through the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board. In addition to this the 'You Said, We Did' feedback quarterly report which is lead on by participation will ensure the Strategy is kept and a live document. Other internal systems and processes such as Performance meetings, monthly performance reporting and audits will support the progression of the Strategy. We will provide impact of the Strategy to the Corporate Parenting Committees on an annual basis.

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CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE (FORMAL)	AGENDA ITEM No. 7
26 FEBRUARY 2024	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS)	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Ray Bisby, Cabinet Member for Children's Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Katie Liddle, Designated Nurse Children in Care	Email: katie.liddle@nhs.net

HEALTH REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Katie Liddle, Designated Nurse Children in Care	Deadline date: N/A
<p>It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes the content of the report 2. Raise any queries with the lead officers 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to a formal Corporate Parenting Committee as part of a scheduled work programme item.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 This report provides an update on health and dental services for children in care. The report provides an overview of the Integrated Care Board's (ICB) activities to ensure robust monitoring and quality assurance systems are in place to meet the health needs of Peterborough's Children in Care including those with a disability.

- 2.2 This report is for the Corporate Parenting Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.4.4.6 To monitor the quality of care delivered by the City Council and review the performance of outcomes for children and young people in care. Promote the development of participation and ensure that the view of children and young people are regularly heard through the Corporate Parenting Committee to improve educational, health and social outcomes to raise aspiration and attainments.

- 2.3 N/A

- 2.4 *How does this report link to the Children in care Promise?*

We will support you maintain a healthy lifestyle and help look after your physical and mental health.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

Annual Health Report Peterborough Corporate Parenting 1st January 2023 – 31st December 2023

- 4.1 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care Board (ICB) commission the Children in Care (CIC) Health Team, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) to have oversight of the health needs of our children in care via Initial and Review Health Assessments; this means that the doctors and nurses within the team undertake the health assessments, or ensure provision by a health service in another part of the country for those children and young people placed outside of Peterborough. The Designated Nurse and Doctor for Children in Care work with commissioners and providers across social care and health to ensure the provision, quality and timeliness of the required health services.
- 4.2 Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) are a statutory requirement for every child or young person when they first become looked after. The IHA must be completed by a qualified doctor within 20 working days of the child coming into care. The IHA is completed in a clinical setting, face to face with a paediatrician. CPFT are able to offer 16 slots per month with a paediatrician for IHA appointment, rising to 20 slots as required. Despite these additional IHA slots it does not meet the demand and a backlog has now been created. Senior managers in the Local Authority and the ICB are discussing a way forward.

Initial Health Assessment Performance 1st Jan 2023 – 31st December 2023		
In County Placements		
	Number of IHA requests	Number of IHAs completed within 20 working days
Total numbers	148	39
Total Percentage		26%
Out of County Placements		
	Number of IHA requests	Number of IHAs completed within 20 working days
Total numbers	46	13
Total percentage		28%
Overall Totals (combining In County and Out of County placements)		
Total Number	194	52
Total percentage		27%

There is increasing demand for IHAs, not only children and young people placed in Peterborough by Peterborough Local Authority but also from other Local Authorities who have children placed in Peterborough.

- 4.3 In addition to the 148 IHAs completed for Peterborough Local Authority children and young people, CPFT have completed 114 IHAs for other Local Authorities whose children are placed in Peterborough and offered a further 21 IHAs that were not attended (10 Peterborough Local Authority children and 11 other Local Authority children).

The table below indicates the growth of demand for IHAs for children and young people living in Peterborough, specifically the cohort of Separated Migrant Children (SMC) and increased requests from other Local Authorities children and young people requiring IHAs.

