

**Notice of a public meeting of
Corporate Parenting Board**

To: Councillors Funnell, Looker (Chair), Potter, Scott, Wiseman, Brooks, Cuthbertson and Runciman (Vice-Chair)

Date: Monday, 1 October 2012

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: The Guildhall, York

AGENDA

1. Declarations of Interests

At this point in the meeting, Members will be invited to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in the business on this agenda.

2. Minutes (Pages 3 - 8)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 July 2012.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered their wish to speak regarding an item on the agenda or an issue within the Board's remit can do so. The deadline for registering is 5pm the working day before the meeting, in this case **5pm on Friday 28 September 2012.**

To register, or for further information, please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting using the details at the foot of this agenda.

4. Adoption, Fostering, Education of Looked After Children and Care Leaving Services (Pages 9 - 44)

Members will consider a series of specific areas of interest, related to the Looked After Children's Strategy. The focus in this report will be upon good, safe placements, education and care leaving services.

5. 2012/13 Work Plan and Dates for 2013 Meetings (Pages 45 - 46)

Members are asked to confirm a work plan of the Board for 2012-13 Municipal Year and to set dates for 2013.

6. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officers:

Names: Catherine Clarke and Louise Cook (job-share)

Contact Details:

- Telephone - (01904) 551031
- E-mail: catherine.clarke@york.gov.uk and louise.cook@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officers responsible for servicing this meeting.

- Registering to speak
- Written Representations
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

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The majority of councillors are not appointed to the Cabinet (39 out of 47). Any 3 non-Cabinet councillors can 'call-in' an item of business following a Cabinet meeting or publication of a Cabinet Member decision. A specially convened Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee (CSMC) will then make its recommendations to the next scheduled Cabinet meeting, where a final decision on the 'called-in' business will be made.

Scrutiny Committees

The purpose of all scrutiny and ad-hoc scrutiny committees appointed by the Council is to:

- Monitor the performance and effectiveness of services;
- Review existing policies and assist in the development of new ones, as necessary; and
- Monitor best value continuous service improvement plans

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

MEETING	CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
DATE	10 JULY 2012
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS FUNNELL, LOOKER, SCOTT, WISEMAN, BROOKS, CUTHBERTSON AND RUNCIMAN
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS POTTER

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Members were given the opportunity to nominate a Chair to the Board.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Looker be elected as the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Members were given the opportunity to nominate a Vice-Chair to the Board.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Runciman be elected as the Vice-Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

At this point in the meeting Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in relation to the business on the agenda or any other general interest they might have within the remit of the Board. No interests were declared.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Councils Public Participation Scheme.

5. SCENE SETTING FOR THE WORK OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Members considered the information contained in the Looked After Children's Strategy, the Local Government Improvement and Development guidance (LGID) and the Ofsted report.

Officers gave an overview of the Looked After Children's Strategy 2012-13 which was produced following extensive consultation work with children and young people in care, their families, their foster carers and all partner agencies who work to support these children. Officers brought to Members attention:

- the York's pledge to children and Young People in Care.
- the outcomes for Looked After Children Strategy.
- how they would deliver, monitor and review the action plan.
- the planning arrangements.
- the references and the LGID jargon busters.

Members were informed that the Ofsted Inspection took place during 19th-30th March 2012. The inspection was very robust and intense. Officers were pleased with the outcome but noted that although the report showed great results it did present some huge challenges. In answer to Members questions it was confirmed that Ofsted would be inspecting again in 2015 and not every year as previously done.

Members thanked officers for the background information and stated that due to all the changes noted at the Health and Wellbeing Board it was vital that good relationships were formed in a rapidly changing health environment so that children did not get lost in the system. Officers confirmed that relationships were continually monitored as Children Services feed into the Health and Wellbeing Board which was now sitting in the middle of the strategic framework.

Officers confirmed that the current virtual Headteacher was stepping down from her role at the end of the academic year but a replacement was in process and they had received lots of strong interest. The new virtual Headteacher would also be working along side the Head of School Improvements to strengthen and monitor schools attainment levels.

RESOLVED: (i) That the Looked After Children's Strategy, the LGID guidance and the Ofsted report be considered and noted.

(ii) That a schedule of quarterly reports from the Director of Adults, Children and Education relating to the progress of the department and its key partners in progressing the actions to achieve York's vision for looked after children be received.

REASON: To enable the Corporate Parenting Board to establish the key area which future Board work will be focused, which will assist in holding the council officers and its partners to account in improving the life experiences and chances of York's looked after children.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members considered the Board's draft set of terms of reference.

It was agreed that the following changes would be made:

- Under Purpose of the Board, first bullet point will read:
To raise awareness of the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities and develop expertise and knowledge among elected Members and officers.
- 2.1 The Membership of the Board will consist of 8 Members.
3 Members must be drawn from:
 - The Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Young People's Services.
 - The elected Members on the Adoption Panel and Fostering and Sharing Care Panel.
- 5 Members must be drawn from:
 - The elected Members on the Show Me That I matter Panel (children in care council).
 - 3 elected Members who visit Wenlock Terrace and The Glen.
 - Another appropriate elected Member.

The Board will also have the power to co-opt Members.

Officers agreed to update the Terms of Reference and forward them to Cabinet to be ratified.

RESOLVED: (i) That the Terms of Reference be agreed if the above changes are applied.

(ii) That the Terms of Reference be ratified at Cabinet.

REASON: To progress the work of the Committee

7. 2012/13 WORK PLAN AND FUTURE MEETING DATES

Members considered a 2012/13 workplan for the Board and agreed to receive the following reports:

Adoption report	2 per annum
Fostering report	2 per annum
Looked After Children (LAC) Respect and Involvement	Annual
LAC: Good and safe placements	Annual
LAC: Relationships	Annual
LAC: Identity	Annual
LAC: Education	Annual
LAC: Health	Annual
LAC: Emotional Well Being	Annual
LAC: Moving into Adulthood	Annual
LAC: Corporate Parenting	Annual
Data re Looked After Children and care leaves	2 per annum
Working with troubled families	2 per annum
Inspection Outcomes	As occur
Regional/national developments	As occur

Officers also agreed to produce some base level data on Looked After Children, in particular facts & figures that showed a comparison to regional and national results and against another similar authority to York.

Members stated they would monitor the timescales and challenges listed in the Ofsted Report.

RESOLVED: That the draft workplan for 2012-13 be noted and agreed.

REASON: To progress the work of the Committee.

Cllr Looker, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 6.40 pm].

