



Derby City Council

# **Looked After and Adopted Children and Young People Strategy**

## **2012 – 2015**

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## Executive Summary

This is a Multi-Agency Strategy which sets out all the partners' commitment to improving the life chances of our Looked after Children and Young People, and those leaving care.

This strategy will support the Children and Young People's Plan 2012-2013, which sets out four key priorities for children and young people across the City.

- Keep children and young people safe.
- Raise educational attainment.
- Improve children's health and well-being.
- Narrowing the gap.

The overriding aim, which underpins all of these priorities, is right service, right place, and right time: early help to support improved outcomes in children's health, safeguarding and learning.

Working together, with our partners, to achieve these priorities will help us to work to achieve the six outcomes for the City that are in the Derby Plan 2011-2026.

- A thriving sustainable economy.
- Achieving their learning potential.
- Good health and well-being.
- Being safe and feeling safe.
- A strong community.
- An active cultural life.

The aim of this strategy is to communicate how the priorities for the City apply to looked after children, and those leaving care. We have identified three key priorities, which link to the commitments made with partners in both the Children and Young People's Plan and in the Derby Plan.

- Raising education achievement and attainment.
- Improved health and well-being.
- Promoting safeguarding and reducing vulnerability.

Underpinning these priorities there are a further three 'development areas' that have been highlighted as requiring focus over the duration of this strategy.

- Engagement and influence of children and young people.
- Adopted children.
- Integrated placements and placement stability.

## **Our priorities**

### ***Raising education achievement and attainment***

The educational attainment and achievement of looked after children and young people is critical if they are to lead fulfilled and successful lives, and we consider this to be an issue of critical importance. There is still work to be done to achieve our aims and to meet the level of our statistical neighbours. We will continue to prioritise educational attainment and aim to continue to raise attainment and achievement at all key stages, especially for children and young people with more complex needs and who are sometimes placed out of city. We aim to ensure that schools and early year's settings meet the needs of looked after children and young people, that we have quality processes - such as personal education plans and tracking systems - in place, and that looked after children and young people have stable experiences of learning settings. In addition we aim to provide advice and support to schools working with those placed for adoption. The school attendance of our looked after children and young people has improved, and is particularly good for our primary school pupils.

### ***Improved health and well-being***

Looked after children and young people have historically received less well coordinated health care than their non-looked after peers and whilst we have reviewed and have improved both the joint commissioning arrangements and delivery of health care we continue to face challenges with some of our processes, service capacity and health needs intelligence. Improving the health outcomes for our looked after children and young people is not the sole responsibility of the health agencies, but also requires enhancing our commissioning and delivery processes across the local authority and other partner agencies. We will continue to improve our Initial and Review Health Assessment processes with agreed cross agency working, and our monitoring of Health, Education and Care Plans within a formal care review process. We also wish to enhance the capabilities for and support the early identification of emotional and mental health problems, early intervention and health promotion for our children placed in Derby, and for our children and young people placed out of Derby, raise the practice of our partners in relation to accessing secondary health care.

### ***Promoting safeguarding and reducing vulnerability***

Safeguarding and vulnerability measures apply to all children, especially those who are looked after in public care. For some looked after children and care leavers there are factors that have the potential to increase their vulnerability and require additional safeguarding measures to be taken. These include looked after children and young people who are, or at risk of:

- Missing from Home, Care or Education;
- Sexual Exploitation;
- Offending or in Custody;
- Placed out of city, including secure welfare placements;
- Some care leavers and those in need of additional transition support services can also be equally vulnerable.

We aim to move forwards our strategic planning, strategic response, partnership working and multi agency responses to improve the outcomes for our more vulnerable children and young people.

## **Development Areas**

### ***Engagement and influence of children and young people***

We believe that the personalisation of care services, support and outcomes will be improved and enhanced through the effective engagement and influence of looked after children and young people, and care leavers. We have taken some clear steps to improve our approach; however, we recognise we still have challenges to overcome. The partnership framework needs strengthening, and for some children and young people engagement may be more complex and require additional support. We are making a commitment to aligning the consultation and participation activity to service improvements, to strengthening the role of the Children in Care Council as well as improving our engagement processes.

### ***Adopted children***

A small number of children and young people who are looked after will be placed for adoption in a permanent family setting. Children and young people who are adopted have nearly always spent some time under the care of the local authority, and can continue to experience difficulties similar to looked after children, consequently it is important to support prospective and adoptive families and ensure that their assessed needs are incorporated into longer term intervention planning which will include developing the partnerships across social care, health and education. It is important that we develop and enhance our engagement of both adopted children and young people and their parents, enhance practitioner awareness of the needs of children with an adoption plan and strengthen the assessment of children's needs. We also need to work to place children with Derby adopters where appropriate and recruit more adopters that reflect the diversity of Derby's children.

### ***Integrated placements and placement stability***

Derby has a commitment to improving local placement sufficiency and we know that longer term stability in placement is achieved through improved multi-agency commissioning and delivery of a wide range of services. A key aim is to ensure that we have the right mix of flexible, quality, cost effective placements to meet the needs of our looked after population which is constantly fluctuating. The stability of placements for Derby children and young people who are looked after is improving; however we need to continue to improve further. It is important that we strengthen the partnership arrangements and develop a robust collaborative support system for looked after children and young people's placements within the city, and increase our number of foster carers as well as our adoption opportunities. We also need to improve our position in relation to specific placement needs, such as those for care leavers, and disabled children.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 As corporate parents of our looked after children and young people, local authorities and partner agencies have complex and challenging roles and responsibilities. Being aware of and responding to the needs of our children and young people is a key priority and those needs must be at the centre of everything we do. Equally important are the views and wishes of our children and young people and making sure that they are involved in everything we do that has an impact on their lives. It is essential that both as individuals and agencies we work together and ensure that we deliver as good corporate parents for Derby's looked after children and young people.
- 1.2 Derby's Looked After, Adopted Children and Young People Strategy demonstrates the council's and partnership's commitment to ensuring that the life chances of every child and young person in its care are improved, in line with their peers. Through the provision of quality services and effective support it will address disadvantage and enable them to reach their full potential.
- 1.3 The overall aim of the strategy is to reinforce the corporate responsibility of the whole council, and of its partner agencies, through commitment to a range of initiatives which reflect national and local policies and best practice. The strategy requires the active engagement of all council services, its elected members, as well as its partner agencies.

