



Agenda for a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on Monday, 7 September 2020 at 4.30 pm remotely

Members of the Committee – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP
Thirkill Farley Tait	Smith	Knox

Alternates:

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP
Mohammed Nazir Shafiq	Pollard	Stubbs

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Chair of Children in Care Council
Jude MacDonald

Bradford District Clinical Commissioning Group
Bradford Education
West Yorkshire Police

Sue Lowndes
Steven Greenbank

Notes:

- A webcast of the meeting will be available to view live on the Council's website at <https://bradford.public-i.tv/core/portal/home> and later as a recording
- Approximately 15 minutes before the start time of the Corporate Parenting Panel meeting the Governance Officer will set up the electronic conference arrangements initially in private and bring into the conference facility the Members of the Panel. The officers presenting the reports at the meeting of the Panel will have been advised by the Governance Officer of their participation and will be brought into the electronic meeting at the appropriate time.
- If any further information is required about any item on this agenda, please contact the officer named at the foot of that agenda item.

From:

Parveen Akhtar
City Solicitor
Agenda Contact: Jill Bell
Phone: 01274 434580
E-Mail: jill.bell@bradford.gov.uk

To:

A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

The City Solicitor will report the names of alternate Members who are attending the meeting in place of appointed Members.

(Jill Bell – 01274 434580)

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

(Members Code of Conduct - Part 4A of the Constitution)

To receive disclosures of interests from members and co-opted members on matters to be considered at the meeting. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

Notes:

- (1) Members may remain in the meeting and take part fully in discussion and voting unless the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or an interest which the Member feels would call into question their compliance with the wider principles set out in the Code of Conduct. Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.*
- (2) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.*
- (3) Members are also welcome to disclose interests which are not disclosable pecuniary interests but which they consider should be made in the interest of clarity.*
- (4) Officers must disclose interests in accordance with Council Standing Order 44.*

(Jill Bell – 01274 434580)

3. MINUTES

Recommended –

That the minutes of the meetings held on 29 June and 20 July 2020 be signed as a correct record (previously published).

(Jill Bell – 01274 434580)

4. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

(Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 3B of the Constitution)

Reports and background papers for agenda items may be inspected by contacting the person shown after each agenda item. Certain reports and background papers may be restricted.

Any request to remove the restriction on a report or background paper should be made to the relevant Strategic Director or Assistant Director whose name is shown on the front page of the report.

If that request is refused, there is a right of appeal to this meeting.

Please contact the officer shown below in advance of the meeting if you wish to appeal.

(Jill Bell - 01274 434580)

B. BUSINESS ITEMS

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING OUTSIDE OF BRADFORD CITY RESIDENTIAL AND FOSTERING SERVICES

1 - 8

The report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services (**Document "K"**) highlights the need to address the sufficiency needs across Bradford Children's Services. Our vision remains to offer Bradford children the right to remain living in their home city and that we can create a suitable offer for each child and young person.

Recommended -

The Panel is asked to note the contents of Document "K".

(Mark Trinder -01274 434254)

6. REPORT ON THE WI-FI ACCESS & MOBILE CONNECTIVITY FOR BRADFORD CARE LEAVERS 9 - 26

Bradford currently has 647 young people identifying as Care Leavers. The report of the Strategic Director of children's Services (**Document "L"**) will explore the numbers of young people who have access to smart devices and Wi-Fi.

Recommended -

The views of the Corporate Parenting Panel regarding options set out in Section 9 of Document "L" are welcomed.

7. WORK PLAN 2020/21 27 - 32

The Corporate Parenting Panel Work Plan for 2020/21 is submitted (**Document "M"**) for the Panel's consideration.



Report of the Strategic Director Children's Services to the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 7 September 2020

K

Subject:

Children and Young People Living Outside of Bradford City Residential and Fostering Services

Summary statement:

This report highlights the need to address the sufficiency needs across Bradford Children's Services. Our vision remains to offer Bradford children the right to remain living in their home city and that we can create a suitable offer for each child and young person.

Mark Douglas
Strategic Director Children's Services

Report Contact: Mark Trinder
Interim Peripatetic Head of Service
Phone: (01274) 434254
E-mail: mark.trinder@bradford.gov.uk

Portfolio:

Children & Families

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report highlights the need to address the sufficiency needs across Bradford Children's Services. Our vision remains to offer Bradford children the right to remain living in their home city and that we can create a suitable offer for each child and young person.
- 1.2 The sufficiency action plan outlines how and when this will be completed. We are working with our partners to enable a better working relationships to achieve the desired outcome for children.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Bradford is a 'young' city and district but until 2018-2019 it had an unusually low rate of children in care in comparison with local authorities of similar size and characteristics. The child in care population has risen steeply since October 2018, outstripping the supply of local authority foster placements. There is no reason to think that this represents a sudden change in the needs of children and it is much more likely to reflect changes in the assessment of risk. These pressures may have reduced the likelihood of children being found an ideal placement. It is also possible that a wider range of preventative services could have prevented the need for some children to enter care.
- 2.2 Our sufficiency research confirmed that, as a general rule, children enter care following a succession of contacts, referrals and escalating interventions. Over each of four years about 20 per cent of child protection plans ended with a child entering care. In the same period 44 per cent of children who entered care had been subject to a child protection plan at least once in the previous few years. We are going to review the progression of children through different types of support and safeguarding, ensuring the early identification of familial and community support that could be drawn on if needed, for example as potential 'friends and family' carers.
- 2.3 This report focusses on the overall sufficiency of placements for our children in care.
- 2.4 Bradford's current child in care population sits at 1,343 and the breakdown of purchased placements is as follows:

Children's home	70
Independent Fostering Agency	164
16+ supported living	72
Total number of externally purchased placements	306

- 2.5 There are a variety of reasons why some CIC are placed outside of local authority residential and fostering provision. This includes high risk of exploitation, risk of harm, increased missing episodes and lack of a suitable internal resource at the time that it was needed.
- 2.6 Bradford Council currently has 8 mainstream children's homes and 3 homes for children with disabilities including respite and short break facilities. We currently

have a total of 48 in-house children's home placements in total.

- 2.7 Bradford mainstream children homes accommodate between 4 and 7 children per home. The national average for residential children homes is 4 children.
- 2.8 Like all authorities Bradford council cares for highly complex and challenging children many of whom have experienced trauma that impacts on their relationships behaviour. Some have experienced previous placement breakdowns. The impact this has on their self-esteem, identity and self-worth is significant.
- 2.9 It is essential to appreciate that not all children can live successfully within the mainstream homes and would also struggle to live within family settings and foster placements.
- 2.10 The Head of Service for CWD chairs a weekly "high cost placement review". This focusses on the total cost of the placement, its value in terms of the impact on outcomes for the child and encourages our education and health colleagues to contribute to the funding of placements when health and education are an integral part of the child's care and placement plan.
- 2.11 The current internal residential provision does not include solo or two-bed homes which are a good option for some young people. We are currently meeting with organisations that are willing to open children homes in Bradford specifically for Bradford children.
- 2.12 To date we have met with two separate independent providers here in Bradford and now finalised our first resource with an independent provider. The provider is now registered and opens on the 4th August 2020. They will care for one of our most complex children.
- 2.13 The aim of this model is to provide a suitable alternative, local option that directly meet the current needs of Bradford Council's most complex children and allow them the opportunity to safely remain living within their own city.
- 2.14 As part of the continued improvement and investment work taking place across children's services a new and updated children's Sufficiency Strategy was completed in June 2020.
- 2.15 The Director of Children Services wrote that:

"The objective of Bradford's placement and sufficiency strategy is to provide children in care children with the best possible placements.