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Peterborough Local Authority IHAs (not including SMC)	116	103	86	116
Other Area Local Authority IHAs Not including SMC)	16	38	33	43
Peterborough Local Authority SMC requiring IHA	16	24	48	32
Other Area Local Authority SMC requiring IHA	37	66	76	71
Total IHA appointments required by CPFT	185	231	243	262

- 4.4 The rationale for separating the SMC from IHAs completed for British children is the impact on the duration of the IHA appointment. IHAs with SMC take on average 50% longer (1.5 hours face to face as opposed to 1 hour face to face). This is to allow time for translation as every question and answer is spoken twice with the assistance of an interpreter in their native language, thus further affecting the number of slots available for IHAs.

- 4.5 Completion of the IHA within the statutory timescale relies on the timely receipt of the referral and consent. Analysis of data collated between 1st April 2023 until 30th Nov 2023 shows only 44% of referrals and consent are received within the 5 working day timeframe and 80% being received by the 10th working day (please see chart below).

Number of Peterborough children new into care	96	%
Consent and referral received within 5 working days	42	44%
Consent and referral received within 6-10 working days	35	36%
Consent and referral received within 11-15 working days	8	8%
Consent and referral received within 16-20 working days	7	7%
Consent and referral received 21+ working days of becoming looked after	4	4%

- 4.6 The health team are unable to make arrangements with the carer for IHAs until the referral and consent are received. The target for this is 5 working days which then allows 15 working days for the health team to arrange the appointment and see the child/young person for their IHA. The average time taken from receipt of referral and consent by the health team to completion of the IHA during the same time frame as above (1st April 2023-30th November 2023) was 21 working days, therefore 6 working days late.

- 4.7 The CiC health team are developing a pathway for which includes a timeline for the health assessment process. This clearly identifies which agency is responsible for which action and includes details of where to send information with documents embedded within the pathway. This will assist Social Workers with knowing when to do what and where to send etc. The Team Manager of the CiC Health Team continues to attend team meetings with social workers to problem solve and improve collaboration.

Besides Paediatrician capacity and delayed referral and consent, there are other factors which affect the timeliness of IHAs. Below is a breakdown of reasons for late IHAs between January 2023-November 2023.

Paediatrician capacity	36%
Late consent/referral from CSC	23%
Carer decline of earlier appointment	13%
Multiple appointments required for sibling group	13%
Placement move	6%
DNA apt	3%
Child in-patient in Acute setting	2%
Young person missing	2%
Turned 18 before IHA completed	2%

- 4.8 Review Health Assessments (RHAs) are also face-to-face appointments completed in a clinical setting with Specialist Nurses. Virtual assessments can be undertaken if the agreed criteria are met as this will offer a degree of flexibility in certain circumstances. For those who decline their consultation a questionnaire is provided which enables a Health Action Plan to be created (in line with the Pathway).

Review Health Assessment Performance 1st Jan 2023 – 31st Dec 2023		
In County Placements		
	Number of RHAs due	Number of RHAs completed within timescales
Total numbers	245	176
Total Percentage		72%
Out of County Placements		
	Number of RHAs due	Number of RHAs completed within timescales
Total numbers	105	35
Total percentage		29%
Overall Totals (combining In County and Out of County placements)		
Total number	350	211
Total percentage		51%

In addition to the 245 RHAs completed for Peterborough Local Authority children and young people placed in Peterborough, the CPFT Children in Care Health team have completed a further 130 RHAs for other Local Authorities whose children are placed in Peterborough and an additional 57 RHA appointments that were not attended (37 Peterborough Local Authority children and 20 other Local Authority children).

- 4.9 To further enhance the above performance of RHAs the Partnership are keen to embed enduring consent. This would mean consent for statutory and routine reviews would be in place for the duration that the child or young person was in care. Currently, social workers are required to gain consent from biological each time a review health assessment is required. This can delay referrals reaching the CiC health team, thus delaying the health assessment taking place. The Designated Nurse and Head of Corporate Parenting are in discussion regarding enduring consent and hope this can be achieved soon.
- 4.10 For Peterborough Children in Care living outside of Peterborough, the Health Team send a request to the nearest CIC Health Team to the child or young person's placement address. This is sent 3 months in advance of the date the RHA is due. Many areas are struggling with capacity and hold waiting lists for children and often prioritise their own Local Authority's

children. The Peterborough CIC Health Team have little control over when our children are seen living out of area

- 4.11 All children in care placed in Peterborough have their dental health reviewed during health assessments. Children seen for Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) have a mouth check completed by a paediatrician and every child that is seen for a Review Health Assessment (RHA) has their dental health and access to dental care discussed as part of their review with a specialist nurse.