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Corporate Parenting Board**1 October 2012**

Report of the Director of Adults, Children and Education

Adoption, Fostering, Education of Looked After Children and Care Leaving Services

Summary

1. The initial meetings of the Corporate Parenting Board will focus on a series of specific areas of interest, related to the Looked After Children's Strategy. The focus in this report will be upon good, safe placements, education and care leaving services.

Background

2. The council's placement strategy focuses upon children being placed with local foster families, where practicable. For children, who can not return to the care of their parents or extended family, there is an explicit commitment to seeking adoption families, in which they will have the opportunity to grow up in a new permanent, loving family.

The fostering and adoption services are registered with Ofsted as the regulatory authority. There is an extensive legislative base underpinned by regulation, national minimum standards and an inspection framework.

The regulations require that each service report on a regular basis to the Director of Children's Services and the Executive Member with responsibility for Children's Services. The reports for the annual review of the adoption service and the quarterly report of the fostering service for period April to June 2012 are submitted for consideration (appendices A and B).

Each local authority is required to appoint a senior teacher to act as a Head Teacher of the virtual school of looked after children. The Head Teacher of the virtual school works to support the education

of looked after children and care leavers in their various settings. The role of head teacher of the virtual school has recently transferred from Sian Rees, Deputy Head Teacher at Fulford School to Tricia Head, Head Teacher of Danesgate. A progress report about the attainment of looked after children is submitted for consideration (appendix C).

The experience of looked after children and young people can often be measured best by the success of their journey into adulthood. The Pathway Team undertakes support to care leavers. A progress report about care leavers' experiences is submitted for consideration (appendix D).

Consultation

3. The work of each of the officers reporting to the board is undertaken with consultation with service users e.g. foster carers, adopters, looked after children and care leavers. Feedback from York Area Foster Carers Association, Show Me That I Matter and I Matter Too (representatives of all looked after children) is regularly sought and incorporated into the service development.

Options

4. There are no options for decision, as the information provided is intended to establish a working knowledge for the Board of the experience of looked after children.

Analysis

5. Not applicable

Council Plan

6. The Corporate Parenting Board will be ensuring that the work of partners for looked after children contributes to the aims of
 - The Children and Young People's Plan
 - Building strong communities
 - Protecting vulnerable people

Through the positive outcomes for looked after children, the aim is for them to be able to benefit from and contribute to

- Get York moving
- Create jobs and grow the economy
- Protect the environment

7. Implications

- **Financial**, Not applicable
- **Human Resources**, Not applicable
- **Equalities**, Not applicable
- **Legal**, Not applicable
- **Crime and Disorder**, Not applicable
- **Information Technology**, Not applicable
- **Property**, Not applicable
- **Other**, Not applicable

Risk Management

8. Not applicable

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that the Board receives the quarterly reports from the Director of Adults, Children and Education relating to the progress of the department and its key partners in progressing the actions to achieve York's vision for looked after children.

Reason: The Board will be able to ensure that all partners in the Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children are making good progress to address the areas for development identified in the Looked After Children's strategy 2012-15 and the Pledge to Looked After Children.

Contact Details

Author:

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Howard Lovelady, Head of Service (Resources) Children's Social Care, ACE

Eoin Rush, Assistant Director

Tel No. (01904) 555357

Tel no (01904) 554212

Report Approved

Date 24/09/12

Chief Officer's name
Title

Report Approved

Date Insert Date

Specialist Implications Officer:

Not applicable

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes:

Adoption Service Report 2012, Annex A

Fostering Service Report April 2012 to June 2012, Annex B

Education of Looked After Children Progress Report, Annex C

Moving to Adulthood LAC Action Plan Update, Annex D

Annex A



Annual report on the Adoption Service in York:
April 2011 - March 2012

Background

The Adoption National Minimum Standard 25.6 require that the Executive side of the local authority:

- receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency every 6 months;
- monitor the management and outcomes of the services in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users;
- satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration

This report sets out a summary of the work of the Adoption Service for the period April 2011 and March 2012. The attached Appendices provide data on activity over this period.

Overview

Adoption work within the agency is located within two main areas; within child care teams who complete the necessary internal and legal processes when adoption is identified as a suitable option for a child; and within the family placement team where adoption social workers assess an individual's suitability to be approved as an adopter and help children's social workers identify a suitable adoptive family for a child.

City of York has always been a high performing adoption agency, and is ranked in the top local authorities nationally for its performance in respect of % of children adopted from the looked after children's population. York also performs well in respect of placing a high percentage of children with a prospective adoptive family within 12 months of the plan for adoption being agreed, and in having a low rate of these placements disrupting before an Adoption Order is made. These three indicators taken together are indicative

Annex A

of a concerted approach to the active planning for adoption, consistent support to prospective adopters and prompt completion of the process.

During this period there has been considerable government interest and comment on adoption services. This has focused on concern about the decrease in the number of adoption orders being made over recent years and requests to local authorities to increase the use of adoption for looked after children and to increase the speed at which adoption plans are made and implemented.

York continues to be an active member of the Yorkshire Adoption Consortium. Membership of the Consortium has worked to York's advantage in that, unlike most other local authorities in the region, York is too small geographically to place children from York with adopters in York, without compromising the anonymity of a placement. York therefore places children across the region (and beyond, where necessary) and recruits adopters for use by other local authorities.

The Yorkshire Adoption Consortium moved to a new working model in this financial year. There is now a payment between agencies, at a reduced rate (£8758) of the nationally set inter-agency fee (£13138), when a child is placed with a family approved by another local authority in the Consortium. A match for a child with a family approved by a local authority outside of the Consortium is charged at the nationally set inter-agency fee rate. A match for a child with a family approved by a Voluntary Adoption Agency is charged at a fee of £27,000. City of York's use of the Yorkshire Adoption Consortium is documented in the balance sheet of April 2012 (Appendix 3).

Alongside the planning for children needing adoptive families and the recruitment, training and support of prospective adopters, the adoption social workers in the family placement team provide adoption support to families living in the City. These can be families approved by York, or families approved by other adoption agencies, with children placed by other local authorities. Three years after the making of an adoption order, York becomes responsible for addressing any adoption support needs these families may have.

There is a close working relationship with colleagues in CAMHS and with After Adoption Yorkshire. The adoption workers also run regular 'drop in' events for adoptive parents and children, which offers an opportunity for adopters to meet each other and build up support networks and for informal training and advice. In some instances adoptive families will need more intensive social work support and are therefore referred onto the long term social work service units.