The Council wants to do what is right for all children in care, which includes being able to provide somewhere safe, caring and suitable for their needs if they are not able to remain at home. This might only be for a few days or it might be for the duration of their childhood, depending on circumstances.

The sufficiency strategy is part of our improvement programme for the whole of Children's Services. There are many changes taking place and planned, which means that the strategy is ambitious but also has to be flexible. For example, we

do not know the full impact of COVID-19 on public services. But the strategy sets out the planning and procedures that we think necessary to guide placement developments over the next three years.

The strategy will allow us to achieve four broad aims:

- *increasing our understanding of children's needs*
- *developing alternatives to children becoming or remaining in care, through earlier intervention and at 'the edge of care'*
- *improving placement and care planning, to minimise the number of disrupted placements and unplanned moves*
- *developing the local authority residential care and fostering agency offers, to provide more placements within the district*

The strategy outlines how these aims will be achieved.

The strategy links with many others designed to promote children's health, safety and welfare. Its success will depend on the energy and vision on colleagues working across the Council and in partner agencies. We will work hard to achieve placements for children that are more than sufficient."

- 2.16 Foster care is the mainstay of placement arrangements in England with about three-quarters of our children in care placed in short-term or long-term foster placements. In Bradford in successive recent years there has been a reduction in the placements available with local authority foster carers ('in-house' foster carers) and a doubling in the use of independent fostering agency (IFA) placements. The availability of in-house placements has not kept pace with the growth in demand for placements and the costs of IFA placements are substantially higher than equivalent local authority placements. To achieve sufficiency and to manage resources we need to restore the capacity of the local authority fostering agency.
- 2.17 To date we have started a back to back review of the fostering service including the existing payment scheme which has been revised and is waiting for sign off.
- 2.18 We have reviewed the service's understanding of who is 'suitable' to foster and embedded a much more open approach to understanding the strengths that stem from people's life experiences rather than deeming them unsuitable. Simultaneously we have been running our current social media marketing campaign seeking to dispel myths around who can and cannot foster. We are also revisiting previous enquiries to re-evaluate their current circumstances and determine suitability to be assessed should they still wish to be.
- 2.19 We have created additional assessment capacity within the assessment team through better utilisation of administrative support and student social workers.
- 2.20 We will be seeking to continue with virtual means of marketing and engagement for the purposes of foster carer recruitment post Covid19 with more social media campaigns including moving towards targeted recruitment based on the needs of

the cohort of children in care. This marketing includes advertisement posts, blogs, video interviews of current carers and fostering staff as well as virtual access to the fostering information events.

- 2.21 We are recruiting to permanent posts across the fostering service and we now have no team manager vacancies which is providing stability and consistency to social workers and to fostering families.
- 2.22 We have reviewed the current support offer to our foster carers in Bradford and determined that we needed a more comprehensive, modernised offer in order to attract and retain fostering families. We are close to securing a comprehensive online training package for foster carers to access, which will be implemented alongside personal development plans for each foster carer. We are in the process of creating a series of specialised support groups for our fostering families including but not limited to a group for men who foster and a group for children of fostering families, it is anticipated that these will bring a positive sense of community within our fostering service which is attractive to new applicants as well as supporting existing fostering households.
- 2.23 We are in the process of re-launching the Mockingbird programme in Bradford. This is a nationally recognised good practice model of support for fostering families and children in care. We will be utilising this within our marketing plan in the coming months.
- 2.24 We have implemented an improved complaints system, better communication with our carers and an improved foster carer recruitment process.
- 2.25 Bradford Metropolitan District Council are now official a Fostering Network recognised fostering friendly organisation. We will be undertaking specific marketing and promotion of this from September to December 2020. From January 2021 we will communicating with other local employers in relation to becoming fostering friendly employers and supporting them to achieve and market this status.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 For all children, entering care is life-changing and for some it is literally life-saving, giving them protection from serious harm arising from abuse, neglect or exploitation. Nonetheless many care episodes are of very short duration. In the year to 31 March 2020 18.7% of care episodes ended within one month - and at any one time about 12 percent of children in care in Bradford are placed with their parents. These features suggest that other forms of crisis or long-term support might provide an alternative to care for some children, either to prevent them entering care in the first place or to facilitate their step-down. These types of service can also be deployed to help prevent placement breakdown and unplanned moves, both of which increase sufficiency pressure. We will continue the development of our early help offer and 'edge of care' strategy and continually review their impact on improving sufficiency by reducing the demand for placements.
- 3.2 Over half of all care episodes end within a year, most within four months, and most of these in the first month. For children of all ages being in care is either a relatively

brief period or it is one that appears likely to extend until they become eighteen years old. This represents a double challenge in the achievement of sufficiency, requiring a large number of short-term placements, particularly for babies and infants, and placements that will provide for children throughout their childhood and into adult life. We are reviewing the permanence planning processes and timescales and the relative contributions that adoption, long-term fostering and Special Guardianship Orders can make for the latter group. We will develop a new Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy, also including a review of 'Staying Put' arrangements for children in long-term foster care after their eighteenth birthday.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 The Placement and Coordination Service has had a “back to back review” from Local Partnership which highlighted several key operational points for us to consider. There has been a £266K investment over 2 years to stabilise the service in line with key findings.
- 4.2 We are now in the process of strengthening our preventative “Edge of Care” support offer through our Be Positive Pathways (BPP) service. This includes bringing the Intensive Family Support Service (IFS), Family Group Conference Service (FGC) and our existing Therapeutic Social Workers together with BPP to operate as a single “edge of care response” aimed primarily at preventing entry into care. The financial investment for this is £371k over 2 years.
- 4.3 We have reviewed the Special Guardianship Order policy and implemented a significant offer for children and connected people as an alternative to children becoming children in Care. This offer will ensure that foster carers (including connected persons) are not disadvantaged by choosing to pursue permanence outside the care system via Special Guardianship.
- 4.4 We are currently investing in additional resources to review the current 12% of CIC are placed with parents to reassess these cases in order identify when a child's Care Order can safely be discharged, along with better management grip and tracking of this cohort of children.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 The risk management and governance sits within the Children in Care Sufficiency Action Plan.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

There are no legal implications.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Not applicable.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Not applicable.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Not applicable.

7.6 TRADE UNION

Not applicable.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

Not applicable.

7.8. IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

Corporate parents will be continually updated on the sufficiency work across Bradford Children's Services.

8. ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

8.1 Not applicable.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

8.1 None.

9. OPTIONS

9.1 The options are built into the sufficiency action plan and will derive from the investment across the provider services. This work is essential as it drives the financial and configuration of resources needed to care for the diversity of Bradford children.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

12.1 None.



Report of the Strategic Director to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 7th September 2020

L

Subject:

Report on the Wi-Fi Access & Mobile Connectivity for Bradford Care Leavers

Summary statement:

Bradford currently has 647 young people identifying as Care Leavers. This report will explore the numbers of young people who have access to smart devices and Wi-Fi.

Mark Douglas
Strategic Director Children's Services

Portfolio:

Childrens Services

Report Contact: Emma Collingwood
Service Manager Care Leavers Service
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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Childrens Services

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1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 It is widely known that within the general young people's population, having a smart device and access to Wi-Fi is a young person's world; for Care Leavers this is no different.
- 1.2 NYAS (National Youth Advisory Service) have just published a report on support for Care Leavers through Covid – 19 (please see Appendix 1). In this report you will see that nationally it has been recognised that Care Leavers are less likely to have a smart device and access to Wi-Fi as compared to their peers. 1 in 5 Care Leavers do not have the technology they feel they need. NLCAS (National Leaving Care Advisory Service) are currently working with the Department of Education and the Leaving Care Covenant to try to nationally close this gap. For example, work is being done with leading broadband suppliers to encourage them via the Leaving Care Covenant to supply free Wi-Fi to all Care Leavers nationally. The conclusion being that it is recognised that it is an issue and some care leavers are facing digital exclusion.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Our Young People

- 647 young people identify as Care Leavers 16 to 25+ and are the responsibility of Bradford Childrens Social Care
- 563 young people are active open cases held with the Care Leavers Service
- 170 young people live independently.
- 209 young people currently live within a family environment (birth family, foster carers, staying put or supported lodgings)
- 129 young people live in residential supported group living or supported tenancies
- 55 young people live in 'other' accommodation – student/hostel/"sofa surfing"
- 408 young people are currently identified as being in education, training or employment
- 155 are identified as not being in education training or employment
- Of these 155 young people 24 are registered as having an illness and 21 are pregnant or full time parents

2.2 Key events so far

- At the point of the Care Leavers Service being established in January 2020 we established a system whereby all young people when 16, as part of their Pathway Planning were set up with an email address and are bought a smart phone or tablet dependent on the young person's choice. Since this time most young people living in foster care or residential homes have smart phones and access to tablets or laptops as a result of living in a care setting. Anecdotally we were aware that young people in less stable living arrangements, presenting with behaviours indicative of child exploitation, young people living with parents or UASC do not generally have smart devices and are even less likely to have access to Wi-Fi. We have since researched this area – see below
- As part of the Corporate Parenting offer to our young people our service contacted corporate IT service and were able to secure 50 refurbished smart phones and 30 basic phones as a result of a wider corporate upgrade to all staff. This supply has now come to an end.
- The Service has also secured a partnership with a local Bradford business where they

fund 50% of the cost of a smart phone and Wi-Fi contract. Young people then fund the remaining 50% out of their weekly monies, this cost is capped at £2.50 per week

- 10 Wi-Fi devices have been purchased from the same business and used to support young people during Covid.
- It is Care Leavers policy that at the point of a young person entering a Level 3 or above education course (College/University) a laptop or tablet (young person's choice) will be bought by the service, if a young person cannot secure a device via virtual school, the education establishment or person in a parental role (foster carers, parents, residential care settings). The costs for this are recouped from the young person's bursary
- The Care Leavers Service is expanding their knowledge of community charities and resources who offer free smart devices generally lap tops to young people.
- Since Covid young people who have been identified as not having smart devices or Wi-Fi and have been identified at risk of a decline in emotional well being or isolation have been bought smart devices and Wi-Fi, regardless of education status

2.3 Current Situation

569 young people were asked the question via the Leaving Well Pathway planning app –

Do you have access to the internet as often as you need?

- 414 said yes – 73%
- 11 said not relevant
- 60 said no - 10%
- 84 did not answer this question.
- 25% presumed as having no access to Wi-Fi

Of the young people who said yes (414):

- 243 are in education training and employment - 57 %
- 321 state that they are living in stable accommodation settings - 78%

Of the young people who said no or did not answer the question (144):

- 42 are NOT in education training or employment – 29%
- 77 state they have issues with substances – 54%
- 98 state they are living in unstable accommodation – 68%

48 young people in our service currently do not have a smart phone – 9%

176 young people in our service do not have a lap top or tablet – 32%

2.4 Analysis

There is a link between young people feeling that they are in unstable accommodation and not having a smart device and or Wi-Fi.

Young people are more likely to be NEET if they don't have access to a smart device or Wi-Fi.

Young people being in stable accommodation increases the likelihood of them having access to Wi-Fi and a smart device.

Most young people in the service have a smart phone (91%); young people who don't have a smart phone are young people where there are exploitation issues, criminality or young people who are UASC.

73% of young people say they have access to Wi-Fi. These young people are more likely to live in family environment, of the young people who said they don't have access to Wi-Fi most live in semi-independent living environments.

32% of young people do not have a lap-top or tablet or access to one. Most of these young people are not in education, training, employment, do not live in 'family environments' and state that they would not be able to either afford a lap top or the Wi-Fi. Most of these young people are older Care Leavers.

2.5 What we would like to do

The service would wish to identify resources to approach local Bradford business to sponsor and support all Bradford Care Leavers having a smart device and Wi-Fi.

The Care Leaver Service to work with commissioning to change the tender specification to ensure that all post 16 accommodation has a basic requirement that Wi-Fi is available to all young people. (See point 3)

The Care Leavers Service to ensure that all young people at 16 have a smart device of their choice and repeat this again at 18. It is strongly felt by the service that this will improve life chances for our Care Leavers. There is of course, a resource implication to this aspiration which needs to be fully explored.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Bradford Children Services has a block contract with Horton Housing and Centre Point where 30 young people live in semi-independent living. This contract is in its 5th year and will be re-commissioned next year. In 5 years the digital world has changed significantly, it was not part of the contract specification that Wi-Fi should be part of the basic requirements, going forward this will be the case.

3.2 Bradford Childrens Services have a 16+ commissioning accommodation framework in place, as above not all providers used have Wi-Fi within their standard requirement specifications. This is an area that needs exploring as part of the forward planning for our young people.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 There will be a resource implication to the roll out of smart devices and Wi-Fi for young people at transitional points 16 and 18. Smart phones are approximately £50 per hand set, lap tops £200 and Wi-Fi £2.50 per week, for 16 to 18 year olds.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 N/A.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 N/A.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

7.1.1 Without question, we have some Bradford Care Leavers where there is no parity with their peers due to them being a Care Leaver and having to rely on the Corporate Parents to purchase smart devices and the Wi-Fi or enter into Wi-Fi/broadband contracts on their behalf.