Children in care are advised of their local dental access centre if they are in pain or score red on the mouth check RAG (red/amber/green) rating system. All children in care are advised of the CHiC (children in care) dental practices identified on the volunteer dentist map for routine dental check-ups and preventative dental care.

Bushfield dental practice have continued the commitment made in Jan 2023 to see children in Care living in Peterborough for routine dental assessments and completion of treatment required. There is a code to be used when the carer/young person makes an appointment which has been circulated widely across health and Social Care teams. This is so the reception team know to book them an appointment without question when the code is used. The practice manager has not kept a log of how many appointments have been offered to children in care and is keen that the code is not used to segregate them as a separate group of children and young people. The practice manager confirmed recently that the practice is happy to continue to support Children’s Social Care by seeing children in care under the age of 18 who are placed in Peterborough without question.

In addition, Bretton Dental Practice have continued to see Separated Migrant Children and young people living in Peterborough without issue, but as yet have not committed to adding their details to the volunteer dental map.

The table below shows data collected from October-December 2023 and identifies that only 6% of Peterborough children and young people in care placed within Peterborough have not seen a dentist within the last 12 months.

Month	Total number of Peterborough children who have been in care for 12 months or more at month end	Number of those children who had seen a dentist in the last 12 months	Number of those children who had not seen a dentist in the last 12 months	Number of children not seen by dentist in last 12 months placed outside of Peterborough (out of county children).	Number of children not seen a dentist in last 12 months living within Peterborough (in county children).
October 2023	262	186	76	55	21
Oct 23 as a percentage		71%	29%	72% of total number not seen	28% of total number not seen
November 2023	267	225	42	32	10
Nov 23 as a percentage		84%	16%	76% of total number not seen	24% of total number not seen
December 2023	273	220	53	36	17
Dec 23 as a percentage		81%	19%	68% of total number not seen	32% of total number not seen

The Designated Dr for Children in Care has written to all dental practices across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to encourage them to add their details to the CHiC volunteer Dental Map and commit to seeing children if they are looked after. This will be circulated by ICB Communications team in February 2024.

- 4.12 The Designated Nurse for Children in Care and the Children’s Mental Health Commissioner at the ICB have met to discuss provision of mental health support for care leavers. This is in response to the recent publication of the Local Authority Ofsted report. Initial scoping has begun

and a request to attend the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum have been submitted to explore what children and young people want and/or feel is missing in Peterborough. Initial findings have identified that sufficient talking therapies exist locally for less complex mental health concerns. However, transitioning from children's mental health services to adult services is difficult without a mental health diagnosis. It seems this is where additional service provision is required for Peterborough care leavers and will be developed; moderate – severe mental health concerns but no official mental health diagnosis.

The CiC Health Team make appropriate referrals to Mental Health and counselling services as required and discuss with the social worker regarding referral pathways (YOUUnited, Centre 33, Yaxley Young People's Counselling Service (YPCS), Refugee Council (for SMC)). Some schools have counselling services which can also be referred into. The Local Authority have access to a clinical team who can support children/young people and their carers. The CiC health team liaise directly with Core/Neuro Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) if advice regarding a referral is required or if it is necessary to expedite an assessment. The Health Professional completing the Health Assessment provides clear actions on the Health Action Plan (HAP) about what the next steps are and provides useful and trusted websites which young people and their carers can access, for example Kooth, YoungMinds.

