



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY JOINT SUB COMMISSION 27 APRIL 2005

Report of the Directors of Education and Social Services

The Education of Children Looked After (Gatsby Project)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 To note the report on attainments of Children Looked After in academic year 03/ 04, against the targets set by the Gatsby Board in December 2003.
- 1.2 To note recent initiatives and work of the education of Children Looked After project and team.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The first phase of the Taking Care of Education Project, mainly funded by the Gatsby Foundation, ran in Derby from 2000 to 2003. The Gatsby Foundation agreed a proposal for a further three years' project extension and exit strategy funding, totalling £292,280, and this second phase of the project now runs to the end of October 2006. Evaluation of both phases of the project has been undertaken by the NCB in collaboration with Luton University. There is a small team dedicated to the support of the education for Children Looked After and the work of the team and project are funded by the Gatsby Vulnerable Children's Grant funding and mainstream funding from Education and Social Services. The exit strategy will include details of the mainstreaming of the project and team activities beyond October 2006.
- 2.2 The following table indicates the outcomes of the cohort of Children Looked After by Derby City Council. The targets set are those which were agreed by the Gatsby Board in 2003 for the duration of the second phase of the Gatsby Project until 2006. These targets reflect national indicators. The cohorts of children in each year group are very small and variations in individuals' circumstances can make a large percentage difference. The education of all Children Looked After in Derby City is monitored through the work of the Advisory Teacher, Principal Officer and Education Welfare Officer, in liaison with schools, carers and other professionals. Nearly a third of our school age Children Looked After attend schools outside the authority.
- 2.3 Two Teaching Assistants, who are currently supporting 11 young people with their education, 2 in foster care and 9 in Children's Homes, provide direct support to Children Looked After, living in the city. The support helps children:
 - to reintegrate into mainstream schools following exclusion;
 - to maintain school placements through difficult care placement moves;
 - to establish a change of school place where this has been necessary;

- to support a gradual move back to full time education where a part-time timetable has been in place; or
- to provide some continuity of education while a suitable placement is sought.

The team's Education Welfare Officer supports children in the Children's Homes and in foster care with their school attendance and placement issues, and provides advice and assistance to Residential Social Workers and foster carers.

OUTCOME 2002	OUTCOME 2003	OUTCOME (TARGET) 2004	LOCAL TARGET 2005	TARGET 2006
Outcomes for 11 year olds in English and Maths compared with their peers (national target by 2006 – to be at least 60% as good)				
Maths (17 out of 19 sat the tests in 2004)				
41%	71%	45% (51%)	(56%)	(60%)
English (17 out of 19 sat the tests in 2004)				
41%	74%	50% (51%)	(56%)	(60%)
The proportion who become disengaged from education is reduced, so that no more than 10% reach school leaving age without having sat a GCSE equivalent exam. So % who sat at least 1 GCSE or equivalent – (34 in the 2004 cohort)				
85%	55%	59% (76%)	(83%)	(90%)
The proportion of those aged 16 who get qualifications equivalent to five GCSEs graded A* to C has risen on average by 4 percentage points each year since 2002; and in all authorities at least 15% of young people in care achieve this level of qualifications.				
25%	8%	6% (29%)	(33%)	(37%)
Nationally 2002 is the base year, and for this indicator, that year was particularly good at 25% in Derby (<i>the Social Exclusion Unit has indicated that the 4% year on year improvement is a national rather than local target, due to the local fluctuations of small cohorts.</i>) More realistic local targets are therefore set below with 2003 being regarded as the baseline year (at 8%).				
25%	8%	6% (12%)	(16%)	(20%)
<u>Local indicator -</u>				
The proportion who are engaged in education is increased, so that no children in care reach school leaving age without having achieved an appropriate qualification.				
Not known	88%	74% (92%)	(96%)	(100%)
Improve the level of education, training and employment outcomes for care leavers aged 19, so that levels for this group are at least 75% of those achieved by all young people in the same area.....				
○ the percentage of young people leaving care aged 16 or over with at least one GCSE at grade A*-G or a GNVQ;				
38%	OC3 (March 04) 60% (42%)	Forecast (March 05) 48% (44%)	-	-
○ the percentage of children who had been looked after continuously for at least 12 months and were of school age, who missed a total of at least 25 days of schooling for any reason during the previous school year;				
12.9%	11.9%	13.6% (10%)	(9%)	(8%)
○ the percentage of those young people who were looked after on 1 April in their 17th year (aged 16), who were engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19;				
71%	OC1 (March 04) 82% (75%)	OC1 (March 05) (75%)	(75%)	(75%)