## **2. Derby's Vision for Looked after Children**

- 2.1 We believe that looked after, adopted children and young people, like all other Derby children and young people, have the right to be healthy, happy and safe, to be valued and respected, and to have high aspirations for the future.
- 2.2 We want to make sure that looked after, adopted children and young people have improved educational outcomes, are achieving as well as their peers, are emotionally stable and resilient, and enabled to move successfully into adulthood.
- 2.3 We will achieve this by making the right services available to looked after, adopted children and young people at the right time and until they no longer require or need them. These services will be personalised to meet the individual needs of the child / young person.
- 2.4 Our vision will be achieved through three key principles:
  - strong leadership and robust performance management;
  - ensuring that the engagement and participation of service users in developing and implementing this strategy is and continues to be at the heart of this strategy;
  - Inclusive and effective partnership working across Derby City council services and those provided by partner agencies.
- 2.5 The vision and supporting priorities for looked after children contained within this strategy have been aligned to the outcomes for the City in the Derby Plan 2011-2026 and more specifically the priorities for children and young people contained within the Children and Young People's Plan 2012/13.

### 3. The Scope and Structure of this Strategy

- 3.1 This strategy sets out key priorities and areas for development that are supported by objectives and actions for improvement. We will work with partners, to deliver improved outcomes for looked after, adopted children and young people who are our responsibility, whether they live in or out of Derby.
- 3.2 While we will seek to offer the same level of service for looked after, adopted children and young people who are living in Derby but the responsibility of another placing Local Authority, as we would want other authorities to treat our children, services for these children are not considered within the scope of this strategy.
- 3.3 Key priorities and areas for development form the main focus of this strategy and have been informed by local consultation with looked after, adopted children and young people and key stakeholders. Consideration has also been given to our performance in delivering both local and national priorities, achievements to date and current challenges. This strategy is structured around delivering improvements in six areas:

#### Our Priorities

- Raising education achievement and attainment.
- Improved health and well-being.
- Promoting safeguarding and reducing vulnerability.

#### Development areas

- Engagement and influence of looked after children.
- Adopted children.
- Integrated placements and placement stability.

### 4. The Local Picture

#### 4.1 A Profile of our Derby Looked After Children

- 4.1.1 At the end of June 2012 there were 476 Looked after Children in the care of Derby local authority, 42% were girls and 58% were boys. The population being broken down as follows:

Aged under 1	29	6.1 %
Aged 1 to 4	88	18.5 %
Aged 5 to 9	101	21.2 %
Aged 10 to 14	136	28.6 %
Aged 15 to 18	122	25.6%

- 4.1.2 A large majority - 79% were White British, 11.3% Dual Heritage; while the remaining children constituted small numbers across the other black and minority ethnic groups. The total proportion of looked after children who are from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities is currently broadly in line with the proportion of BME children in Derby's child population
- 4.1.3 Most of the children - 55%, continue to live in Derby and of these 58% were with foster families, 3% with their own parents, 8% in a residential home or in some cases in a hostel (if aged 16-17), 12% were placed for adoption and 5% were in independent living.

4.1.4 Derby has a significantly higher looked after children population when compared to statistical neighbours in terms of the numbers of children (per 10,000) who are looked after, and in comparison to England averages. The current ratio is 88.3.

4.1.5 Many looked after children have special educational needs and as at the end of March 2011, of all school aged looked after children, 27.8% had a statement of Special Educational Needs, a further 54.4% were on School Action Plus or on School Action.

## **4.2 A Profile of Derby Adopted Children**

4.2.1 During 2011/12, 70 children were made subject of a decision that they should be placed for adoption, 44% were girls and 56% boys, 47% were single children while 53% were part of a sibling group. 27% of the children were aged less than 1 when the decision for adoption was made.

4.2.2 Also during 2011/12, 40 children were adopted, 60% were girls and 40% were boys. All the children were aged 10 or under at the time of the adoption order, with 37.5% aged less than 4, 42.5% aged 4 - 6 inclusive, and 20% aged 7 - 10 inclusive.



## 5. Legal Framework

The legal context within which this strategy is set is described below.

- 5.1 The term looked after children refer, under the 1989 Children Act, to all children and young people being looked after by a Local Authority, namely:
- those subject to care orders or interim care orders (under sections 31 and 38 of the 1989 Act);
  - those children who have been placed, or are authorised to be placed, with prospective adopters by a local authority (section 18(3) of the 2002 Act);
  - those who are voluntarily accommodated under section 20 of the 1989 Act, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Where children are accommodated under this provision, parental responsibility remains with the parents; and
  - those who are subject to court orders with residence requirements (for example, secure remand or remand to local authority accommodation), in accordance with section 21 of the 1989 Act.
- 5.2 Local Authorities' duties to looked after and adopted children and care leavers are set out in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, the Children and Young People's Act 2008 and the Adoption and Children Act 2002.
- 5.3 The Quality Protects Programme, launched in 1998, was designed to ensure that local authorities improved the life chances of looked after children and care leavers. In a letter to local authorities, the then Secretary of State for Health emphasised that:
- “One of the aims of the Quality Protects Programme is to assist councils to adopt a truly corporate outcome-orientated approach to parenting children who are looked after by them and support the parenting of other children in need.”
- 5.4 The concept of whole council responsibility for the quality of care for looked after and adopted children and care leavers became known as “Corporate Parenting,” in the acknowledgement that councils as a whole, and their partners, shared the task of improving outcomes for this vulnerable group of children and young people.
- 5.5 The advent of the Children Act 2004 saw Corporate Parenting underpinned by statute. Section 10 of the Act places a duty on local authorities and strategic partners, such as health and police, to co-operate to secure the welfare of children. Section 52 states the duty to promote education.
- 5.6 *Care Matters* legislation – the Children and Young People's Act 2008 – further sharpened the focus on looked after and adopted children and care leavers, setting out the key elements of effective corporate parenting, strengthening the role of Independent Reviewing Officers, and on the whole, challenging local authorities to ‘get it right’ for looked after and adopted children and care leavers.
- 5.7 Statutory Guidance on promoting the health and wellbeing of looked after children (DCSF 2009) aimed to promote better co-ordinated care and local authorities and primary care trusts should implement this in accordance with sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004.
- 5.8 In 2009 ‘Healthy Lives, Bright Futures – the strategy for children and young people's health (DH2009) restated the commitment in *Care Matters*