4.13

The Designated Doctor for Children in Care completed an audit of health assessments. A sample of 5 x IHAs and RHAs from the following categories were reviewed; 0-4 years, 5-10 years, 11-17 years, 17-18 years (Care Leavers Passport) and an additional 5 x IHAs for Separated Migrant Children.

The audit showed that the majority of IHA and RHA were carried out to a good standard. There has been a marked improvement in access to and uptake of dental provisions across both Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. For those who have not yet registered with a dentist, there was clear sign posting of dental practices who were willing to offer care in certain areas. There has also been a more detailed focus on the emotional well-being of Children in care this year. There remains a problem with completing SDQ before the IHA and RHA and making sure that those that are not completed, are done so shortly afterwards. There is a need for better integration of Separated Migrant Children into the local community for them to be aware of and sign posting to local facilities may help to improve their physical and mental well-being. 100% of IHAs audited for separated migrant children were awaiting a place in Education.

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1 *Consider how the recommendation links to the Council's Corporate Priorities:*

1. *The Economy & Inclusive Growth*
 - *Environment*
 - *Carbon Impact Assessment (copy and paste the summary section from the approved Carbon Impact Assessment form)*
 - *Homes and Workplaces*
 - *Jobs and Money*
2. *Our Places & Communities*
 - *Places and Safety (including any rural implications)*
 - *Lives and Work*
 - *Health and Wellbeing*
3. *Prevention, Independence & Resilience*
 - *Educations and Skills for All*
 - *Adults*
 - *Children*
4. *Sustainable Future City Council*
 - *How we Work*
 - *How we Serve*
 - *How we Enable*

Further information on the Council's Priorities can be found here - [Link to Corporate Strategy and Priorities Webpage](#)

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 N/A

6.2 N/A

6.3 N/A

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

7.1 To improve health and well-being, and health outcomes for children in care by ensuring adequate assessment of health and suitable health provision; addressing areas where there may be a lack of provision or improvements required.

8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Corporate Parenting Committee have requested a health update at all formal committees.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 N/A

10. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

10.1 N/A

Legal Implications

10.2 N/A

Equalities Implications

10.3 N/A

Children in care and care leavers Implications

10.4 *Does this report have any implications for Children In Care and Care Leavers? If so, include these in this section.*

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

11.1 *None*

12. APPENDICES

12.1 None

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CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 8
26 FEBRUARY 2024	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	John Gregg Executive Director Children and Young People's Service	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Bisby Cabinet Member for Education, Skills, and Children's Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Gary Jones, Service Director Children's Social Care and Targeted Support	Tel. 0173386362 4

PERFORMANCE DATA FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS DECEMBER 2023

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Gary Jones, Service Director Children's Social Care and Targeted Support	Deadline date: N/A
<p>It is recommended that members of Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the content of the report, and 2. Raise any questions with the lead officer. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to Corporate Parenting Committee to each formal and informal committee as part of the standing work programme item in relation to performance.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Corporate Parenting Committee in respect of the numbers of children and young people being looked after by the Council as of 31st December 2023 providing a breakdown of the types of homes in which they are living. The report also provides information about the age, gender and ethnicity of those children and young people. Additional information on adoption data and residential data has been included at the request of the Committee.
- 2.2 This report is for Corporate Parenting Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.4.4.6 To monitor the quality of care delivered by the City Council and review the performance of outcomes for children and young people in care.
- 2.3 This reports to the Children in Care Promise by focussing on the placements for children in care and care leavers.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 As of 31 December 2023, there were 412 children in care.