- 2.5 During this second phase of the Gatsby project, there has been a continued emphasis on training and raising awareness of the educational needs of Children Looked After, and of the duties of corporate parenting. Recent initiatives in which the project groups and team members have been involved include:
- regular visits to Designated Teachers in schools;
 - social worker/ foster carer 'surgeries';
 - Residential Education Forum;
 - peer mentoring training for secondary school pupils and staff to support vulnerable children at transition from primary to secondary phase education;
 - training events for social workers, governors, primary school teachers and foster carers;
 - report to SENCO cluster meetings;
 - attendance at Children's Accommodation Panel weekly;
 - weekly homework club for Years 10 and 11 (responding to the suggestion of young people) ;
 - running a monthly film club and associated activities for children, carers and families;
 - working with a group of young people to produce a short training video;
 - revising and simplifying the Personal Education Plans process to align this with statutory reviews;
 - working towards a protocol to reduce exclusions.
- 2.6 The nine East Midlands local authorities, through the Named Officers Group of the Special Educational Needs Partnership, have recently revised and re-launched the East Midlands Regional Protocol for Looked After Children. This has been signed up to by all the Directors of Education and Social Services involved. The protocol sets out approaches to improve arrangements between local authorities for the education of Looked After Children who move across local authority boundaries, and includes an Appendix which sets out an agreement on the operational process of determining levels of additional support for the education of LAC and the allocation of funding to receiving schools. Following the launch, Derby, like the other authorities, will be raising awareness of the protocol internally, and working on the revised procedures and data developments which will be required to fully meet the requirements of the protocol.
- 2.7 The second phase of Gatsby funding was granted with a view to the work of the project becoming mainstreamed by the end of the Gatsby funding in 2006. A mainstreaming report was presented to the Gatsby Board in March. The main recommendation of that report was: 'That consideration is given to the extent to which the current funding of posts dedicated to the education of children looked after can be met through mainstream budgets from November 2006, so that Derby can continue to deliver strategically, operationally and developmentally. This is an opportunity to strategically rethink how we meet the requirement to support the education of children looked after.' The Board agreed in principal to mainstreaming the required posts to maintain the work of the project. The specific structure of the future functions to support the education of Children Looked After will depend upon the developments in Integrated Children's Services in Derby, and the availability of funding, and this item will now become a regular item on each Board meeting agenda.

- 2.8 The Gatsby Charitable Foundation has confirmed that there will be no further funding beyond the second phase that ends at the end of October 2006. The project will be funded by over £200,000 in the final year to October 2006, of which approximately half is Gatsby funding, the rest being from the Vulnerable Children's Grant and from mainstream budgets. In addition every year, there is an SLA with Social Services and Education by which Social Services funds two teaching posts in the PRU at an annual cost of approximately £79,000.

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Background papers:	East Midlands Regional Protocol for the Education of CLA
List of appendices:	Appendix 1: Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 None.

Legal

- 2.1 The Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' and Children Act 2004 highlights the need for 'joined up' services to ensure children's need are met which includes those of children looked after. Draft statutory guidance on the 'Duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children' was issued by the DfES on 16 March 2005, with consultation closing on 9 June 2005.

Personnel

- 3.1 None.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 Targeted support for Children Looked After will ensure that the best chance is given for this vulnerable group to achieve their educational potential.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 5.1 This furthers the Council's Objectives of **a stimulating and high quality learning environment** and **healthy, safe and independent communities**.

This supports the priorities of **raising educational achievement** and **modernising social care**.

It also contributes to all three of the target areas of the 2nd generation LPSA2 priority for improvement : to create a stimulating and high quality learning environment by: improving the educational attainment of children and young people in danger of disengagement and disaffection; preventing the need for children to become looked after and improving the potential for children looked after to return home; increased engagement in informal and formal learning leading to improved educational attainment and enhanced life and vocational skills.