- 5.9 Statutory Guidance (DCSF 2009) Designated Teacher - the governing bodies of all maintained schools are required under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 to appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked after children who are on the school roll.
- 5.10 In 2010 Statutory Guidance on securing the sufficient accommodation for looked after children was published, which provides guidance on the implementation of section 22G of the Children Act 1989. This guidance sets out the requirements of local authorities in relation to children they look after, for whom it would be consistent with their welfare to be accommodated locally, to ensure there is sufficient capacity and a sufficient range of accommodation that meets children's needs. There is a clear expectation of effective partnerships with Children's Trust partners.
- 5.11 Statutory Guidance Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Handbook (DFE Implementation April 2011) - which describes how IRO's and local authorities should discharge their distinct responsibilities to looked after children in relation to care planning and reviews. It also gives guidance to local authorities on establishing an effective IRO service. This guidance replaces the 2002 guidance 'Independent Reviewing Officers Guidance: Adoption and Children Act 2002'.
- 5.12 Statutory Guidance Short Breaks (DFE Implementation 2011) - which clarifies the legal framework for short breaks under Part 3 Children Act 1989, and the requirement for assessment, planning and review for children having short breaks. It also makes provision as to the legal status of the child in receipt of short breaks
- 5.13 In 2002 the government sought to overhaul and modernise the existing adoption legislation. Adoption law was developed to reflect the provisions of the Children Act 1989 to ensure that the child's welfare is paramount in all decisions relating to adoption. The Act placed a duty on local authorities to maintain an adoption service and to provide an adoption support service to all those, whose lives are directly touched by adoption including birth parents, adopters, children and adopted adults.
- 5.14 Statutory Guidance Care Planning (DFE 2010) - The regulations and guidance consolidate existing regulations and guidance into one coherent framework relating to care planning and review for all looked after children. This also builds on good practice, which has developed since the Children Act 1989 was implemented.

## Our priorities

### 6.1 Raising educational attainment and achievement

#### 6.1.1 Context

Educational achievement of looked after children and young people is critical if they are going to lead fulfilled and successful lives.




Looked after children's attendance is increasing and is above the Derby City average.

#### *Looked After Children School Attendance 2008/09 – 2011/12*

Total	2008-2009			2009-2010			2010-2011		
	LAC	ALL	DIFF	LAC	ALL	DIFF	LAC	ALL	DIFF
<b>Attendance</b>	94.2%	93.8%	+0.4%	95.5%	93.8%	+1.7%	95.9%	94.0%	+1.9%

In 2012 in Derby looked after children who achieve 5+ GCSE's grade A\* - C, including English and Maths was 24.3%, above our target and also slightly above our statistical neighbour's achievement of 23.0%.

We face a greater challenge at Key Stage 2 with respect to looked after children achieving level 4+. In 2012 43% of looked after children achieved Level 4+ in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2, which is below targets and our comparator neighbour achievement of 53.2%.

Definition	2011 Derby Outturn	2012 Stat. Neighb. Average	2011/12 Derby Target	2012 Derby Outturn	Trend
<b>Level 4+ at Key Stage 2 English and Maths:</b> percentage of looked after children achieving Level 4+ at Key Stage 2 Maths	27.0%	53.2%	N/A	43.0%	
<b>Level 4+ at Key Stage 2 English:</b> percentage of looked after children achieving Level 4+ at Key Stage 2 English	N/A	63.1%	62%	50.0%	N/A
<b>Level 4+ at Key Stage 2 Maths:</b> percentage of looked after children achieving Level 4+ at Key Stage 2 Maths	N/A	58.0%	64%	43.0%	N/A
<b>5+ A*-C (including English and maths):</b> percentage of looked after children achieving 5+ A*-C (including English and maths)	16.7%	23.0%	18%	24.3%	
<b>5+ A*-C Key Stage 4:</b> percentage of children looked after achieving 5+ A*-C at GCSE or equivalent	54.3%	42.3%	N/A	45.9%	

Over the lifetime of this strategy we will continue to prioritise educational attainment, continue to raise attainment at all key stages and ensure that looked after children and young people make good progress given their starting, especially those with the most complex cases and who are sometimes placed out of city. We will ensure that all looked after children and young people receive the very best quality of education, regardless of whether they are educated within Derby or out of the city. We are committed to monitoring and tracking progress and achievement at all levels, on a regular basis throughout the year.

### **6.1.2 Our Achievements**

- a. 24.3% of looked after children in Derby achieved 5 or more GCSE's at grades A\*-C including English and mathematics. This is Derby's highest performance seen over the past six years and is performing well above the national figure (15.1%) and comparator authority average (23.0%).
- b. On average, for the last three years the school attendance of looked after children in Derby is higher than the total school population.
- c. The percentage of Derby's looked after children who had at least one fixed term exclusion has dropped for the third year running in 2012 and remains under the national and comparator authority average.