- 119 children placed with in house foster carers.
- 122 children placed with agency foster carers outside of the city boundaries. These agencies work with the council to provide foster placements on a contractual basis.
- 29 children were placed with family or friends (connected persons). These carers are formally assessed in the same way that in house foster carers are assessed and are presented to the Fostering panel for approval through the same process and standard. They are supported through the foster carer allowance.
- 20 children were living with their parents but are still considered to be 'looked after' because they are subject to full care orders. The Council is sharing parental responsibility with the birth parent. Such placements are made when there is a plan for reunification.
- 6 children were placed for adoption.
- 2 child was placed in a residential educational placement.
- 113 children were placed in residential provision. The placements in these homes are most usually made when foster care is not sufficient to meet the child or young person's needs. Residential care is nearly always accessed for older children and only used for younger children in very special circumstances although we currently have 12 children under 13 in residential provision, largely due to sufficiency issues in foster care. A specific project is underway to enable these children to step into a foster placement. In general, children in residential provision are reviewed regularly to ensure children can step down to a foster placement when they are ready and a well matched carer is available.
- Of the 113 children in residential provision, included are 62, 16–18-year-olds, living in semi-Independent accommodation where the focus is preparation for adulthood.
- There was one young person living in secure provision.
- The 'timeliness to adoption data' shows that we are under performing in relation to the target for both 'time to placement' and 'time to match'. Of the 18 children adopted in the last year, 10 were within the required timeframes, and 5 were just outside. There are 3 children who have experienced significant delays and they have contributed to the overall significant increase in time.
- These children all have complex needs which often makes it more complex to find adoptive homes for them. Two of the children were 2 years old and have complex health needs. For one of these children, his foster carers have chosen to adopt him to secure permanence for him.
- The 3rd child is a 12-year-old boy who came into care when he was 5 years old. Despite extensive searches we were unable to identify an adoptive placement due to his complex emotional and behavioural needs and were looking to change his plan to long term fostering. His foster carers decided to adopt him which was secured when he was 11 years old, 6 years after he came into care, thus impacting the performance figures significantly.

- Despite these outcomes creating a decline in our performance around timeliness for adoption, it is positive that we have secured permanence for these children.

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1 This report links to the following Corporate Priorities:

1. *Our Places & Communities*
 - *Places and Safety (including any rural implications)*
 - *Lives and Work*
 - *Health and Wellbeing*
2. *Prevention, Independence & Resilience*
 - *Educations and Skills for All Children*
3. *The Economy & Inclusive Growth*
 - *Environment: The report contains no proposals for changes to service delivery and therefore there is no decision to take which may impact carbon emissions of the council or the city.*
 - *Homes and Workplaces*
 - *Jobs and Money*

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 N/A

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

7.1 This is an accurate report of the current accommodation placements for children in care and care leavers.

8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

8.1 The data included in this report is from the monthly performance report which includes live data.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 No alternative options required for this report as this data is provided for information purposes only.

10. IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications as this report is for information only.

10.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications as this report is for information only.

10.3 Equalities Implications

None

10.4 Other Implications

This is high level data concerning our children in care population in Peterborough and how we are performing on some key performance indicators.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

11.1 Monthly Performance Report

12. APPENDICES

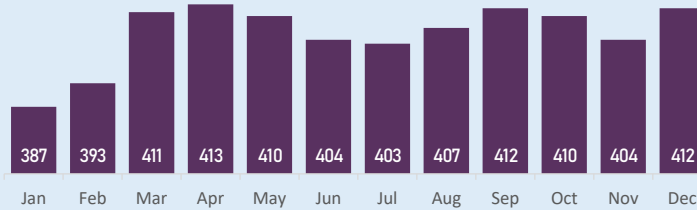
12.1 Appendix 1 – Performance Report December 2023

HEADLINE FIGURES

Number of children in care on the last day of December

412

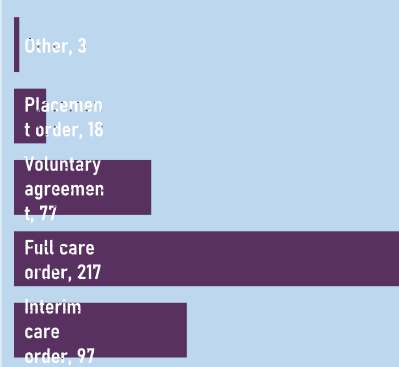
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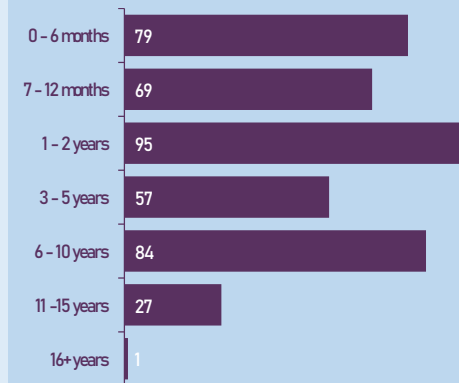
Staffing