Annex A

The adoption workers within the family placement team also manage the post box service which facilitates indirect contact between adopted children and their birth families, without compromising the anonymity of the adoptive family.

Consultation: What children and adopters say about the service and how they contribute to its development.

The majority of children placed are under the age of 6 and their understanding of the adoption service will be in relation to their experience with their social worker and foster carers who act as their advocates. The views of older children adopted in York are usually gleaned via their link with After Adoption Yorkshire or CAMHS. This feedback is used to develop services. Family placement workers liaise closely with social work colleagues in finding suitable families for children whose plan is adoption. The feedback from these worker and manager is that this input is positive in achieving good outcomes for children.

Prospective adopters provide feedback on all stages of the process, from initial enquiry to Panel; this is overwhelmingly positive, with many commenting on the high quality of the support they receive from their adoption worker. Adopters choose to return to the agency for approval for a second placement. Adopters voice appreciate often of support provided post placement and post order via support groups or individual interventions.

Adopters are involved in service development via the various support groups they attend. Feedback is also obtained from adopters accessing After Adoption Yorkshire. Issues arising are included in service development planning. Adopters contribute to running Preparation Groups for new applicants.

How we ensure that adoptive placements that will meet children's needs are provided

We recruit prospective adopters able to meet children's needs from within the City and make these families available to other local authorities in the local consortium. Due to York's geographical size we cannot usually place York children with York adopters. We pro-actively family find for all our children with plans for adoption, using families from within the consortium or available through the Adoption Register. We profile our children at national Exchange days. There is regular monitoring of the progress of family finding activity for all individual children with senior managers. All suitable families are explored for a potential match, those approved by VAA or well as other local authority adopters.

Annex A

How children progress in their health, learning and emotional and social development.

All the children have a health action plan that is regularly reviewed and updated. Those of nursery or school age have a personal education plan. CAMHS provide input to foster carers preparing children to move to an adoptive placement. The children all have Life Story books to accompany them into their new families. There is close liaison with the prospective adopters' local authority to dovetail planning from placement through to adoption, to ensure that all services are in place to support the child. Adoption workers and the placing social worker offer ongoing support after placement.

How the adoption agency contributes to promoting good outcomes for children and young people.

Family finding meetings are set up as soon as the plan for adoption has been agreed after Panel so that there is no delay in seeking a suitable family for a child. The child's details are entered on the local Consortium database, and where appropriate, the Adoption Register to ensure access to all available families. The adoption team and the child's social worker work together to find a family, planning the placement and post placement support. The child's needs are carefully considered against identified prospective adopters to ensure the best possible match. A Life Appreciation Day is held to ensure that prospective adopters have all available information on a child before proceeding to Adoption Panel. The Panel closely scrutinise the proposed match to ensure that it is likely to meet the child's needs. There is close liaison with York based agencies to ensure good information gathering and effective transfer to key agencies in the prospective adopters' local authority.

How recruitment, assessment, training and supervision of adopters promotes positive outcomes for children and young people.

Though the number of approved adoptive families across the country has decreased, in York interest in adoption still remains strong. The service endeavours to avoid delay for those interested in adoption where ever possible and to ensure that they are fully informed of the challenges and rewards of adoption. Enquirers are sent an information pack within 5 days and are invited to an Information Evening which run at 2 monthly intervals. At this, further information is provided and opportunity for questions around individual circumstances. As the adoption family placement team is small, at times there may be a wait for an assessing social worker to be available. Enquirers are made aware of this at information evenings and given contact details of other agencies in the region that may be able to progress their interest more quickly.

Annex A

Those who wish to take their interest further have a home visit to explore their circumstances and gain more detailed information about children's needs. An initial assessment is made as to whether the enquirer has the potential to parent an adopted child and if positive, they are invited to make a formal application and attend a preparation course. Preparation courses are run jointly with North Yorkshire County Council, which offers a greater frequency of courses for applicants than would be possible otherwise. Following the course, an adoption social worker is allocated to undertake a comprehensive assessment with the family. The adoption team work to a 5 months timeframe to complete the assessment, known as the prospective adopter report (PAR), to present to Panel. If approved as a prospective adopter, work is undertaken to identify a child whose needs they are able to meet. Supervision and support is provided through the matching and placement process and on through to adoption order, and beyond. The positive working relationships established enable adopters to seek advice and support from the adoption team in parenting their children throughout their childhood.

How adopters are involved in matching and subsequent planning.

There are two major strands to this work; that involving adopters approved by City of York and that involving adopters approved by other agencies matched with City of York children. For adopters approved by City of York, the adoption worker will share all information supplied by a child's social worker and fully discuss with the adopters the degree of match with any considered child. After a meeting with a child's social worker to discuss a possible match, the York adoption worker will go through feedback from the meeting and analyse the information provided with the adopter to enable the adopter to arrive at a considered decision as to whether or not they will proceed to a match. The adoption worker will accompany them to meetings about the child and fully discuss issues arising from this with them. The prospective adopters will be accompanied by their adoption worker to a matching panel and supported throughout the panel process. If a match agreed the adopters will be central to all discussions regarding placement planning. When a child placed they will be fully involved in reviews for the child through to the granting of an adoption order.

For adopters approved by other agencies, they will be given all information about a child, invited to a Life Appreciation Day, invited to attend the Adoption Panel considering the match and thereafter fully involved in the planning process as outlined above.

Annex A

Management for the Adoption Service

The adoption team consists of 2.5 social workers and a Practice Manager. The Practice Manager oversees the day to day running of the service and takes a lead in family finding alongside the child's social worker. The Service Manager Family Placement line manages the Practice Manager and has overall responsibility for the adoption service

The social workers in the adoption team undertake all aspects of mainstream adoption work: recruiting families; matching and placing children; family finding jointly with child's social workers; supporting adoptive families from placement of a child through to the making of an Adoption Order, and beyond where needed; running a post box service.

The adoption workers are fully involved in service development via regular team meetings and service development sessions. Feedback from children's social workers is used to further develop services.

The Adoption Panels meets every 2 or 3 weeks to consider plans for adoption, approval of adopters and matches for children. It also provides an oversight and quality assurance of the work presented to panel. Panel received regular feedback at each panel meeting regarding the progress of cases considered in the previous 6 and 12 months.

The Agency Decision Maker receives the recommendations of the Panel and then makes the decision regarding agreeing (or not) plans, approvals and matches. The Assistant Director Children's Services acts as the Agency Decision Maker.