### **6.1.3 Challenges**

Our key challenges are:

- a. Ensuring that all schools and early years settings meet the needs of all looked after children and young people and have high quality personal education plans (PEP's) in place and which are based on the latest information.
- b. Further improving our understanding of the educational needs of looked after children with special educational needs, learning difficulties or disabilities and aligning this strategy to other key documents to improve outcomes.
- c. Ensuring that we have high quality tracking and monitoring systems in place to identify children and young people who need individualised support to ensure that they achieve their potential, with particular reference for looked after children placed out of the city.
- d. Ensuring that schools meet the needs of all looked after children and young people and that the Local Authority provides appropriate support and challenge to schools.
- e. To ensure that looked after children have stable experiences of schools and learning settings. Movement of school places should only ever be in the very best interest of the child/young person.
- f. Ensuring that all looked after children's PEPs reflect the need to secure positive progression routes following their period in full time education.
- g. Ensure that children in adoptive placements are supported in the school environment and that their needs are understood by educational staff.

### **6.1.4 Objectives**

Over the lifetime of this strategy we will:

- a. Continue the improving trend in raising attainment and achievement at all key stages.
- b. Continue to maintain current levels of attendance of looked after children and young people.

- c. Ensure that all schools and early years settings meet the needs of all looked after children and have high quality personal education plans in place and which are based on the latest information. Working in partnership for all looked after children to be school ready and maximise outcomes.
- d. Develop protocols with the private and voluntary sector to discuss and collect information about the learning development and progress of looked after children in early years settings.
- e. Ensure that we have high quality tracking and monitoring systems in place to identify children and young people who need individualised support to ensure that they achieve their potential.
- f. Ensure that schools meet the needs of all looked after children and young people and that the Local Authority provides appropriate support and challenge to schools.
- g. Ensure that looked after children and young people have stable experiences of schools and learning settings. Movement of school places should only ever be in the very best interest of the child.
- h. Improve completion rates to ensure that all looked after children's PEPs reflect the need to secure positive progression routes following their period in full time education.
- i. Provide advice and support to schools working with children placed for adoption. Children who have experienced traumatic experiences of loss, trauma, abuse and neglect are likely to struggle within the structure of the school setting and their ability to settle and to achieve can be crucial to the success of their adoptive placement.

Full details of the actions that will be taken to deliver the objectives set out above are in the '[Looked After and Adopted Children and Young People Strategy – Improvement Plan](#)', which is set out in **Annex A**.

## 6.2 Improved health and well-being



### 6.2.1 Context

There is good evidence that looked after and adopted children and young people experience poorer health outcomes than their non–looked after peers with higher rates of physical health complaints and 4 to 5 times higher rates of mental health problems (Melzer et al, 2003<sup>1</sup>). In addition, looked after children and young people are four times more likely to smoke, drink and take drugs (Meltzer, 2003) and tend to start using drugs at an earlier age, at higher levels and more regularly than those not in care (Newburn & Pearson, 2002<sup>2</sup>). Looked after girls under 18 (in England) also have a higher prevalence of teenage motherhood (DfES, 2006<sup>3</sup>).

For looked after children and young people an Initial Health Assessment (IHA) is undertaken upon admission to care and Review Health Assessments (RHA) are undertaken every 6 months for those under 5, and annually for those over 5 years old. These feed into the looked after review process undertaken by the Independent Reviewing Service, which starts 28 days after admission to care. Derby's Care Commissioning Group will work to ensure that for all looked after children and young people living in Derby, and out of city, health assessments and reviews will be commissioned for all looked after children.

In 2011/12, 74.5% of looked after children had their statutory health needs met (SS PM02). Linked to this, 74.8% of children had their teeth checked by a dentist within the year (82% nationally) and 92.8% of children had up to date immunisation checks (79% nationally)

Over the last twelve months, 266 children were required to complete a 'strength and difficulties' questionnaire, which measures emotional well-being for looked after children. A total of 99 questionnaires were completed (38%) and the average score for those was 16.9, which is higher than the national position for the previous year of 13.9.

Definition	2011 Derby Outturn	2012 Stat. Neighb. Average	2011/12 Derby Target	2012 Derby Outturn	Trend
<b>Development assessments</b> of children aged 5 or under who had been looked after continuously for at least twelve months	54.0%	75.4%	N/A	38.5%	
<b>Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children</b> - Percentage of children looked after at 31 March for whom a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was completed	66%	66.5%	N/A	38.0%	
<b>Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children</b> - children looked after at 31 March average Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) score	16.4	13.9	N/A	16.9	

<sup>1</sup> Meltzer et al. (2003) *The Mental Health of Young People Looked After by the Local Authorities in England. The Report of a Survey Carried Out in 2002 by the ONS on behalf of Department of Health*, Norwich: the Stationary Office

<sup>2</sup> Newburn and Pearson (2002) *Drug Use Among Young People in Care*, Sheffield: Youth Citizen & Social Change Programme

<sup>3</sup> DfES (2006) *Teenage Pregnancy. Next Steps*, London: DFES

## 6.2.2 Our Achievements

- a. We have improved our process and performance in delivering holistic health assessments (IHAs and RHAs), dental checks and immunisations (this is part of the health assessment) for looked after children and young people.
- b. We have ensured all children with an adoption plan are seen by a paediatrician (who is also an adviser to the adoption panel) who identifies their health needs and how these needs should be met.

## 6.2.3 Challenges

Children and young people who are looked after have historically received less well coordinated health care than their non-looked after peers. We are aware that we face challenges with some of our processes, service capacity and health need intelligence, and our key challenges include:

- a. Our joint commissioning, planning and monitoring of health services for looked after children and young people needs to be more robust, and we do not have sufficient understanding at a strategic level, of the health needs of looked after children and young people in Derby
- b. There are difficulties in ensuring looked after children and young people who live outside of Derby have access to appropriate health services. This in part reflects national inconsistencies and a lack of clarity relating to the governance and responsibility for the provision of health services for looked after children and young people who are placed out of city.
- c. We need to enhance the extent to which the health plans form a holistic and integral part of the case file or care plan, including dental needs.
- d. A significant challenge is the delivery of consistent health care for our looked after children and young people who have contact with a range of primary and secondary health services and often receive less well coordinated health care than their non-looked after peers. In addition access to dental care has historically been low, leading to poorer dental health.
- e. Referrals for looked after children and young people into specialist substance misuse treatment (Tier 3) services information are not known. It is important to support strategies to take this area forward.
- f. The transition arrangements from childhood to adulthood for care leavers with emotional well being or mental health issues appear to present some challenges and we need to improve our understanding of the issues in this area.
- g. NHS commissioning, providers and services in Derby are due to undergo significant organisational change and re-structuring from April 2013 as part of the vision set out in the NHS White Paper Healthy Lives, Healthy People. This includes a shift in commissioning responsibilities. Minimising disruption to service delivery whilst ensuring an effective redesign and integration of services is a key challenge.