	Staff	Average Caseload
Family Safeguarding Qualified social workers	28	21
Children in Care Qualified social workers	18.3	20
Leaving Care Personal Advisors	8	23
Independent Reviewing Officers	6	68

Legal status of children in care



Length of time children have been in care

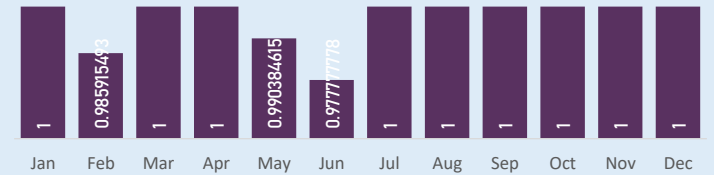


SERVICE STANDARDS

% of child in care reviews which were held on time (year to date, and during each month)

99.6%

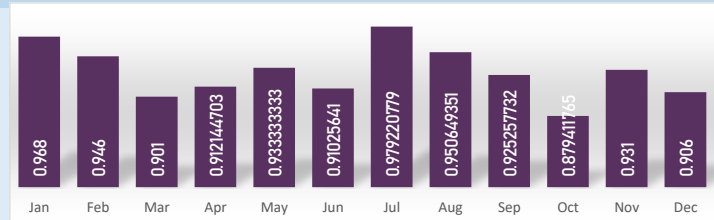
Target: 100%



% of child in care statutory visits which were carried out on time (year to date, and during each month)

90.6%

Target: Above 98%



HOME

Home stability

15.0%

Target: below 8%

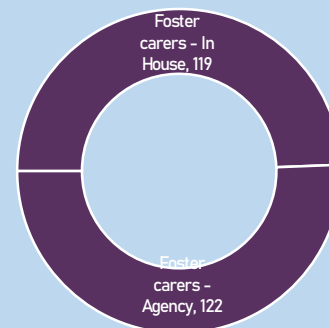
15.0% of children in Peterborough's care had 3 or more different homes in the last 12 months.

Out of those children who have been in care for over 2.5 years, 66.4% have been in their current home for two or more years.

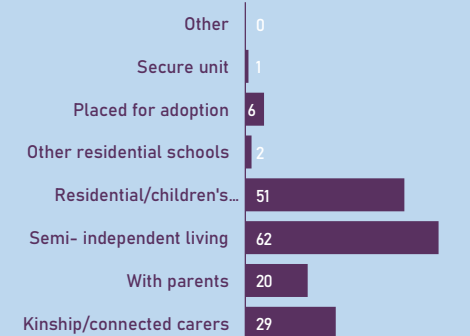
66.4%

Target: above 70%

Type of home of children in care

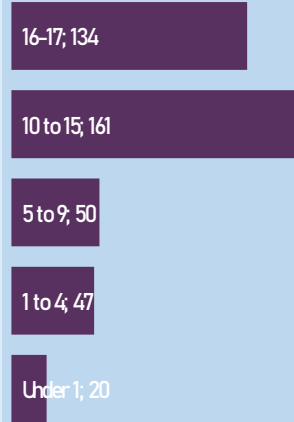


Other settings breakdown



EDUCATION

Children in care by age group



% of school-aged children in care who have a PEP in place

93.5%

Target: above 100%

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) was in place for 215 out of 230 school aged children who were in care for at least a month by the end of December.