There are good operational links in place between the Practice Manager adoption and the Children's Front door service, where requests for assessments for adoption support are received and also with the children's social work teams who complete any ongoing work with a family following an assessment.

A Service level Agreement is in place with After Adoption Yorkshire, a voluntary adoption agency who provide support to all those effected by adoption, focussed in the main with Birth Relatives and in providing specialist counselling and intermediary work for adopted adults.

A Service Level Agreement is also in place with the Yorkshire Adoption Society to provide advice and assessment work relating to Inter-country adopters.

Annex A

Plans for improvement and development.

- Written consultation with adopters to inform service development.
- An evaluation of Life Appreciation Days to ensure consistent approach for all children.
- Work to ensure data systems updated for all monitoring purposes and that analysis of data informs adoption service planning.

Recommendation

The Executive notes the information about the adoption agency in the financial year 2011-2012

Mary McKelvey

Service Manager

June 2012.

Annex A

Appendix 1 : Children

Outcomes for Children in period:	Number of children
Plan for Adoption Agreed	12
Placed for Adoption	11
Adoption Orders were made	13
Placement Disrupted	1
Awaiting Placement as at 31 st March 2012	17
Placed but not yet Adopted as at 31 st March 2012	10

Of the 11 children matched in this period:	Number of children
Matched with families approved by a local authority that is a member of the Yorkshire Adoption Consortium	7
Matched with a family approved by a local authority that is not a member of the Yorkshire Adoption Consortium.	2
Matched with a family approved by a Voluntary Adoption Agency (VAA).	2

Of the children not yet placed:	Number of children
Aged 2 years or younger	2
Aged 3 – 5 years	7
Aged 6 years and over	8
Sibling groups of 2	3
Boys	8
Girls	9
Length of time waiting since plan approved	
Less than 6 months	2
6 months –12 months	6
12- 18 months	9
Over 18 months	0
Children where plan of adoption has been withdrawn in period	6

- The children placed or adopted during this period are not necessarily the same as those with plans were approved during the same period; a child's plan for adoption or placement may have been approved in a previous financial year.

Annex A

- There was 1 disruption of an adoptive placement (before an adoption order was made) during this period. The national average rate of disruptions is in the region of 20%. City of York's rate was 9%.

Appendix 2: Adopters

Approved	Number of households
Approved during 2011-2012	6
Matched during 2011-2012	8
With children placed at 31/3/12 but not yet adopted	4
Approved, awaiting match as of 31/3/12	6

- Of the 8 prospective adoptive families matched with children in this period, all were matched with children from within the Yorkshire Adoption Consortium.

Applicants	Number of households
Assessment in progress as of 31/3/12	7
Applications awaiting allocation as of 31/3/12	9

Appendix 3: Consortium placements made between 1/4/11 to 31/3/12

Agency	Number of families with placements	Number of children placed
Barnsley	3	6
Bradford	0	3
Calderdale	3	3
Doncaster	4	6
East Riding	4	1
Hull	7	4
Kirklees	1	3
Leeds	2	3
NE Lincs	4	1
North Lincs	3	8
North Yorks	1	0
Sheffield	2	1
Wakefield	1	1
York	4	5
Total Placements Made	39	45

Annex A

Appendix 4: The adoption process for a child who is Looked After:

1. The government target is to reach a decision as to the plan for a child within 5 months of the child becomes looked after and to review this plan at regular intervals.
2. If the child's proposed plan becomes adoption, comprehensive reports are created about the child's history and needs and are presented to an adoption panel. The government target is that panels consider these plans within 2 months of the proposed plan being agreed by a Child Care Review.
3. Following the panel recommendation, the Agency Decision Maker makes a decision about whether adoption should be the plan for a child. For children who are the subject of legal proceedings, an application will also be made for a Placement Order.
4. The government target is that a child should be placed with a new family within 6 months of the decision in 3 above. For children under 6 months and whose birth parents have requested adoption, a new family should be found within 3 months. Searches for suitable families are made through the Yorkshire Adoption Consortium, other adoption agencies and through the national adoption register.
5. When a family is identified and the "match" has been recommended by the adoption panel and approved by the Agency Decision Maker, the child is placed for adoption.
6. At a point chosen by the adopters, an application is made to court for an adoption order. There is no target for the time between placement and adoption order, as adopters need to feel they and their new child have had time to adjust and can apply for the order with confidence.

Appendix 5: The adoption process for adopters

1. A phone call/ letter/email is sent to the agency expressing an interest in adoption.
2. An information pack is sent out. The Government target is that these should be received within 5 days. The information pack sets out the legal and policy requirements and describes the process of training and assessment through to an adoption order being made. Dates of

Annex A

information evenings are attached with an invitation to attend. The majority of enquirers chose not pursue their interest beyond this general enquiry stage.

3. Attendance at an information evening. The information provided during these meetings builds on that contained the information pack and provides opportunity for questions around individual circumstances. The Government target is that enquirers should be offered an information evening within 2 months of their enquiry.
4. Those who wish to take their interest further complete and return an 'expression of Interest' form.
5. A home visit is undertaken by an adoption social worker to further information about the enquirers circumstances and impart more detailed information about the needs of adopted children.
6. If the assessment from the home visit is that the enquirer has the potential to become an adoptive parent and they wish to proceed, the enquirer makes a formal application to the agency.
7. The applicant then attends a preparation course.
8. Following this, an adoption social worker is allocated to complete an in-depth assessment of the applicant's suitability to adopt.
9. The assessing social worker will complete a report which will be presented to the adoption panel. The government target is that the report should be presented to the panel within 6 weeks of its completion and within 8 months of the formal application.
10. If approved as a prospective adopter, work is undertaken to identify a child whose needs they are able to meet. There is no target timescale for this stage but it is clearly in the interests of all concerned for this to be achieved as soon as possible. A search is made within the region through the regional consortium and nationally through the national adoption register to identify a child.
11. A match with a child is agreed by the child's adoption panel and the child is subsequently placed for adoption with the family.

Annex A

12. At a point chosen by them, the adopter(s) will apply to court for an adoption order. There is no target for the time between placement and adoption order

Fostering Service 3 monthly Report for Executive and Senior Management Team:

Period covered: 1st April – 30th June 2012

How the foster care provided meets the needs of the child/young person.