## 6.2.4 Objectives

Over the lifetime of the strategy we will:

- a. Strengthen the leadership and joint strategic commissioning of services to meet the health needs of looked after children and young people through the CCG incrementally.
- b. Ensure timely and efficient Review Health Assessments are undertaken by the School Nursing and Health Visiting Services that meet quality standards.
- c. Ensure timely and efficient processes including IHAs, with cross-agency agreement regarding such issues as consent, information sharing and attendance of the social worker at the Initial Health Assessment meeting.
- d. Align Health, Education and Care plans within statutory review timescales and implement effective monitoring processes and embed this within the formal care review process.
- e. Raise and embed high expectations and practice by all partners in relation to their role and functions in securing secondary health care for those placed out of city, covered through the CCG and health tariff arrangements.
- f. Increase carer's response rates to completing the SDQ Questionnaire, support early identification of children's emotional and mental health needs and promote good health and well-being to sustain improvements.
- g. Increase practitioner's knowledge, skills and confidence, in order to support early identification and the promotion of good health and well-being.
- h. Improve our understanding of the issues around transition arrangements for care leavers requiring access to specialist support and services (including adult mental health services) and identify if, and where, there are deliverable service improvements.
- i. Work in partnership to deliver strategies which will support appropriate referral of looked after children to specialist substance misuse services.

Full details of the actions that will be taken to deliver the objectives set out above are in the **'Looked After and Adopted Children and Young People Strategy – Improvement Plan'**, which is set out in **Annex A**.



## **6.3 Promoting safeguarding and reducing vulnerability**

### **6.3.1 Context**

Safeguarding and vulnerability measures apply to all children, especially those who are looked after in public care. For some looked after children and care leavers there are factors that have the potential to increase their vulnerability and require additional safeguarding measures to be taken. These include looked after children who are, or at risk of:

- Missing from Home, Care or Education;
- Sexual Exploitation;
- Offending or in Custody;
- Placed out of city, including secure welfare placements.

Some care leavers and those in need of additional transition support services can be equally vulnerable.




The risks of sexual exploitation are significantly increased for looked after children and care leavers, particularly those involved in running away. Issues around attachment and developing relationships, access to internet based information, including social networking and past care experiences can all be instrumental in increasing risk to looked after children and care leavers.

The percentage of looked after children who have been cautioned or convicted has fluctuated in recent years, with performance decreasing slightly between 2010/11 and 2011/2012. The latest full year's data was 9.9% for the year to March 2012. Derby's outturn is slightly higher than that of similar authorities and the England average

The transition between children services to adult services presents a number of challenges for care leavers in terms of education, training, employment, accommodation, welfare benefits and healthcare. Each young person requiring an individual tailored package of support.

Positively, we are successful in providing suitable accommodation for our care leavers with 91.4% in suitable accommodation during 2011/12 which is a stronger result than our statistical neighbours. We have developed the Preventing Youth Homelessness Strategy in partnership with providers and Housing. Care leavers feature as a priority group in terms of planning and delivering suitable accommodation and support services.

Our care leavers are also achieving in terms of employment, education and training, with 62.9% in employment, education and training during 2011/12, a notable increase on the previous year and slightly below the average of the 2010/11 statistical neighbours figure.

Definition	2010/11 Derby Outturn	2010/11 Stat Neighbour average	2011/12 Derby Target	2011/12 Derby Outturn	Trend
<b>Final warnings / reprimands of children looked after:</b> percentage of children looked after given a final warning / reprimand or convicted of an offence	9.8%	9.0%	n/a	9.9%	
<b>Care leavers in suitable accommodation</b>	84.6%	89.5%	90.0%	91.4%	
<b>Care leavers in employment, education and training</b>	57.7%	61.9%	65.0%	62.9%	

### 6.3.2 Achievements

- a. In looked after children's reviews, Independent Reviewing Officers are focusing on care plans in detail and reporting back about the quality of personal education plans and health assessments. The new Dispute Resolution Process enables IROs to challenge where individual children's needs are not being met and identify timescales for action and improvement.
- b. The Runaway Action Partnership protocol has been revised and is reflected in Derby's Strategy. There is one central number for reporting missing children and one dedicated team responding to missing young people. Looked after children and young people are identified and referred through to the appropriate service where they receive additional support.
- c. We have a multi-agency operational partnership group focussing on issues surrounding children who go missing, including those who run away.
- d. We undertake quarterly data analysis of the whole Derby runaway cohort and there are now dedicated workers
- e. A Reducing Offending Behaviour Partnership protocol that was implemented across Derby's children's homes is being revised as the Tackling Offending protocol for all looked after children.
- f. The Child Sexual Exploitation Manager has provided all the local authority run children's residential homes and independent providers training around sexual exploitation and e-safety. The Children and Young People's department has worked hard with partners in raising awareness and support for professionals and families around child sexual exploitation.

### 6.3.3 Challenges

- a. Looked after children and young people running away, is one of the predictors of placement instability and we need to improve our understanding of these issues through challenging instability (through the corporate parenting and the Independent Reviewing Service) to improve our evidence on an individual or thematic basis, and developing more qualitative analysis from the return home interviews.
- b. Children and young people placed out of the city are routinely reviewed by IROs who report observations regarding placement quality through to the Commissioning team. However, there needs to be an audit and review of services so the qualitative review

process is consistent between in and out of city looked after children and young people.