76.7%

76.7% of Peterborough's children in care are taught in good or outstanding schools.

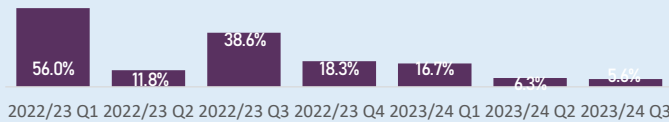
% of school-aged children in care in good or outstanding schools

HEALTH - SERVICE STANDARDS

Children in care whose initial health assessment was completed on time (Year to date and by quarter)

9.4%

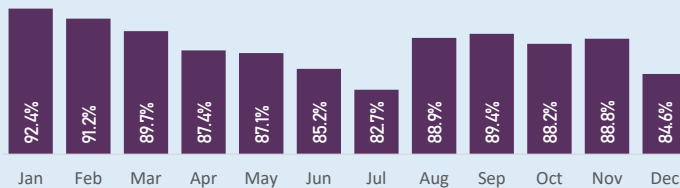
Target: above 95%



Children in care whose annual health assessment was completed on time

84.6%

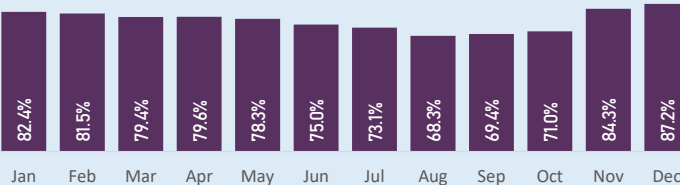
Target: above 90%



Children in care whose annual dental examination was completed on time

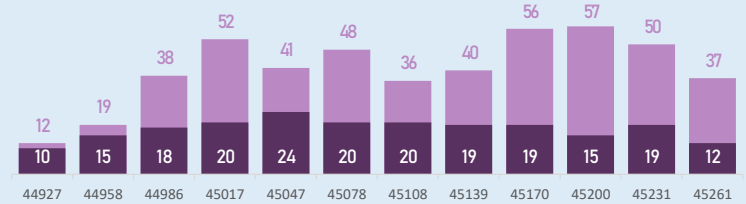
87.2%

Target: above 90%



Children in care who go missing (with number of episodes)

12 Children
37 Episodes

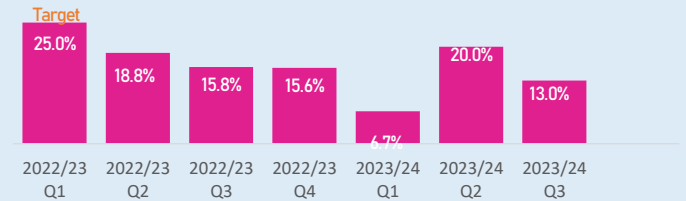


ADOPTION

% of children leaving care who are adopted by quarter

12.6%

Target: above 18%



Timeliness of adoption process

Time to placement

580

Target: below 400

For children adopted during the past 12 months, an average of 580 days passed between the child entering care and them moving into their adoptive placement. An average of 298 days passed between their placement order being granted and approval of a match with their adopters.

Time to match

298

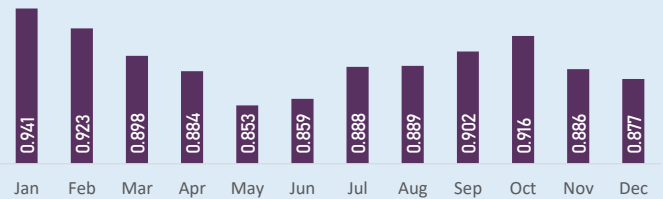
Target: below 120

CARE LEAVERS

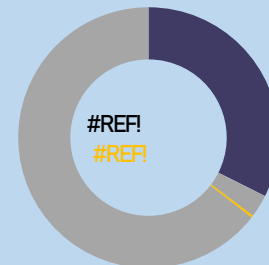
Care Leavers who have a pathway plan in place