Matching of children/young people with foster carers is carefully based upon the information included both in the referral forms for the child/young person and the assessment of the foster carers. When a placement is requested the child/young person's social worker submits a Placement Plan that clearly outlines the young person's needs. A search is then undertaken of foster carers approved for the appropriate age range with vacancies, to identify the foster carer best able to meet these needs. If there are any other young people in placement the duty family placement worker then discusses with the social work of any looked after child in placement the proposed placement and asks that they discuss with child and the foster carer the possible impact if another child is placed. If the outcome of this determines that the proposed placement could proceed, then the duty family placement worker liaises with the requesting social worker to give information on the placement and asks the social worker to phone and discuss the child/young person's needs with the foster carer. If the social worker wishes to proceed, and the foster carer feels that they could meet the child/young person's needs, then a pre-placement planning meeting is set up involving the child/young person, parent, foster carer, Independent Reviewing Officers, social worker and the linked family placement social worker.

At the meeting the placement plan is shared, along with rest of the care plan, and if there are areas of the child/young person's needs that the foster carer cannot meet, the plan for how this will be addressed is agreed and recorded. The final version of the Placement Plan is then completed and agreed, including all details of authority delegated to the foster carer, and other placement forms (consent, delegation of responsibility, etc) are completed and signed. The Placement plan is then distributed and reviewed at subsequent Child Care Reviews.

Children and young people's progress in their learning, health and social development

The health of looked after children/young people in York is vigorously promoted and closely monitored. All initial health reviews of looked after children/young people are now undertaken by a paediatrician, with

subsequent reviews undertaken as part of the targeted work of health visitors and school nurses. There is designated Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAMHS) team, which provides support both to young people and consultation to their foster carers. There is active commitment to ensure that health engagement with young people while looked after does not cease as young people move into independent accommodation, with gaps in health and mental health services for care leavers addressed with partners.

There is active collaboration between the City of York Safeguarding Board, all of its partners and Children's Social Care staff to promote the awareness of safeguarding and child protection for all looked after children/young people and care leavers. All staff and foster carers are trained in child protection awareness to ensure that issues of concern can be addressed. Early Years Personal Education Plan's [PEP's] are completed jointly with foster carer, parents, social workers and Early Years and Extended Schools staff to facilitate early identification and intervention. There is a range of highly effective alternative learning provision which ensures, that for those children/young people who cannot be supported in the classroom, there is effective tailored support which regularly results in their prompt return to mainstream education. The number of young people on the Education Otherwise register has fallen.

There are determined efforts to divert looked after children/young people from offending, which is evident in the work of the Youth Offending Team (YOT). Targeted youth club provision for looked after children/young people is offered in partnership with the Youth Service, and other staff. Many young people are supported to remain in their foster placements up to and beyond their 18th birthday. While the young person remains in care, they will continue to have access to social work support, and their foster carer and Pathway worker will undertake the preparation for their becoming independent. Whilst in care, care leavers have the opportunity to experience being independent for 4 weeks in our 'Taster' flat. This has helped to reduce the determination of some young people to become independent before they are ready. We have excellent relationships with local housing services, with access to 5/6 'Trainer' flats for care leavers to move into, but also with the proviso that if the tenancy doesn't work out, they are able to end it without loss of status.

As indicated above looked after children/young people in York have excellent chances to experience family life while they in care, and this

translates into long-term support from their foster carers post-18. This success is manifest in the engagement of young people in Year 12 in education, training and employment. At 19 years, York care leavers are very likely to continue to be in education, training and employment.

How the fostering service contributes to promoting good outcomes for children and young people

The Service Manager for fostering is a key member of the Council's Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children Committee (SPLAC). She has a lead on achieving good and safe placements and works collaboratively with other key partners to promote best practice in relation to identity; health; emotional well being; education; moving into adulthood; corporate parenting and respect and involvement for children and young people in foster care. The Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children Committee reports to the newly established Corporate Parenting Board.

Looked after children/young people are regularly consulted and consistently involved in decisions that affect their lives. In addition to a child/young person's individual review, this is undertaken with reference to the children in care council - "Show Me That I Matter" and "I Matter 2". York's "Show Me That I Matter" is a panel of looked after young people, care leavers and Council Members that can challenge officers about decisions made and require explanation of, and involvement in, future planning. The panel regularly invites key officers in the council (including the Chief Executive and the Director of Adults, Children and Education services) and partner agencies to discuss specific issues. The 'I Matter 2' panel is a more informal panel for younger looked after children which feeds into the 'Show Me That I Matter' panel via the Children's Rights Officer. The panels are consistently well attended by young people and members.

What children and young people say about the service and how they contribute to its development

The Children's Rights Service for looked after children provides access to an advocate to ensure the voice of the child/young person is heard, whether this is in reviews or to act on their behalf in the early stages of any complaints. The Children's Rights Officer also provides the means whereby looked after children/young people can offer feedback (individually or in groups) on service quality and potential future developments. A panel of 'care experienced' young people routinely participates in the recruitment and interview process for key posts across Children's Social Care.

How the recruitment, assessment, training and supervision of foster carers promotes positive outcomes for children and young people

We provide families with as much information as possible in order that they can make an informed decision as to whether to become a foster carer. Assessment procedures follow Fostering Regulations and Statutory Guidance and are carried out promptly on receipt of application. Training is considered in supervisory visits, which cover training needs, needs of young people, resource issues and any concerns the carers may have, and in the foster carer's annual review... Foster carers have access to all training available to social work staff.

How foster carers are involved in planning for children and young people

Foster carers play an active part in the planning and review process for young people in foster care. Foster carers are trained about the importance of ongoing contact with parents and siblings and they are committed to provide a high quality service. They attend Child Care Reviews and planning meetings, are good advocates for young people and also feedback on how the the child/young person is, an invaluable part of the independent review system, which is often commented upon by the Independent Reviewing Officers chairing Reviews.

What foster carers say about the service.

The local fostering association meets regularly with senior managers from the fostering service to provide feedback on issues and ideas about improving the quality of the planning for young people. The Chair of the local fostering association is a member of the Council's Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children Committee, and also meets regularly with the Assistant Director, Children's Social Care. There is an active support group for foster carers looking after teenagers which directly contributes to service development. There are also regular consultation events for all foster carers focussed on providing high quality services for young people fostered.

How staff are involved in service development

The fostering social work team meets weekly to look at placement needs and consider issues from foster carers, children/young people and families, as well as changes needed in relation to policy and procedures. The Service Manager attends these meetings periodically. Team development days take place to look at specific areas of service development. Staff receives regular supervision and annual Personal

Development Reviews that look at their contribution to good outcomes for children/young people. Staff ideas and feed back are an integral part of service development.