- c. We need to continue to reduce the numbers of looked after children and young people who run away from care through collaborative working between statutory partners and manage their safety so that response and support mechanisms are effective.
- d. To ensure that universal services are responsive to the needs of all looked after children those on the periphery of offending and looked after children vulnerable to offenders. We need to continue to build on the initial success of the positive relationships with MAT's and local communities whilst continuing to support the Local Authority to fulfil its corporate parenting responsibilities.
- e. Looked after children and young people are vulnerable to grooming by adult offenders and drawn into sexual exploitation and targeted and coerced into offending activity. Proactive measures are required to ensure looked after children are safeguarded.
- f. To link the assessments and plans of the YOS and Social Care in respect of children and young people who are known to both services, particularly those children and young people who are looked after.
- g. To provide accommodation for looked after children and young people being released from custody or secure welfare placements in a timely fashion, allowing more effective resettlement planning.
- h. As well as meeting the needs of looked after children and young people, provide services to minimise the risks of these children becoming victims of crime and raising awareness of personal safety.
- i. To further enhance our understanding around the transitional needs and wishes of care leavers, with particular emphasis on supporting those young people with disabilities and to strengthen the implementation of Pathway Plans through multi-agency service responses.

#### **6.3.4 Objectives**

Over the lifetime of this strategy we will:

- a. Establish joint and qualitative information management systems around children and young people who go missing from care
- b. Continue to provide a robust strategic response between Derbyshire Police and the Council's children's and housing services to looked after children and young people who run away, offend, or are vulnerable to offenders, including sexual exploitation, and to our care leavers.
- c. Increase the profile of looked after children and young people within city-wide work on Runaways.
- d. Revise and extend the multi-agency partnership protocol around reducing offending behaviour of looked after children and young people
- e. Improving Safer Neighbourhood engagement in tackling those who target or offend against looked after children, young people and care leavers.

- f. Improve our shared intelligence on and understanding of the issues for looked after children and Young People, including what they tell us.
- g. Support Local Authority Children's Home staff to reduce the number of offences committed by children and young people and provide Restorative Justice Interventions.
- h. Reduce the number of looked after children and young people coming to the attention of the Courts and improve links with YOS Prevention Services.
- i. To continue to offer a service to children and young people at risk or involved in sexual exploitation.

Full details of the actions that will be taken to deliver the objectives set out above are in the **'Looked After and Adopted Children and Young People Strategy – Improvement Plan'**, which is set out in **Annex A**.

## **Development Areas**

### **7.1 Engagement and influence of children and young people**

#### **7.1.1 Context**

We believe that children and young people should and will be at the heart of this strategy. It is crucial that their experiences, views and ideas are captured and responded to in our strategy. We believe that the personalisation of care services, support and outcomes will be improved and enhanced through the effective engagement and influence of looked after children and young people and care leavers. We recognise that over consultation presents a risk of disengagement and children have told us to improve how we do it. Any future participation activity needs to include the views of adopted children and young people.

#### **7.1.2 Aspirations and Aims**

- a. Derby has established a Children in Care Council, (CiC) which consists of Derby care experienced children and young people.
- b. We are committed to continue to support and develop the role of the Children in Care council through this and associated strategies and, in addition to the Council, extend opportunities for the engagement of children and young people in influencing and making decisions about their care arrangements and wider looked after children's services.
- c. We aim to establish direct access for the CiC council to meet with the Corporate Parenting Sub Group, senior managers as corporate parents.
- d. We will develop consultation through several approaches, including:
  - Monthly 'Open Door' sessions, which will enable Looked after Children to meet with, phone or e-mail the Director of Specialist Services, Children and Young People's Department. These will be publicised widely, and will continue every month.
  - Consultation, including a Corporate Parenting survey and satisfaction questionnaires within services
  - Develop a Care Leaver questionnaire that will be distributed every 6 months and informs feedback to young people
  - Explore membership of national and regional networks through which our young people, as representatives of Derby's Looked after Children, share experience and practice with other local authorities.
- e. We have made improvements to our Independent Reviewing Service - which undertakes statutory monitoring of the experiences and outcomes of all of our looked after children and young people. Children's views must be at the centre of the review process in ways that are suitable to their personal circumstances and abilities.
- f. We will launch the Derby Care Experience Pledge which was developed with members of the CiC council.

### 7.1.3 Challenges

- a. Work around participation needs strengthening to ensure that children and young people's views inform strategic and operational development, as we recognise that we have not always been as sufficiently responsive to consultation findings as we could have been. We also need to move beyond consultation and increase the participation of children and young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of services.
- b. We recognise that for some children and young people engagement may be more complex and require additional or alternative support, for example, some children and young people may have communication difficulties and require assistance to communicate via different means, or require support throughout the looked after children reviewing process. Similarly it can be difficult to ascertain the views of young children placed for adoption.
- c. The views and experiences of children and young people placed for adoption needs to be captured through the reviewing process and through direct work with the child's social worker.
- d. Ensuring that consultation outcomes and actions are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) especially where expectations and aspirations are raised.

### 7.1.4 Objectives

Over the life of this strategy we will:

- a. Ensure the co-ordination of consultation and participation activity so that it is aligned to service improvements. This will inform commissioning functions, service planning and the reviewing and performance management processes.
- b. Improve and strengthen the role of the CiC Council to act as the central voice of Derby looked after children and young people and to form the link between children and young people and the strategic planning, commissioning and reviewing of services.
- c. Continue to develop independent services to promote Looked after Children's engagement including advocacy services, Independent Visitors and language support services (interpretation).
- d. Review our effectiveness against the Derby Care Experience Pledge, to build upon this within the revised Pledge, and establish a 3 year pledge with annual review.
- e. Review the 'Children's Guide to Adoption' which will facilitate with gaining the views and experiences of children and young people placed for adoption.



Full details of the actions that will be taken to deliver the objectives set out above are in the **'Looked After and Adopted Children and Young People Strategy – Improvement Plan'**, which is set out in **Annex A**.

## 7.2 Adopted children

### 7.2.1 Context

A small number of children who are looked after will be placed for adoption in a permanent family setting. The majority of these children will have experienced some form of disadvantage within their family of origin and will take with them a range of needs into their adoptive family. The Local Authority continues to act as a corporate parent to these children until an adoption order is made and then continues to have responsibilities under the adoption support regulations. It is important that the needs of these children are included in the Looked After, Adopted Children and Young People Strategy in order to ensure that their assessed needs are incorporated into longer term intervention planning which will include developing our partnerships with health and education.