7.1.2 Young people have articulated to us that they feel there is inequality and some go as far as saying they are in 'digital poverty'

7.1.3 It is felt by the service that not having smart devices and Wi-Fi puts our young people at a disadvantage in terms of education, training and employment. This has been exacerbated especially as a result of Covid, as public spaces where Wi-Fi was accessible and free are no longer available.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

7.2.1 N/A

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

7.3.1 N/A.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.4.1 N/A.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

7.5.1 N/A.

7.6 TRADE UNION

7.6.1 N/A.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

7.7.1 N/A.

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS

7.8.1 N/A.

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

7.9.1 The provision of a good quality offer from the Corporate Parents of Care Leavers is crucial to the outcomes of Bradford Care leavers.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

7.10.1 See above.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

8.1 None.

9. OPTIONS

9.1 Nationally it is recognised at the highest level that Care Leavers are disadvantaged as a result of not all being able to have access to smart devices and Wi-Fi. Already in Britain there are Cities where free Wi-Fi is available. Therefore, it is felt that this is a changing picture and in 1 to 2 years' time issues may have resolved themselves. Therefore, there is an option to continue as is and wait for a changing national landscape.

9.2 Bradford Children Service have an option to purchase smart devices and facilitate Wi-Fi, for all young people but this will be at a cost. Young people would state that having access to the digital world is a basic need and to not have this is seriously impacting on their wellbeing across all developmental areas.

9.3 Bradford Children Service have an option to continue to purchase a one off smart devices at 16 and then review at the point of young people being in education.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The views of the Corporate Parenting Panel regarding options set out in Section 9 of this report are welcomed.

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1: NYAS - Young Lives in Lockdown.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

12.1 N/A.

YOUNG LIVES IN LOCKDOWN

NYAS' SURVEY OF CARE-EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE DURING COVID-19



gwasanaeth eiriolaeth
ieuenctid cenedlaethol
national youth
advocacy service

We are living in unprecedented times. Lockdown and social distancing measures are affecting us all.

NYAS have been working with thousands of children and young people since the pandemic began, and created a survey to better understand the experiences of children in care and care leavers during the COVID-19 lockdown.

We know this is a particularly challenging time for children and young people, as the number of safeguarding referrals made by our professionals and volunteers have more than tripled since we entered lockdown. We created this survey to give a snapshot of how care-experienced children and young people are getting on in England and Wales during the lockdown.

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Feeling lonely or anxious	p6
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Staying in touch with children's services	p11

Key statistics

(The survey was open from 15th April – 7th May 2020)

230

Children and young people responded to the survey across England and Wales

55

Different local authorities are corporate parents to respondents

4 in 5

Care leavers felt lonely and anxious more often during the lockdown

1 in 5

Care leavers do not have the technology they need to stay in touch with friends and family during the lockdown

1 in 10

Children in care have had no contact with their social worker since the lockdown began

4x

Care leavers were four times more likely to see their personal adviser 'less often' than 'more often' during the lockdown

half

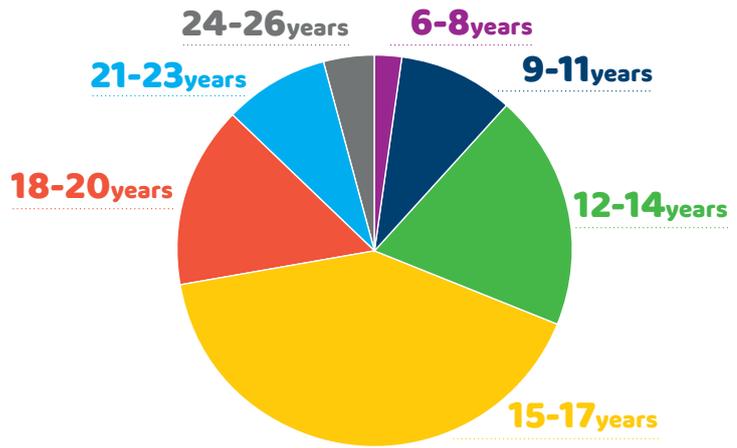
Of children in care are feeling lonely more often during the lockdown

99%

Of children and young people understand why there is a lockdown

Who we spoke to

Our survey was open to 5-25-year olds, but the majority of children and young people that responded were between 12 and 20 years old. The most responses came from those aged 15 – 17. The gender balance of respondents was broadly representative of the children and young people in care.



52%
of those that responded identified as female

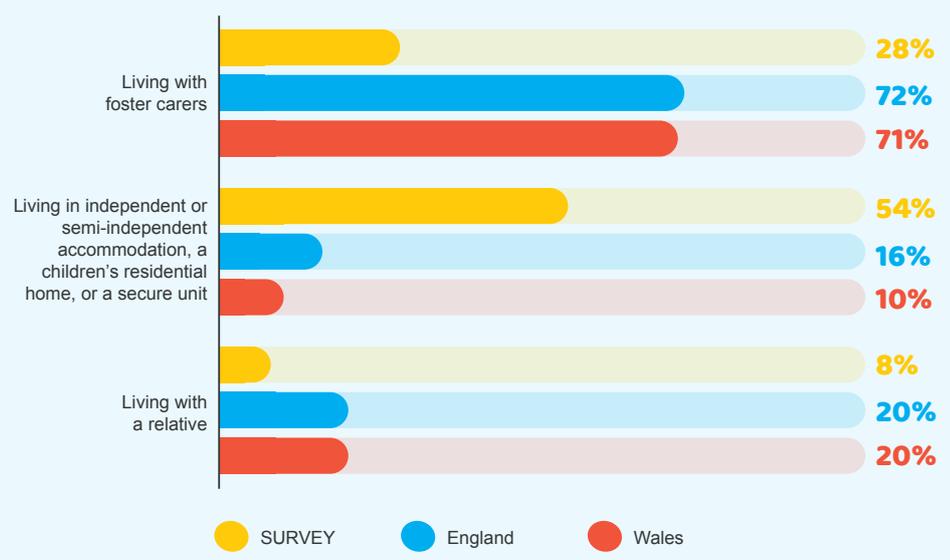
44%
identified as male

4%
identified as either 'Other' or did not disclose their gender

The majority of children and young people that responded to our survey (54%) live in an independent or semi-independent setting, a children's residential home or a secure unit. These young people are therefore significantly overrepresented in our survey when compared to figures from the Department for Education and Stats Wales.

We have chosen to categorise in a way that is broadly consistent with how the statistics are presented in both England and Wales, by combining categories such as children's residential homes with secure units. It is worth noting that this data is limited in that some children's foster carers will also be classed as a 'relative or friend.'