Current plans for improvement and development

A review of foster carer career development, including fees payments, is ongoing, in conjunction with foster carers. The annual foster carer review process is also being revised to ensure that there is sufficient opportunity for feedback from all parties involved in fostering. It is hoped to identify a younger care leaver to join the central list of Foster Panel members, in order to ensure there is a consistent focus from the child/young person's perspective on the quality and suitability of fostering households. There is an aspiration to develop greater opportunities for foster carers, social workers and other professionals to become involved in presentation of core training events, so as to ensure each gain insight and understanding of the challenges presented within their respective roles. The placement planning process will be reviewed with foster carers and social workers to look at improvements that can be made, including revising Placement Plans for children and young people to emphasise the potential for delegated authority to foster carers.

Appendix: Data for period 1st April- 30th June 2012

Number of children and young people placed with City of York Council approved foster carers:

There were 253 children and young people looked after on 30th June. Of these 182 children and young people were placed with City of York foster carers, 72 % of all looked after children.

This compares with a looked after population of 258 on 31st March, with 76% placed with foster carers approved by City of York Council, and 251 at the end of January with 70% placed with foster carers approved by City of York.

Fostering households as of 30th June:

There were 120 fostering households as of 30th June. Of these, 96 were mainstream foster carers and 24 were those approved for a particular child/young person with whom they had an established relationship prior to the child/young person being looked after (e.g. aunt, grandparent). These foster carers are known as Connected People or Kinship foster carers.

This compares with 119 fostering households on 31st March, of which 23 were Connected People foster carers and 96 were mainstream foster carers and 119 fostering households on 31st December 2011, with 97 mainstream and 22 Connected People fostering households.

Placements with Foster carers approved by independent fostering agencies (IFA).

There were 17 children and young people placed with foster carers approved by other agencies on 30th June, an increase of 1 on the figure for 31st March, but a decrease of 4 on the number at the end of December 2011

Recruitment

There were 19 enquirers from members of the public interested in finding out about becoming foster carers during this period.

Preparation Course.

A preparation course for those who wished to understand what fostering fully involved before submitting an application, was held over 4 weekdays in June. 7 households attended this course

Applications

Applications were received from 9 households for assessment for suitability to become foster carers. Of these, 5 households had previously been given temporary fostering approval as Connected People for a particular child/young person.

4 households applied to be assessed as prospective mainstream foster carers.

The court timetabling pressure around completing full fostering assessments of those with temporary approval as Connected People meant that these cases had to take priority in allocation. All 5 applications were allocated to a social worker to complete an assessment. This meant that the 4 potential mainstream foster carers had to await allocation until a social worker became available to pick up this work.

Connected People temporarily approved as foster carers

8 households were given temporary approval as Connected People foster carers during this period; of these, there were 2 requests presented to Fostering Panel for an 8 week extension of temporary

approval as foster carers, in order to complete a full fostering assessment.

The steady increase in the number seeking temporary fostering approval as Connected People for a particular child/young person continues to provide a challenge for the service in respect of allocating assessment work. The full fostering assessments have to be completed with 16 weeks of temporary approval, with the option of an additional 8 week period, if Fostering Panel recommend this.

New Approvals

There were 5 new households approved in the period. Of these, 4 families previously had temporary approval as Connected People and 1 family was approved as mainstream foster carers.

Exemptions

There were 3 households granted exemptions from the usual fostering limit of 3 placements. The period of exemption agreed ranged from 1 week to 2 months.

Deregistration

3 fostering households were deregistered in the period: 1 retired due to poor health; 1 resigned; and 1 connected person resigned as the children were rehabilitated to a parent.

Complaints and allegations against foster carers

There were 2 complaints in respect of 2 different foster households; both were substantiated.

There were 2 allegations involving 2 different fostering household; 1 was substantiated and 1 unsubstantiated.

Mary McKelvey
Service Manager

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Outcomes for Looked After Children Review October 2012

Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Headline data shows gap already present between LAC and their chronological peers.

Action points

- Further analysis needed.
- Virtual School Leadership team to embrace Early Years Foundation Stage from a school improvement perspective.

KS1

- 2012 outcomes across all key performance indicators declined between 2011 and 2012. Over time there has been an inconsistent trend in performance and this is partly linked to the volatility caused by small cohort size. However, there is a need to focus more strongly on probing end of KS1 attainment to improve targeted interventions.

Action points

- School Improvement partner visits will be used to probe end of KS1 attainment for LAC.

KS2

- The 2012 data and over time show a more positive picture than in KS1. This may be due to children being in same placements and/or schools for longer periods of time, however a robust evidence base needs to be collated to confirm this conclusion.

Action points

- The evidence about the impact of the length of time in a school placement on attainment has had needs to be collated and analysed.
- Data needs to be added to show the performance of LAC in English and maths combined at the end of KS2 and the percentage of LAC pupils who made 2 levels progress between KS1 and KS2.
- Collect and analyse data about the progress of Y3 and Y4 LAC pupils.

KS4

- Over time there has been an inconsistent trend in performance against the national performance indicator 5A*-C including English and maths. In 2011 achievement of the York LAC cohort was well above the

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performance of LAC nationally, however a wide gap remains between the performance of LAC and their peers. Further analysis needs to be done to ensure the accuracy of the 2012 data. In particular to investigate the impact of the change to grade boundaries in GCSE English on the performance of LAC pupils. National data sets for 2012 have not yet been published.

Action points

- Analysis of performance in KS4 needs to be further developed to include a broader range of indicators to more accurately track the progress and future progression of LAC pupils.

Virtual School Development Priorities

- Revise the structure and constitution of the senior leadership team to ensure that it has capacity to impact on learner outcomes.
- Develop data analysis and tracking systems to ensure that they are more robust.
- Review the deployment of the specialist teacher for LAC so that schools are supported to implement targeted interventions. Develop staff skills in this area in school and consider use of LAC teaching assistant resource.
- Develop and introduce learner profiles for LAC children and young people. This profile could include; samples of work, progress information which would follow the child/ young person throughout their learning journey and would help CYC to develop its role as corporate parent through having more rounded information about each child/young person.

