

Report of the Deputy Director (Children's Social Care) to the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 13 September 2017.

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Subject:

Updated information for Members on the outcomes for Looked After Children at 31 March 2017.

Summary statement:

The report provides the Corporate Parenting Panel with comprehensive information regarding outcomes for Looked After Children. It is a summary of information known about Looked After Children in Bradford as at 31 March 2017 and draws on the same data used to provide statistical returns to the Department for Education (all figures are provisional, DfE publish the final figures March 2018) . Comparison is made to performance levels at 31 March 2016 and to the first National Statistical Release for 2015-16.

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Portfolio:

Children's Services

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report provides the Corporate Parenting Panel with comprehensive information regarding outcomes for Looked After Children. It is a summary of information known about Looked After Children in Bradford as at 31 March 2017 and draws on the same data used to provide statistical returns to the Department for Education (all figures are provisional, Department for Education (DfE) publish the final figures March 2018) . Comparison is made to performance levels at 31 March 2016 and to the first National Statistical Release for 2015-16.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 These outcomes are reported on children who are Looked After at 31 March 2017, and have been in care continuously for at least one year on that date.
- 2.2 This is reported annually to the DfE as part of the wider Looked After Children's return (SSDA903) and performance is fed back to Through Care Strategy group to support and improve the work of individual services.
- 2.3 The data provided through the Looked After Children return provides information on performance indicators which are used to form part of the National Indicator Set (NIS). Although the NIS as a central entity has been abolished by the Coalition Government, these performance indicators are still a key local tool in managing the quality of outcomes for Looked After Children in the District. They also contribute to Ofsted's annual evaluation of children's services in Bradford and provide key baseline information for any Ofsted inspection of services to Looked After Children that may take place.

Headlines:

- There has been an increase in the number of looked after children, 927 children were in care at 31 March 2017 compared to 848 last year.
- The numbers of adoptions and Special Guardianship Orders have decreased since last year.
- Numbers of Young people having a Dental Check and up to date Immunisations have increased.
- Numbers of Care Leavers in Employment, Education or Training has improved.
- Young people who were convicted or subject to a youth caution in the year has fallen.

2.1 Overall Numbers

- 2.1.2 There were 927 children looked after at 31 March 2017, which is a 9.3% increase on last year of 848. Nationally the number of looked after children has continued to rise; it has increased steadily over the last eight years. The rate of looked after children per 10,000 population aged 0-17 is at 61 and this has been slowly decreasing since 2012 by effective management of the Looked After population. This compares favourably with statistical neighbours rate of 77.7.

- 2.1.3 There has been a 16% increase in the number of children becoming Looked After at 31 March. 351 children started to be looked after, which is an increase on last year's figure of 302. 281 ceased to be looked after compared to 331 last year.

Nationally at 31 March 2016 there was a 2% increase in the numbers starting to be looked after compared to the previous year.

The proportion of 0-4 and 5-9 year olds becoming looked after has remained fairly stable over the last 3 years, however there has been a fall in the proportion of 10-15 year olds becoming looked after, 23% in 2017 compared to 30% in 2016. There has also been a significant increase in the proportion of 16+ becoming looked after, an increase from 7% in 2016 to 14% in 2017. The increase appears to be due to a rise in the numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children starting to be looked after, given the increases are largely seen amongst those aged 16 and over, and amongst those with a primary category of need of 'absent parenting'.

2.2 Placements and Adoptions

- 2.2.1 Ensuring Looked After children and young people are in stable placements is a key priority for Children's Services. At 31 March 2017, 69% of children and young people were in long term stable and secure placements, which is a decrease on last year's figure of 71%. This compares favourably with the England average of 68% and in line with the Statistical neighbours' average of 69%. Short term placement stability remains fairly stable; 9.8% of children and young people had 3 or more placements in the year compared to 9.5% last year. This compares favourably with the England average of 10% but is higher than the Statistical neighbours' average of 8.3%.

- 2.2.2 42 children (15%) were adopted at 31 March 2017 this is a decrease on last year of 72 (21%). This compares favourably to the national average of 15% but unfavourable to the statistical neighbours average of 20.9% (comparison from the first National Statistical Release for 2015-16).

- 2.2.3 The number of Special Guardianship orders granted has also decreased 33 (12%) in 2017 from 42 (12%) in 2016.

- 2.2.4 The average time taken between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family has also improved in the year in question from 554 days in 2015/16 to 357 days in 2016/17.

2.3 Health

2.3.1 Physical Health

- 92% of Looked After children had all their immunisations up to date increase from 89% in 2016.
- 94% had their teeth checked by a dentist in the year, an increase on last year of 92%.
- 93% of Looked After children had an annual health assessment in the year, a decrease on last year of 95%.