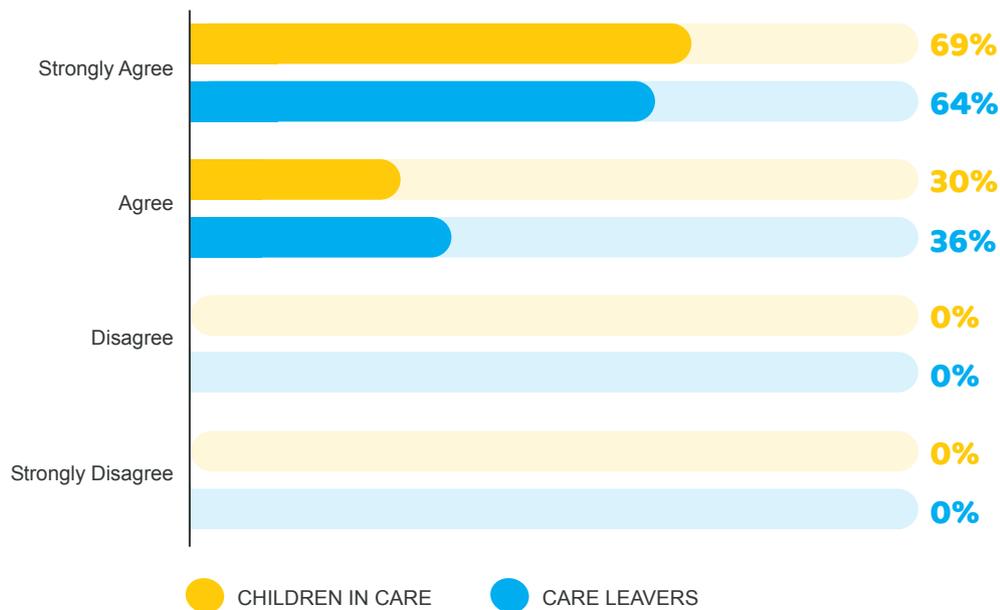
Care arrangements of respondents compared to England and Wales rates



Understanding why there is a lockdown

Every care leaver that responded, and 99% of children in care either agreed or strongly agreed that they understood why there is a lockdown.

I understand why there is a lockdown at the moment



Feeling lonely or anxious

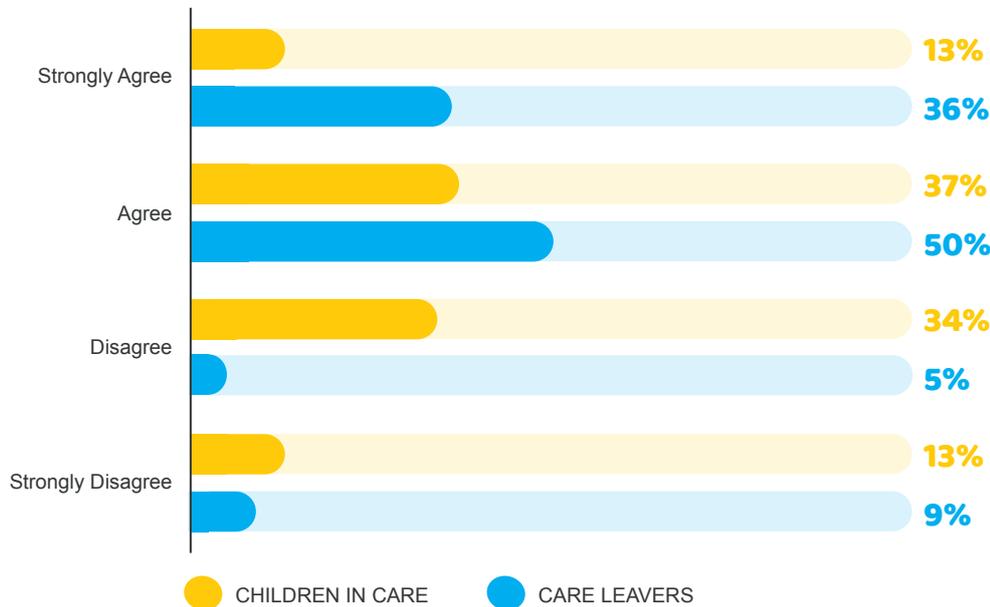
Most children in care and care leavers are feeling lonely more often during the lockdown.

This is four in five (86%) care leavers, and half (50%) of children in care.

“ I am speaking to my psychologist over the phone weekly and pay to have the mental health team to give me my medication each day, but it is hard. I live in a bedsit in a hostel. My room is small, and it is hard being in all day. I was due to leave the hostel, but everything is on hold until after the lockdown. I am missing college. ”

OLIVIA, 19, CARE LEAVER

I am feeling lonely more often during the lockdown



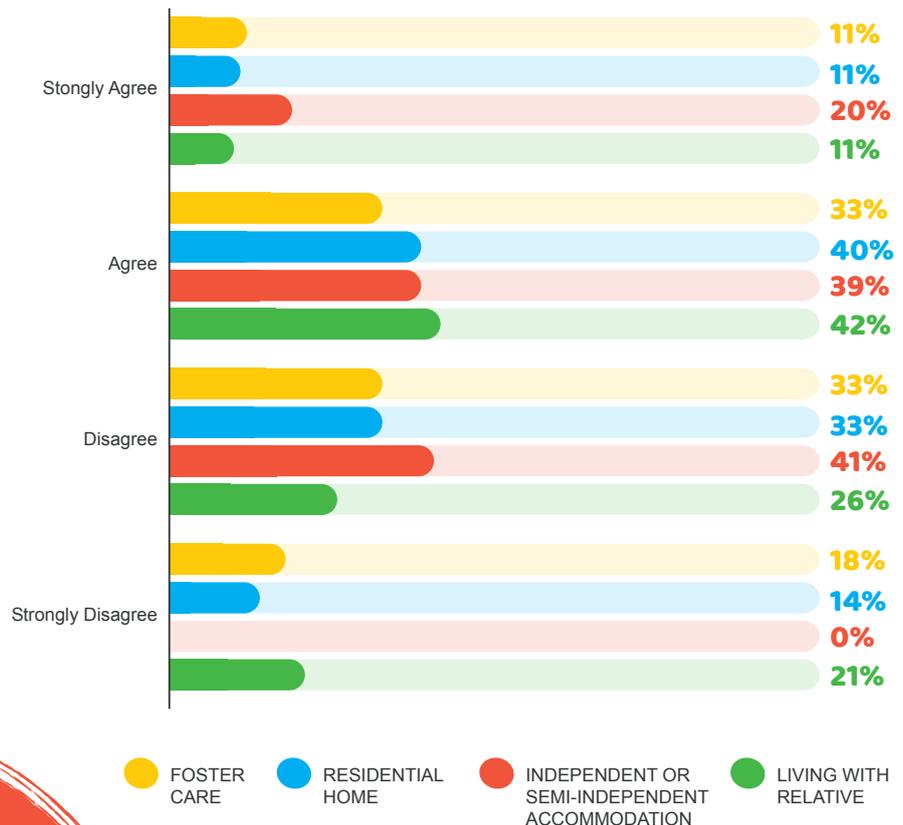
“ I’m rather depressed and anxious, as I am unable to talk to family and friends. I do not have a phone to be able to contact them on and the WiFi connection is too poor. I can’t go on social media or Netflix. ”

SOPHIE, 22, CARE LEAVER

Children living in independent or semi-independent accommodation were more likely than other children in care to feel lonely more often during the lockdown.