Children who are adopted have nearly always spent time in the care of the Local Authority, and can continue to experience difficulties similar to looked after children, consequently it is important to support prospective and adoptive families. We have a statutory duty to provide support until three years after the making of an adoption order to all families that have a Derby child placed with them. For those families who live within the Derby boundary this responsibility is ongoing.

Definition	2010/11 Derby Outturn	2010/11 Stat Neigh. Average	2011/12 Derby Target	2011/12 Derby Outturn	Trend
Percentage of looked after children that were adopted	11.6%	N/A	12%	13%	
Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption (% of looked after children adopted during the year who were placed for adoption within 12 months of the decision that they should be placed for adoption, and who remained in that placement on adoption)	75.9%	75.0%	70.0%	30.0%	

### 7.2.2 Achievements

- We perform very well in the total number of adoptions from care. Derby had 110 children adopted over the three year period 2009 to 2012, which equates to a performance of 25%. This is more than double the national average and also higher than the comparator authority average.
- 19% of Derby's adoptions are children from ethnic minority backgrounds, which is significantly higher than the national average of 6%.
- Overall for 2009 to 2012 14% of adoptions were children aged 5 years and over, which is higher than the national average of 4% and the comparator authority average of 6.8%.
- The average time of court proceedings in Derby is 39 weeks, compared to 53 weeks nationally. In addition to this, we were top of our comparator group for the average days taken between a court order being granted and matching to a suitable adoptive family

### 7.2.3 Challenges

- a. Our joint commissioning and planning of health services for adopted children needs to be more robust, and we need to develop our understanding of the health needs of children placed for adoption and strengthen our adoption support plans.
- b. Many prospective adopters wish to adopt children under the age of two years. This does not reflect the age range of the children and young people with an adoption plan within Derby and can lead to children being placed with external local authorities or voluntary adoption agencies.

### 7.2.4 Objectives

Over the lifetime of the strategy we will:

- a. Ensure the co-ordination of consultation and participation activity to support the engagement of Adopted Children and ensure their views inform service improvements, commissioning and review.
- b. Develop our communication and engagement with the parents of adopted children through the implementation of a web based interactive adoption service site which will enable the service to consult on a wide range of issues.
- c. Further develop the relationship between the Adoption Service, and CAMHS/Psychological Service and fieldwork social workers in order to increase practitioners understanding the emotional needs of children with an adoption plan and to improve the planning and provision of adoption support.
- d. Develop and implement a recruitment and marketing strategy that is targeted at recruiting prospective adopters who have the knowledge, understanding and skills which reflects the diversity of children within Derby.
- e. Strengthen the assessment of children's needs by implementing a multi-professionals meeting to inform the adoption planning process prior to presentation to the Adoption Panel.
- f. Regularly review the process of family finding for children to ensure that wherever appropriate children are placed with Derby adopters and that where this is not possible all possible placements are considered in a timely manner.
- g. Continue to develop a range of support services. To implement as appropriate personal budgets for adopters to access.
- h. Strengthen our understanding of the needs of adopted children and adoptive parents.
- i. Strengthen the membership of elected members to the adoption panels to reflect the council's commitment to the corporate parenting role.

Full details of the actions that will be taken to deliver the objectives set out above are in the '[Looked After and Adopted Children and Young People Strategy – Improvement Plan](#)', which is set out in **Annex A**.





## 7.3 Integrated placements and placement stability

### 7.3.1 Context

A review of the fostering and residential services has been progressed. An integrated placement strategy is to be developed with the aim to be coordinating the different strands of activity across the services. The key aim is to ensure that we have the right mix of flexible, quality cost effective placements to meet the need of our looked after child population which is constantly fluctuating. In 2010 national guidance was released with respect to securing sufficient accommodation for Looked After Children, this provides guidance on section 22G of the Children Act 1989. The guidance states that for looked after children, 'having the right placement in the right place, at the right time, is a vital factor in improving placement stability, which in turn is a critical success factor in relation to better outcomes'.

Derby has a commitment to improving local placement sufficiency and the stability of placements for Derby children and young people who are looked after is improving. The number of children who experience more than three placement moves during the year is showing a decrease in performance, having gone from 6.7% in 2010/11 to 9.6% in 2011/12. Performance had been improving year on year until the deterioration seen in 2011/12. However, Derby remains in line with our statistical neighbours and the national average. We know that longer term stability in placement is achieved through improved multi-agency commissioning and delivery of a wide range of services.

The percentage of children and young people who have continued to live in the same placement for more than 2.5 years is also showing a slight decrease down from 69% in 2010/11 to 66.5% in 2011/12. The latest national data shows that Derby is in line with the national average but slightly under our statistical neighbours.

Definition	2010/11 Derby Outturn	2010/11 Stat Neigh. Average	2011/12 Derby Target	2011/12 Derby Outturn	Trend
<b>Stability of placements of children looked after:</b> number of placements (% of children looked after with three or more placements during the year)	6.7%	10.0%	9.0%	9.6%	
<b>Stability of placements of children looked after:</b> length of placement (% of children looked after for more than 2.5 years living continuously in the same placement for at least 2 years)	69.0%	70.0%	72.0%	66.5%	

Our performance in terms of the timescale for placing children and young people, who have an approved adoption plan, in an adoptive placement, is below that of our statistical neighbours and more work is being undertaken to improve the timescales for placement by improving joint working between appropriate agencies. In those instances where it has taken longer than 12 months to identify a suitable family for a child it has been a reflection of the child's specific needs, for example cultural, medical or emotional.

It is sometimes necessary, in the best interests of the child, for some of our children to have respite placements away from Derby, and whilst this impacts on our overall performance in terms of placement moves, it is important that we understand and support the need that some of our children might require this support. Where safe to

do so, we will consider Derby options for children who are currently placed out of city to return home.