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**LAC Attainment**

Early Years Foundation Stage – please see separate table

Key Stage 1**Level 2+ Reading results**

Year	2008 (8)	2009 (4)	2010 (5)	2011 (8)	2012* (4)
York LAC	38%	25%	100%	50%	0%
National LAC	61%	63%	63%	65%	
All York CYP	86%	90%	88%	87%	87%
All National	84%	84%	85%	85%	

Level 2+ Writing results

Year	2008 (8)	2009 (4)	2010 (5)	2011 (8)	2012* (4)
York LAC	25%	25%	80%	50%	25%
National LAC	54%	55%	56%	57%	
All York CYP	84%	86%	84%	82%	82%
All National	80%	81%	81%	81%	

Level 2+ Maths results

Year	2008 (8)	2009 (4)	2010 (5)	2011 (8)	2012* (4)
York LAC	63%	25%	80%	75%	25%
National LAC	68%	70%	68%	71%	
All York CYP	92%	92%	91%	91%	89%
All National	90%	89%	89%	90%	

There was a small group of 8 looked after children who were in the Key Stage 1 cohort for 2011 and they achieved lower than their peers. However, the results do fluctuate year-on-year due to the small cohort size and pupil contextual factors. In 2011, 5 out of the 8 pupils had a special educational

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need compared to 1 out of 5 pupils in 2010.

Children achieving at least level 2 in reading decreased from 100% in 2010 to 50% in 2011, attaining below all York pupil (87%) and national looked after children (65%).

Children achieving at least level 2 in writing decreased from 80% in 2010 to 50%, which was slightly below the national figure for looked after children (57%).

Children achieving at least Level 2 in mathematics decreased from 80% in 2010 to 75% but was above the national figure for looked after children (71%)

Key Stage 2

Level 4+ English results

Year	2008 (10)	2009 (9)	2010 (10)	2011 (9)	2012* (13)
York LAC	30%	56%	30%	67%	54%
National LAC	45%	45%	45%	50%	
All York CYP	85%	81%	84%	83%	85%
All National	81%	80%	80%	82%	

Level 4+ Maths results

Year	2008 (10)	2009 (9)	2010 (10)	2011 (9)	2012* (13)
York LAC	40%	56%	30%	56%	62%
National LAC	43%	44%	44%	48%	
All York CYP	79%	80%	83%	83%	85%
All National	79%	79%	79%	80%	

The results fluctuate year-on-year due to the small cohort size. There were 9 looked after children eligible to sit Key Stage 2 in 2011, 3 had a special education need. 6 out of the 9 pupils (66.7%) achieved a level 4 in English and 5 (55.6%) achieved a level 4 in mathematics. 5 pupils achieved a level 4 in both English and mathematics. These results are significantly above the national results for looked after children. Looking at starting point from Key Stage 1, 7 pupils made 2 levels progress in English and 6 made 2 levels of progress in mathematics.

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York is ranked = 33rd out of 152 Local authorities, using a 3 year rolling average of the percentage of children looked after continuously for 12 months who achieved at least level 4 at Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics. (York 43%, National 37%) – Ref: Children in Care and Adoption Performance Tables (updated 22 December 2011).

Key Stage 4/GCSE's

5+A*-Cs including English and Maths

Year	2008 (10)	2009 (12)	2010 (18)	2011 (17)	2012* (15)
York LAC	NA	0%	6%	24%	7%
National LAC	9%	10%	12%	13%	
All York CYP	54%	59%	59%	62%	62%
All National	48%	50%	54%	59%	

4 (24%) obtained at least 5 GCSEs or equivalent including English and mathematics in 2011 which is significantly above the national figures for looked after children (12.8%). The 2011 result is the best outcome since this performance indicator was introduced and is significantly above the national result for looked after children. There were 17 looked after children eligible to sit GCSEs in 2011, of these 16 achieved at least one GCSE pass at any grade (94%). 10 pupils had a special educational need of which 6 (35%) had a statement compared with 3% of York year 11 pupils.

Behaviour and Attendance

The attendance for LAC in York schools compared to those in other local authorities was ranked = 15th out of all 152 Local Authorities, using a two year rolling average (2009 and 2010) of the percentage of sessions missed due to overall absences for children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 31 March 2010 (York 5%, National 6%). The percentage of sessions lost due to absence in York in 2010 is lower at 4.6% compared to the national average for looked after children at 5.7%. The percentage of sessions lost due to unauthorised absence was 0.6% compared to 1.5% nationally.

In 2011, the absence rates remain low. 2012 data not published.

Exclusions

There have been no permanent exclusions of looked after children since September 2009.

The percentage of looked after children with at least one fixed term exclusion in 2008/09 was 18.8%, higher than the national figure for looked after children at 12.2%. However, the average number of fixed term exclusions per child with at least one exclusion was 1.6 compared to the national figure of 2.4. In addition, there has been an improvement in the number of fixed term exclusions which has reduced in 2010 and 2011.

Care leavers in employment, education and training

Year (Financial year)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
York LAC	50%	50%	54%	50%	
National LAC	65%	63%	62%	61%	

The cohort size is very small. In 2011, of the eight (out of the 16) young people not in EET, three are young parents, one is a disabled adult.

Cohorts of 19 year old Care Leavers in York are relatively small (between 6 and 16 per year for the years mentioned above). With small cohorts, numbers can easily be skewed by a small number being NEET. An ETE Adviser post continues to be effective in supporting Care Leavers to engage in ETE, but sustaining ETE seems to be a struggle for some young people. YiF Springboard funding starting in April 2012 is designed to address exactly that issue and will provide intensive support to the hardest to engage/most chaotic young people, to enable sustained engagement in ETE.

Current in-year results (as at 31 Dec 2011), show that York is performing at 81.3%, where 13 of 16 cohort are in EET (Of the 3 NEET, 1 is a disabled adult and further ongoing work continues to seek a positive outcome for those 2 not currently engaged.)

Tricia Head
Head Teacher of the Virtual School

Information for Corporate Parenting Board 1.10.12

Moving to Adulthood Looked After Children Action Plan Update

- 1. Creating more supported accommodation options, including some which can take young people with complex needs, including in emergencies.**

Have a very successful arrangement with Skipbridge Farm (supported accommodation in converted cottages, with foster carers 'on site').

Monitoring number of very chaotic or very vulnerable Care Leavers, for whom Howe Hill for Young People (HH4YP) is not suited. Early stages of discussions with Supporting People, Youth Offending Team and Foundation about possible re-provision of 5 bed unit for chaotic/Youth Offending Team young people with history of assaults, prison release etc. Also looking at options for small provision for vulnerable young people who would not manage in a 20-bed unit such as Howe Hill. With only one Tier 1 provision for all young people with a housing need, there are limited options and some young people cannot be placed with other young people due to their shared histories.