Three in five (59%) of those living in independent or semi-independent accommodation agreed or strongly agreed that they were feeling lonely more often during the lockdown. Over half (53%) of those living with a relative also agreed or strongly agreed, as did half (51%) of those living in a residential children's home, and two in five (44%) children in foster care.

I am feeling lonely more often during the lockdown



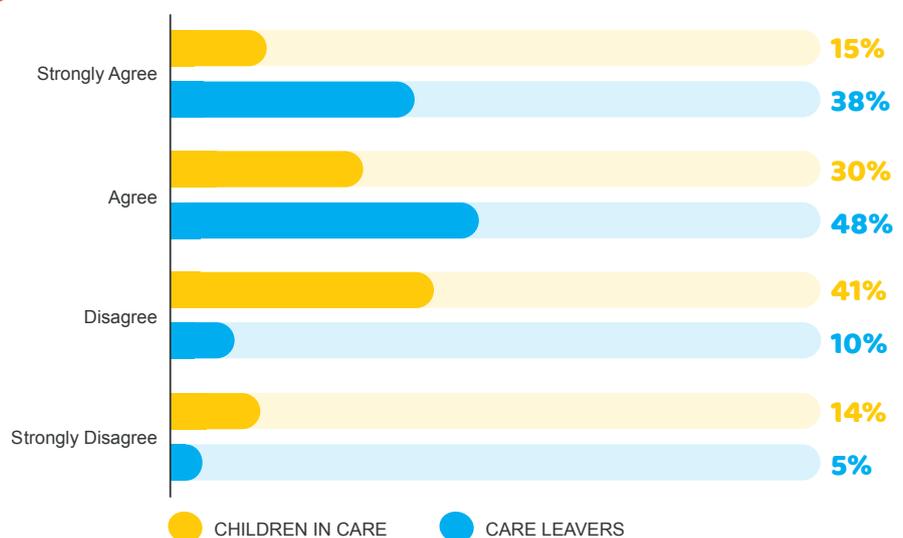
“ Not being able to socialise has affected my mental health, increasing my anxiety levels and depression. Only being given one walk a day to grab essentials or walk the dog is not enough considering I used to go out for three or four each day of the week. ”

HARRY, 17, LIVING WITH RELATIVE

I am feeling more anxious during lockdown

Care leavers are twice as likely as children in care to feel more anxious during the lockdown.

Four in five (86%) care leavers, and two in five (45%) children in care are feeling more anxious during the lockdown.





“

I am using this time to focus on my wellbeing, and I am focusing on things that I have been meaning to accomplish for years that I have never had the time to do. As worrying as this period of time is, I think after this pandemic is demolished, we will all be different and better people in our own unique ways. I hope that people can comprehend how quickly the planet has recovered whilst we have been in lockdown and that they can reduce their carbon footprint.

”

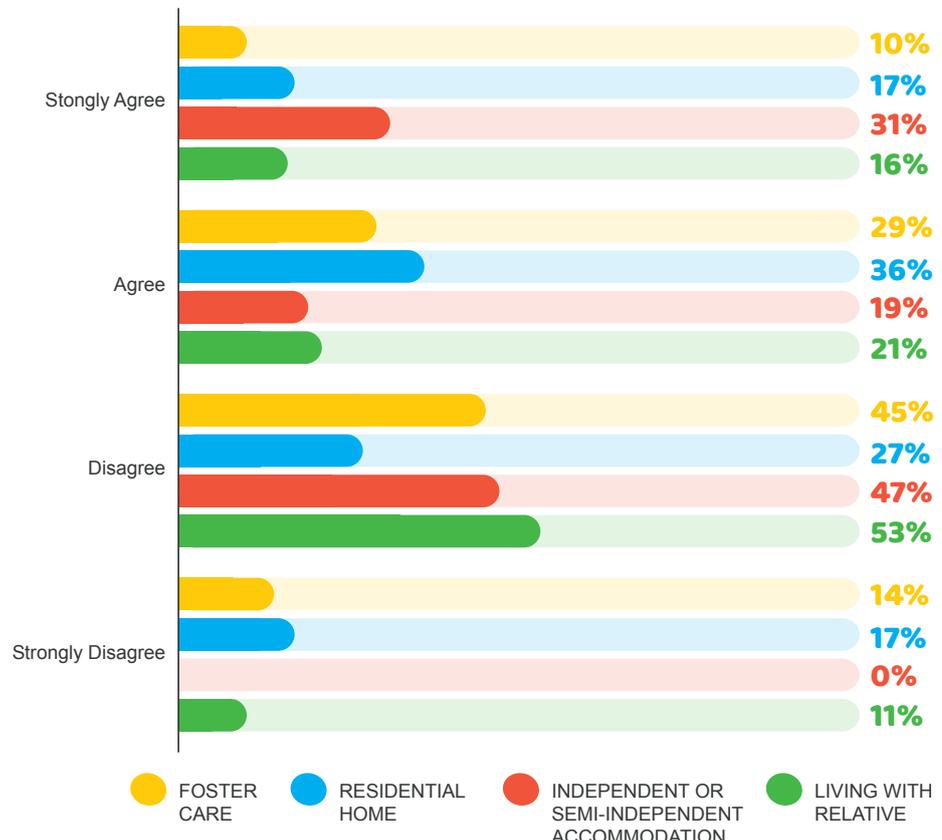
ETHAN, 17, LIVING WITH FOSTER CARERS

Children living with relatives or in foster care were less likely than other children in care to feel more anxious during the lockdown.

Two in five (39%) children living in foster care felt more anxious during the lockdown, and half (50%) of children living in independent or semi-independent accommodation and residential homes (53%) did too.

Children living with a relative are slightly less likely to feel anxious (37%) during lockdown.

I am feeling more anxious during lockdown



Accessing technology

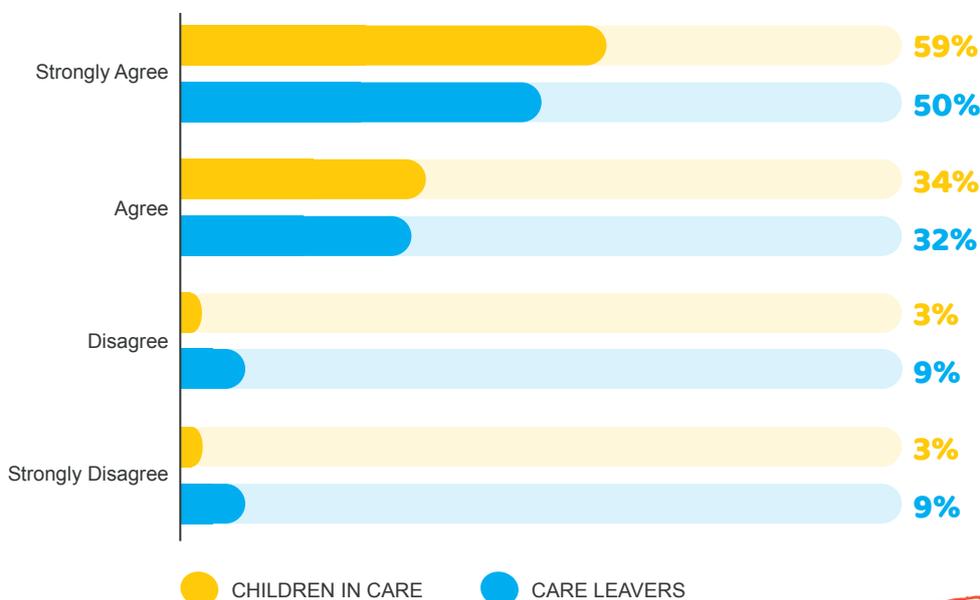
9 in 10 (93%) children in care and 8 in 10 (82%) care leavers agreed or strongly agreed that they had access to the technology they need to keep in touch with friends and family.