2.4 Emotional Health

- 2.4.1. It is recognised that Children and Young People who have been abused and suffered loss of their primary carer are at greater risk of poor emotional resilience. Concerns remain for the outcomes of young people leaving care whose future is impacted by issues of poor emotional health which for a minority can lead to social exclusion.
- 2.4.2 The emotional health needs of children and young people (Looked After for more than a year) are assessed through a 'Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). A SDQ generates an individual score for an individual child (between 1 – 40), 0-13 as normal level of emotional need, 13-25 some concerns, 25-40 very concerning. The highest figures are a predictor of emotional difficulties.
- 2.4.3 51% of children aged 4-16 inclusive (who have been Looked After for more than one year) had a SDQ completed, this is a decrease on last year of 69%. The average value for completed questionnaires at 31 March 2017 is 12.2 compared to 12.7 last year. This rate compares favourably with the National and Statistical average rate of 14 and 14.3 (2015-2016 Statistical Release Figures).
- 2.4.4 To respond to the emotional wellbeing of Looked After children and care leavers Social Care Services have implemented specific partnerships with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS):
- Therapeutically-oriented care programme at Meadowlea Children's Home which focuses on the emotional needs of children and views the child's development process from a broad psychoanalytical perspective as well as biological and social influences.
 - Leaving Care Workers and young people have early access to CAMHS Social Work service to provide preventative therapeutic work or access to specialist CAMHS and Adult Services.
 - All staff within Children's Homes are being trained to deliver PACE and DDP our model of care for working with young people who have experienced early trauma and attachment issues, we expect this to improve relationships and increase resilience in placements. This training is also being rolled out to Foster Carers.
 - A dedicated CAMHS Looked after Team is in place and two psychologists have been recruited who are working to support our placement resources. This includes direct work at placements as opposed to a clinic approach.

2.5 Children's Homes

- 2.5.1 Changes to the Children's Homes Regulations and Ofsted Inspection Framework were introduced in April 2015 with residential care settings and provisions being inspected against a rigorous inspection framework twice a year. Inspectors consider the information that Ofsted has about the service which includes:

- previous inspection reports
- the home's statement of purpose
- concerns and complaints received
- notifications of serious events received
- written reports following a visit by an independent visitor
- any quality assurance reports required by regulation
- any changes to registration, including change of manager
- any current or recent enforcement activity.

2.5.2 Judgements of the home are made in relation to:

- The Overall Experiences and Progress of Children and Young People living in the home
- How Well Children and Young People are Helped and Protected
- The Impact and Effectiveness of Leaders and Managers

2.5.3 With overall judgements in relation to the care delivered being made using a four-point scale:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

2.5.4 Inspectors will investigate how the manager and staff:

- Understand each child or young person's starting point
- Measure success
- Know they are making a positive difference to children and young people's lives
- Understand and act on the strengths and areas for improvement in practice.

2.5.6 Any judgement of inadequate for the overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home at an inspection of a children's home will lead to an urgent case review. There will also be an urgent case review where the issues identified at an interim inspection give sufficient cause for concern.

Currently Bradford has 11 children's homes, the outcomes for 2016-2017:

Full inspection outcomes

- 2 - Requires Improvement
- 3 - Good
- 1 - Outstanding

Interim Inspection outcomes

- 6 sustained effectiveness
- 4 improved effectiveness

2.6 Achievement

The information on the attainment of Looked After children for the academic year 2016/2017 is not yet available and is the subject of a report to this Committee at its next meeting.

2.7 Positive Contribution

- 96% of Looked After children participated in their reviews at 31 March 2017 which is an increase on last year of 92%.
- 98% of Looked After children had all their reviews on time during the previous year; this is the same as last year.
- The percentage of Looked After young people who were convicted or subject to a youth caution in the year has fallen; 5.5% in 2017 compared to 7% in 2016. There is a dedicated Police Officer working closely with the children's homes to work restoratively and reduce offending and missing episodes.

2.8 Economic Wellbeing

2.8.1 At 31 March 2017, 60% of Care Leavers aged between 17 and 21 were in education, employment and training, which is an increase on last year of 57%. Bradford performance compares favourably with the England average of 49%, Yorkshire and Humber average of 52% and with Statistical neighbours average of 48.5% (2015-2016 Statistical Release Figures).

2.8.2 85% of Care Leavers aged between 17 and 21 were living in suitable accommodation; this is a slight fall on last year figure of 86%. Bradford's figure compares favourably with the England average of 83% and in line with the statistical neighbour's average of 85.6% and Yorkshire and Humber average of 85% (2015-2016 Statistical Release Figures).

2.8.3 6% of Care Leavers aged between 17 and 21 were in higher education, a slight decrease on last year's figure of 7%. This compares unfavourably against the National and Statistical neighbours average of 7% and 8.25% (2015-2016 Statistical Release Figures).

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

N/A.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

N/A.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

N/A.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

N/A.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

N/A.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

N/A.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

N/A.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

N/A.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

N/A.

7.6 TRADE UNION

N/A.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

N/A.

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

N/A.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

N/A.

9. OPTIONS

N/A.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel note the content of this report.

11. APPENDICES

None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Looked After Children Analysis 2017
- National Statistical Release for 2015-16