- 2. Ensure the sustainability of the Staying Put scheme by recruiting enough foster carers to replace those whose young people stay put.**

19 young people Stayed Put in 2011-12, only 4 of those were in a bed that would have been used for a Looked After Child. Recruitment of foster carers continues, but numbers of Looked After Children continue to increase. Better and more sustained outcomes for those young people who Stay Put.

Outcomes for those who Stayed Put in 2011-12 were as follows:-

At age 19 84% engaged in Education, Training or Employment (ETE): 16% not in paid work, but are full-time Mums.

At age 20 100% engaged in Education, Training or Employment.

3. Develop a more consistent approach to preparing young people for independent living by creating a programme that builds up their skills and can be used in a variety of settings.

Consultations underway with foster carers, residential workers, young people, Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) and Pathway Workers to pull together a “minimum knowledge/skills” that every young person leaving care will be able to achieve, having had support from foster cares, residential workers, Social Workers.

4. Adopt a more structured approach to the identification of young people’s skills and learning needs when they are moving to independent living, and include this in the planning process.

Skills and learning needs are identified in the Pathway Needs Assessment and Pathway Care Plan. Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) will monitor the progress and support received, through Child Care Review system.

5. Use the new provision at Howe Hill to build on and develop existing links with colleagues in housing, education and the voluntary sector, to increase the Education, Training and Employment options available to care leavers.

‘Start Smart’ sessions to run in October half-term with 16 year olds, around appropriate self-presentation in a variety of settings e.g. college, workplace etc . Working with York Cares to set up employers coming to run work readiness sessions for Care Leavers at Howe Hill. Springboard Project now up and running – activities to engage the ‘hardest to reach’ young people and build confidence to get them into Education, Training or Employment. Creative use of resources to develop packages of support that the young people are really excited by.

6. Further develop the opportunities for care leavers to access training and employment within the council, e.g. “employment with training” and ensure that Human Resources processes are supporting the access of care leavers to jobs and apprenticeships.

Meeting with Tracey Walters, Eoin Rush to look at possibility of revising City of York Council job applications with priority for York Care Leavers. Looking at legality around guaranteed interview if Care Leavers meet essential criteria.

Apprenticeships within City of York Council – Care Leavers have advance interview if meet essential criteria. Apprenticeship Group remit widened to include pre-apprenticeships and Foundation Learning opportunities across City of York Council. Work just starting to set these up in similar way to apprenticeships, but in more practical/vocational areas of work.

7. Clarify the process by which over 21s can access Pathway support when eligible.

3 requests for support, so far. New policy in place, young people being told at their exit interviews about this right to request support post 21. Leaflets recently received from National Care Advisory Service, to publicise it further to foster carers and other agencies who may come into contact to with 21 – 24 year old York Care Leavers.

8. Ensure there is easy access to mental health and counselling services for care leavers and young adults up to the age of 25.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service – Looked After Children Team continue to provide a Care Leaver drop-in once a month at Howe Hill, which is well-supported. Young people also access the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service counselling that is available from Kate Gibbon at Castlegate. We are just starting some discussion with Relate about a pilot young people’s project they are about to start with Care Leavers, both 1:1, group and relationship counselling.

Development of an effective emotional and mental health support to Care Leavers aged 18 and above is not within the auspices of the Pathway Team but is included in the Emotional Well-Being Section of the Looked After Children Action Plan. The Pathway Team would welcome this piece of work and will offer whatever support and advice we can to enable such a service to be commissioned.

9. The pathway team will put in place a system of exit interviews for care leavers approaching 21 years, and use this information to improve the service.

5 completed so far this year. Exit interviews offered in person or by email, by the Pathway Young People’s Participation apprentice. Not all young people take up this offer, but some useful learning coming through. Responses will be collated and used to inform future planning.

10. Jointly, with other agencies, create more accessible social, leisure, sport and cultural opportunities for care leavers, to equip them to enjoy living independently.

Pathway Social Group resumed, been out for meals, bowling, cinema, theatre and ongoing consultation about future activities. Discussing plans for some activities/events in National Care Leavers Week (October half-term). Good links with Energise to provide free membership – good take-up of gym and swimming by Care Leavers.

Springboard Project have taken 3 York young people to Carlton Lodge (North Yorks) for activity day and are planning an overnight trip in 2013. North Yorkshire Rural Arts and Springboard are offering creative arts experiences and so far young people have been involved in designing a plaque, t-shirt design and printing, waste metal sculptures.

11. Improve the process of carrying out Pathway Assessments, planning and reviews so that young people understand, are involved in and value these activities.

Pathway Needs Assessment now developed (in conjunction with young people), Pathway Care Plan in use – more appropriate to older teenagers and links in with Pathway Planning. Increased rate of plans being completed and reviewed on time and quality assurance measures improving the quality of the actual plans. Young People are actively involved in the whole process, but are still somewhat ambivalent about Pathway Planning in general and do not see the Pathway Plan as a dynamic tool.

12. Develop the work which has started with the group of foster carers who look after teenagers, so that they become our partners in monitoring, developing and reviewing the service.

Have met with Chair of York Area Foster Care Association (YAFCA) on several occasions and as a result of a number of questions that carers had about how York College works with carers, Pathway organised and facilitated a half-day information session at York College for foster carers, Family Placement and Pathway Workers. We welcome being invited to the Teenage Foster Care Group whenever they wish to discuss any topics with us.

13. Put in place better arrangements for the provision of health care to young people and care leavers who are no longer at school, and offer them choices in how they access health care and information.

Initial Health Assessments for up to 16 year olds have been commissioned and the specification for the Review Health assessments for the same age group is being drawn up and will be commissioned. However, there remain gaps in the provision of health assessments for 16-18 year olds who are no longer in school.

It is not within the Pathway Team remit to put in place any health arrangements, but we would welcome working alongside Health colleagues to develop appropriate provision that meets the health needs of our older Looked After Children and Care Leavers, in a way that encourages and commends them taking increasing responsibility for their own health needs.

Jenny Bullock
Service Manager – Pathway Team
September 2012

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Report Schedule

1st October 2012

Adoption Report

Fostering Report

Looked After Children (LAC): Education

LAC: Moving Into Adulthood

3rd December 2012

LAC: Health

LAC: Respect and Involvement

LAC: Relationships

Data re Looked After Children

(tbc) February 2013

Fostering Report

LAC: Good and Safe Placements

LAC: Corporate Parenting

(tbc) April 2013

Adoption report

LAC: Identity

LAC: Emotional Well being

Data re Looked After Children

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