However, this could be an overrepresentation of those with access, given that our survey was mostly circulated and completed online. This still leaves 1 in every 5 care leavers feeling in need of better access to technology.

“ I have a unit mobile but not my own phone yet. I hope that my social worker will provide the placement with money to buy me one. My advocate is going to follow up with her about this. ”

EMILY, 14, LIVING IN A RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S HOME

I have access to the technology that I need, in order to keep in contact with my friends and those I care about during the lockdown



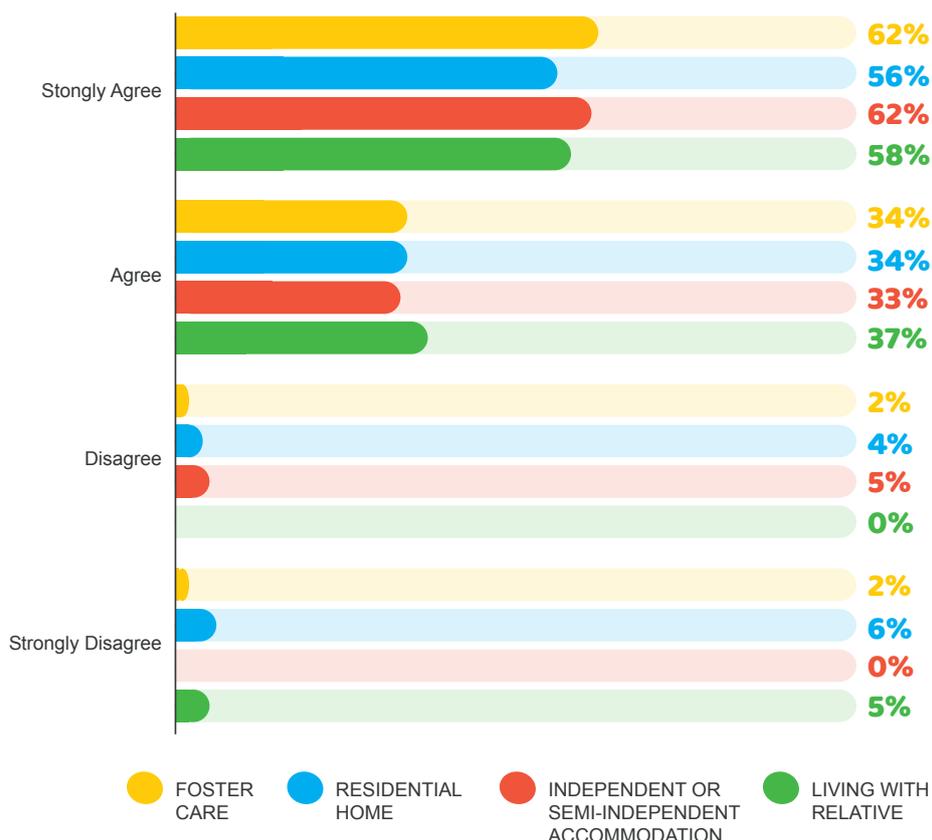
“ The hostel I am staying in does not have Wi-Fi. I do not have any data left on my phone and the signal is poor. My advocate has asked on my behalf that my personal adviser supports me in purchasing a new data package from my weekly allowance. This is being done. ”

CHLOE, 19, CARE LEAVER

There are similar high levels of access to technology reported across different types of care. Children living in a residential homes were slightly less likely than their peers to feel they had access to the technology they needed.

I have access to the technology that I need, in order to keep in contact with my friends and those I care about during the lockdown

“
Staff are trying to make it fun by doing activities, so we are not bored.
 ”
 GRACE, 12, LIVING IN A RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S HOME



“
I don't have many friends here, I just moved to a new house and then this all began. I live in the middle of nowhere and there's no service or anything!
 ”
 ALICE, 16, LIVING WITH FOSTER CARERS

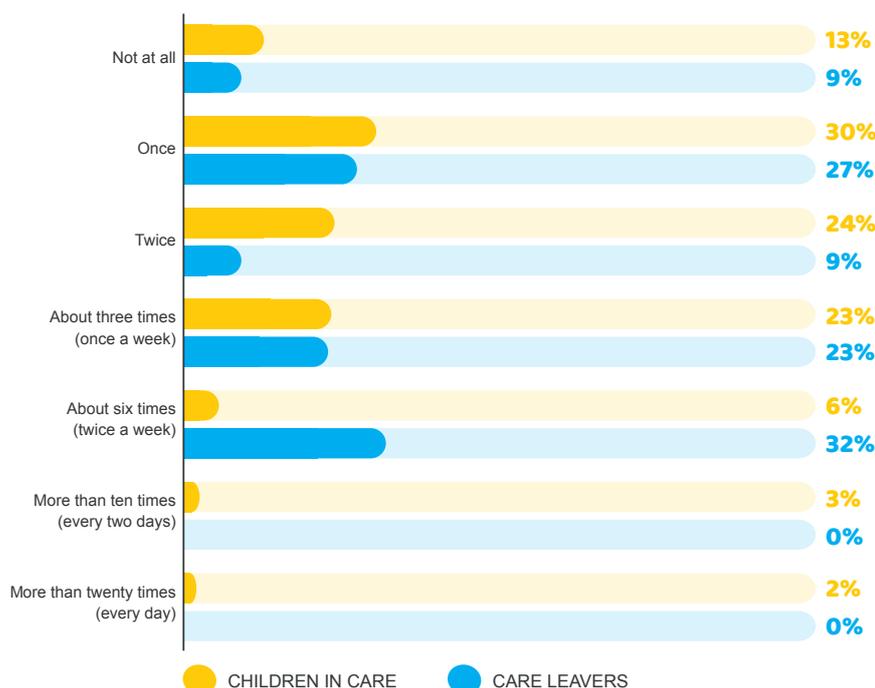


Staying in touch with children's services

One in ten (13%) children in care, and almost one in ten (9%) care leavers said that they have not had any contact from their social worker or personal adviser since the lockdown started. Almost a third (30%) of children in care had only been in contact once.