87.7%

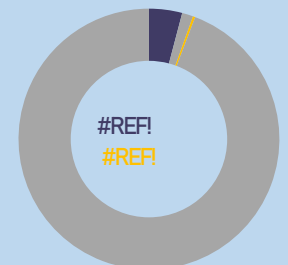
Target: above 95%

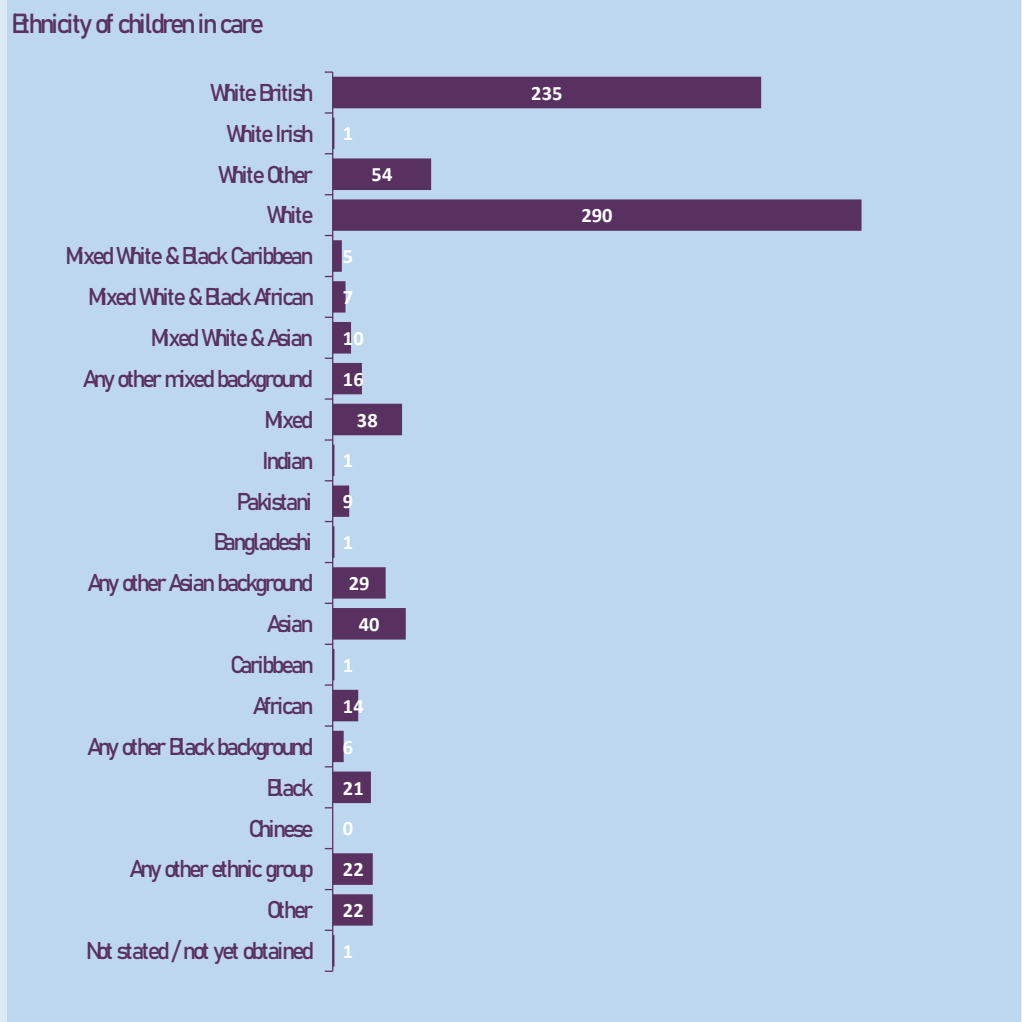


19 to 21 year old care leavers who are not in employment, education or training (NEET)



19 to 21 year old care leavers who live in unsuitable accommodation





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