
Corporate Parenting Board

26 June 2017

Report of the Corporate Director of Children, Education and Communities

Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health of Children and Young People in Care, on the Edge of Care and Care Leavers

Summary

1. National estimates suggest that one in ten children need support/treatment for mental health problems such as short spells of depression or anxiety through to more severe and persistent issues. Mental health problems in young people can result in lower educational attainment and involvement in behaviours that pose a risk, such as smoking, drug and alcohol abuse and risky sexual behaviour. We know that fear of stigma is a key issue for children and young people who need additional help to support their good mental wellbeing. Our children in care tell us that they want their lives, above all, to be 'normal'. This was a key feature of our consultation with them.¹
2. A survey of key stakeholders across the children's trust community of providers was undertaken in 2015 to review the strategic priorities for the City and to inform the strategic partnership arrangements.² The responses to this survey informed our current partnership arrangements; the Emotional and Mental Health Strategic partnership. The response also clearly identified strong multi agency support for a Children's Looked After work strand. This is embodied within the Emotional and Mental Health Sub Group- Children in Care, on the Edge of Care and Care Leavers.
3. The Children in Care Strategic Partnership also has an interest and role in supporting and challenging practice and services which support the emotional wellbeing and mental health of our children in care, edge of care and care leavers. This partnership has identified a need for clarity around Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire effectiveness and use with our children and young people in care.

¹ pg 11 C&YPiC York's Strategy 2016 - 2020

² Improving the Emotional and Mental Health of Children and Young People in York

4. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a brief behavioural screening questionnaire. The SDQ ask about 25 attributes, some positive and others negative. These 25 items are divided between 5 scales: ³

1) emotional symptoms (5 items)	} 1) to 4) added together to generate a total difficulties score (based on 20 items)
2) conduct problems (5 items)	
3) hyperactivity/inattention (5 items)	
4) peer relationship problems (5 items)	

The questionnaire is scored, if necessary support offered and undertaken each year in order to monitor change.

Background

Ofsted Inspection

8. In November and December 2016 Ofsted carried out an extensive inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children in care, and care leavers. The overall judgement was “Good” and reflected that York has a strong base from which we continue to build upon work with children and young people.
9. The report contained a specific recommendation relevant to emotional wellbeing, mental health and support.

“Ensure that care leavers are supported to understand their health histories and that they and professionals are clear about the pathways to access support for their emotional and mental health needs.”

10. The body of the report highlighted the below regarding pathways to access services.

“There is a wide range of provision available for the emotional health support of children looked after. Specialist psychological support is used to support individual children as required, although pathways to access services are unclear.”

“..Care leavers spoken to by inspectors were unclear about how to access support for their emotional and mental health needs, and described

³ <http://www.sdqinfo.com/a0.html>

loneliness and isolation as having the biggest impact on their emotional well-being.”

U Matter Survey - Section 6: Health and Happiness

11. When asked about their Health Assessment, 85% said they knew what it was while 15% said that they did not. The most positive response from this survey was in answer to the question “If you didn’t feel happy, is there someone you would be able to talk to?” where 97% of children and young people who answered said yes and only 3% said no. They were also asked if they knew where to get information, advice and support and 93% said that they did. One 14 year old young person commented, “I don’t really tell anyone how I feel, but I know who to talk to if needed.” When invited to provide any additional information two young people commented on either lack of knowledge about how to access CAMHS provision or unhappiness with the CAMHS provision they had received.

Analysis

12. The work of the Emotional and Mental Health Sub Group - Children in Care, on the Edge of Care and Care Leavers multi agency priority work stream is intended to ensure that:

More young people who are looked after, or on the verge of being looked after, with emotional and /or mental health problems will recover. More children and young people who have emotional and /or mental health problems will have a positive experience of care and support offered to them.

13. It is chaired by Sophie Keeble, Group Manager Achieving Permanence and Gwynne Rayns, Group Manager Safeguarding Interventions.

This sub group will:

- Map available service provision against tiers of need.
- Undertake a literature review which is focused on improving our knowledge of the evidence of effectiveness of mental health interventions for children and young people. This will be undertaken by students from University of York
- Inform this work by using the views of children in care through SMTIM.
- The initial outcomes will be shared in the Emotional and Mental Health Strategic Partnership meeting in August

14. The work of the SDQ Sub Group multi-agency priority work stream is intended to

Determine the value and limitations of SDQs for York's children and young people in care.

It is chaired by Sophie Keeble, Group Manager Achieving Permanence, and will

- Review York's use of SDQ and evidence of effectiveness
- Undertake a literature search around evidence for effectiveness
- Identify other LA practice
- The outcomes will be shared in the Child in Care Strategic Partnership meeting in Autumn 2017.

15. The outcomes of the two work streams will be considered together to inform the approach to supporting children in care, on the edge of care and care leavers emotional and mental health moving forward .

Council Plan

16. The development of these work streams and outcomes directly relates to

- a) the Council Plan 2015-19 priorities 'A focus on frontline services' - to ensure all residents, particularly the least advantaged, can access reliable services and community facilities.
- b) the Children and Young People's Plan 2016-20 which highlights Emotional and Mental Health as one of its three priorities
- c) the Children and Young People in Care Plan 2016-2020 which has an overarching strategic theme Emotional well being and mental health.

Implications

17. Financial

No financial implications have been identified at this stage.

Human Resources (HR)

There are no HR implications to consider at this stage

Equalities

There are no equalities implications to consider at this stage

Legal

There are no equalities implications to consider at this stage

Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications to consider at this stage

Information Technology (IT)

There are no IT implications to consider at this stage

Property

There are no property implications to consider at this stage

Risk Management

18. There are no risks to consider at this stage.

Recommendations

19. Members of the Corporate Parenting Board are asked to consider the report.

20. Reason: To keep Members updated on the progress and for members to clarify any issues arising

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

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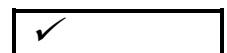
Report Approved by
Eoin Rush Assistant
Director



Date 16.06.17

Specialist Implications Officer(s) None

All



Wards Affected:

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers

None

Annexes

Annex A Strategic Partnership for Emotional and Mental Health (Children and Young People)

Abbreviations used in report and annex

AMHS	Adult Mental Health Services
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CLA	Children Looked After
EWB	Emotional Wellbeing
LAT	Local Area Teams
MH	Mental Health
PCU	Partnership Commissioning Unit
SMTIM	Show Me That I Matter Panel
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SEWG	Social Emotional Welfare Group
SPA	Single Point of Access
YOS	Youth Offending Service