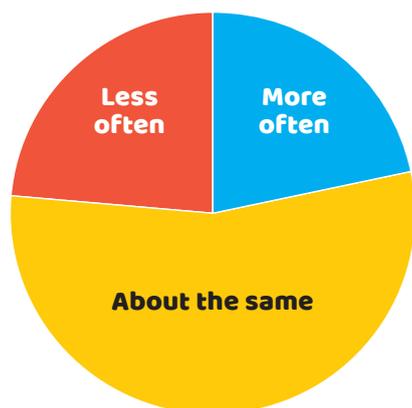


Since the lockdown started on 23rd March 2020, I have been in contact with my social worker (or personal adviser if I have left care)...

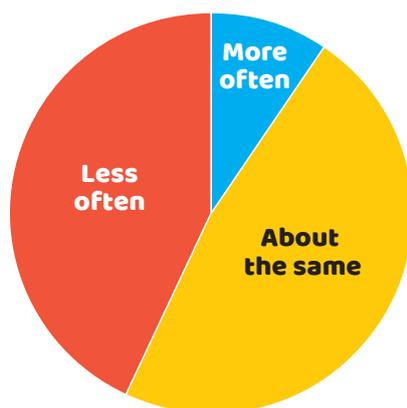


One in five children in care (23%) and two in five (43%) care leavers have had less contact with their social worker or personal adviser during the lockdown. Care leavers were four times more likely to have had less contact than more contact with their PA.

Children in care are in touch with their social worker during lockdown...



Care leavers are in touch with their personal advisers during lockdown...





#ChangingYoungLives

This data report was written by Lucy Croxton, Research and Policy Assistant

We at NYAS give our heartfelt thanks to the children and young people who gave their time to share their views as part of our survey. Thank you also to the local authorities, residential children's homes, partners and advocates, who shared our survey and empowered the 230 young voices within it.

NYAS | May 2020

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Registered Charity No: 1012485

Corporate Parenting Panel 2020/21 Forward Plan

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Conservative	Labour	Lib Dem
Cllr Dale Smith	Cllr Carol Thirkill (Chair)	Cllr Susan Knox
	Cllr Adrian Farley (Dep Chair)	
	Cllr Angela Tait	
Alternates	Alternates	Alternates
Cllr Mike Pollard	Cllr Sarfraz Nazir	Cllr Brendan Stubbs
	Cllr Nussrat Mohammed	
	Cllr Mohammed Shafiq	

Non-voting Co-opted Members	
Inspector Kevin Taylor (awaiting replacement)	West Yorkshire Police, Partnerships
Sue Lowndes	Education and Learning Strategic Manager, Education
Jude MacDonald	Designated Nurse – Safeguarding Children and LAC, CCG Collaboration
The Chair of the Children in Care Council	

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Date and Venue	Type of Meeting / Venue	Agenda Items	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
29th June 2020	City Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of the Virtual School on education for CLA children who are not in education pre and post 16. This report to include a summary on education for CLA during the COVID crisis 	Jonathan Copper	5th June	9th June	16th June	19th June
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reg 44 report directly to the Chair . Suzanne Lythgow to joining the meeting for a report on Children's Homes during the COVID crisis 	Suzanne Lythgow	5th June	9th June	16th June	19th June
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on social work arrangements during the COVID crisis Progress in relation to the key issues raised in the Ofsted report and the Improvement Plan 	Irfan Alam	5th June	9th June	16th June	19th June
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on support for Care Leavers living independently during the COVID crisis, 	Kirsty Askew	5th June	9th June	16th June	19th June

		including and update on digital inclusion in this group					
Date and Venue	Type of Meeting / Venue	Agenda Items	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
20th July 2020	Business Meeting Committee Room 1 City Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of Co opted Members 	Chair	1 st July 2020	2 nd July 2020	7 th July 2020	10 th July 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Adoption Agency: Annual report for Bradford focusing on the achievements and the challenges. 	Michelle Rawlings One Adoption West Yorkshire	1 st July 2020	2 nd July 2020	7 th July 2020	10 th July 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children Placed out of Bradford: Report on the numbers of children; services offered; challenges and sufficiency plans 	Mark Trinder (Deferred to Sept)	1 st July 2020	2 nd July 2020	7 th July 2020	10 th July 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizenship and Passports update with a focus on Brexit planning 	Rachel Curtis	1 st July 2020	2 nd July 2020	7 th July 2020	10 th July 2020
		Forward Plan	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
7th September 2020	Meeting to be held remotely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wi Fi Access & Mobile Connectivity for YP 	Emma Collingwood	12 th August 2020	19 th August 2020	25 th August 2020	28 th August 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children Placed out of Bradford: Report on the 	Mark Trinder (Deferred from July 2020)	12 th August 2020	19 th August 2020	25 th August 2020	28 th August 2020

		numbers of children; services offered; challenges and sufficiency plans					
		Forward Plan	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
2nd November 2020	Meeting to be held remotely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of QA and Safeguarding annual report to include IRO/CP/Audit 	Amandip Johal	7 th October 2020	14 th October 2020	20 th October 2020	23 rd October 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Services : Corporate Parenting Report 	Amandip Johal	7 th October 2020	14 th October 2020	20 th October 2020	23 rd October 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report from the Homelessness Review 	Kirsty Askew	7 th October 2020	14 th October 2020	20 th October 2020	23 rd October 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on Emotional and Mental Wellbeing of Looked After Children 	Sasha Bhat	7 th October 2020	14 th October 2020	20 th October 2020	23 rd October 2020
		Forward Plan	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
18th January 2021	Meeting to be held remotely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Viewpoint- what are young people telling us: Report and discussion 	Amandip Johal	23 rd December 2020	30 th December 2020	5 th January 2021	8 th January 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaving Well App feedback on views 	Amandip Johal	30 th December 2020	5 th January 2021	8 th January 2021	23 rd December 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Parenting Report: Place 	Steve Hartley	30 th December	5 th January 2021	8 th January 2021	23 rd December

				2020			2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's rights and advocacy services 	Amandip Johal	30 th December 2020	5 th January 2021	8 th January 2021	23 rd December 2020
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficiency Strategy 	Irfan Alam/Mark Trinder	30 th December 2020	5 th January 2021	8 th January 2021	23 rd December 2020
		Forward Plan	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
8th March 2021	Meeting to be held remotely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanence 	Richard Fawcett	10 th February 2021	17 th February 2021	23 rd February 2021	26 th February 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post 16 Service 	Kirsty Askew	10 th February 2021	17 th February 2021	23 rd February 2021	26 th February 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Services for Children Looked After: CCG and health partners 	Ali Jan Haider	10 th February 2021	17 th February 2021	23 rd February 2021	26 th February 2021
		Forward Plan	Lead Officer / Report Author	Deadline for report to DD/AD	Chair's briefing	Report deadline to Secretariat	Publication of Papers
5th April 2020	Meeting to be held remotely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education report on children not in mainstream education, not in education and post 16 	Jonathan Cooper	10 th March 2021	17 th March 2021	23 rd March 2021	26 th March 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reg 44 report on children's homes 	Suzanne Lythgow	10 th March 2021	17 th March 2021	23 rd March 2021	26 th March 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Parenting 		10 th March	17 th March	23 rd March	26 th March

		Report: Health and Wellbeing		2021	2021	2021	2021
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