### **7.3.2 Achievements**

- a. Plans for meeting accommodation sufficiency have been incorporated into local commissioning strategies and the Case Review Panel and Placement Panel has been implemented.
- b. We have begun to strengthen our partnership between Specialist Services, responsible for placement provision, and the Multi Agency Teams based in localities. This provides additional support services, through the Vulnerable and Locality Management Meetings, for children and young people within Derby in the local area where they live.
- c. We have improved collaborative working between social care and education services to ensure that the education offer supports placement stability either in city or out of city.
- d. We have strengthened the partnership between Children's Specialist Services and the Youth Offending Service to respond to looked after children who offend, are at risk of offending or are targeted as victims or accomplices by other offenders. This partnership will monitor the strategic and operational developments for this work.
- e. We have strengthened our partnership with the Independent Reviewing Service to create a more robust communication and dispute resolution process with clear timescales.
- f. Our partnership across Housing and other local accommodation providers is improving, and we have implemented a joint assessment protocol between partners to establish the needs of 16/17 year olds presenting as homeless.
- g. Our understanding around the disparity related to the financial status and entitlements of care leavers has improved however through further work with employment and benefit agencies we are committed to creating equitable financial payment systems and procedures.

### **7.3.3 Challenges**

- a. Our preference is to stop children and young people having to be placed out of city and to create a range of suitable placements to meet our looked after children and young people's needs.
- b. There are challenges in trying to secure suitable placements and accommodation opportunities taking into account issues around ethnicity, disability, age and complex case history, and to ensure that we have sufficient capacity of the right types of accommodation and placements to best meet the different needs and ages of our looked after children and young people.
- c. We will continue to need to provide sufficient and suitable accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds, including care leavers, this highlights the need to improve sufficiency in partnership with partners and specialist agencies.

- d. The number of foster carers in Derby needs to increase. A recruitment and retention strategy will be launched in 2013. The objectives of the strategy will be to:
- Improve recruitment and retention of local authority foster carers;
  - Increase the capacity of foster carers within the service;
  - Provide more placement choice for children and young people who need looking after by the local authority;
  - Improve outcomes for looked after children and young people.
- e. To increase the quality of Children's Permanence Reports as these reflect the child's history and current needs and form an important record that the child can access in later life.
- f. There is a need to review the social housing stock options for all young people in Derby and there is particular need to consider the additional or specialist support needs of our more vulnerable care leavers, through transition planning, in order to ensure the provision of choice and supply.
- g. Providing sufficient and equitable financial support packages for care leavers in an increasingly difficult economic climate requires further work with all of our partners. Our offer to care leavers needs to reflect what other young people in Derby experience whilst recognising and addressing the gaps that come from leaving care such as home starter costs.
- h. Further understanding of the needs of disabled looked after children and young people is needed in order to plan and deliver provision for this group of children and young people in a more informed manner.

### **7.3.4 Objectives**

Over the lifetime of the strategy we will:

- a. Strengthen the support to looked after children placements within the city through:
- i. Links to localities through the MAT services areas.
  - ii. Producing and maintaining a Children and Families Partnership Resource Directory to maximise the opportunities for Looked after children to access the right service at the right time.
- b. Develop and implement the Fostering Service recruitment strategy to increase the number of Local Authority Foster Carers over 5 years, and development of a performance framework, with a focus upon Task and Permanent Local Authority foster carers.
- c. Further enhance our adoption opportunities and placement choice
- d. Use a variety of commissioning mechanisms to secure a range of accommodation options and drive effective delivery based on outcomes.
- e. Strengthen a robust and collaborative support system for placement provision including the police, health and education services for looked after children, young people and care leavers.

- f. Implement a workforce development initiative in order to increase the skills and confidence of practitioners, with a particular focus on looked after children with disabilities
- g. Develop a detailed understanding of the position of, and issues for, disabled looked after children, and implement commissioning decisions with respect to placements and short breaks.
- h. Develop a range of housing options to meet the needs of, and support the transition to independent living for, Care Leavers and those who become looked after at the age of 16 and 17.
- i. Ensure Derby City Council has the appropriate mix of flexible, quality and cost effective placements to meet the needs of our looked after child population, including children with disabilities.
- j. Work in collaboration with all our partner agencies, including the voluntary, community and faith sector to develop wrap around support services to strengthen the stability of placements.
- k. Develop and maintain an equitable and sustainable financial support package for care leavers alongside the aims and outcomes contained in their personal Pathway Plan.

Full details of the actions that will be taken to deliver the objectives set out above are in the '[Looked After and Adopted Children and Young People Strategy – Improvement Plan](#)', which is set out in **Annex A**

# 8. Governance and Accountability

There is commitment across partners, coordinated through the Children, Families and Learners Board to delivered improved outcomes for looked after, adopted children and young people through the delivery of this strategy.

Derby Children's Safeguarding Board and Corporate Parenting Sub Group will provide further guidance, support and challenge; making sure all actions taken are in line with commitments and aimed at delivering improvements in the key priorities and areas for development.

The strategy provides clear leadership, action and required outcomes across three key priorities for three development areas:

### Priorities

- Raising education achievement and attainment;
- Improved health and well-being;
- Promoting safeguarding and reducing vulnerability.

### Development areas

- Engagement and influence of children and young people;
- Adopted children;
- Integrated placements and placement stability.

The Looked After, Adopted Children and Young People Strategy has been produced by the Local Authority in partnership with other statutory partners, including NHS Derby and healthcare providers and Derbyshire Police. The involvement of children and young people in producing this strategy was achieved with input from Derby's Children in Care Council.

The strategy is monitored and reviewed at a senior level by the Children and Young People's Improvement Board, which is chaired by the Strategic Director for Children and Young People. The Board has representation from commissioners, providers and managers to ensure that legislative compliance and best practice and value for money are achieved. The Board reports progress as necessary to; Council Cabinet, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board, Corporate Parenting Sub Group; Derby Children's Safeguarding Board and the Children and Families Learners Board.

The Children in Care Council, improves the voice and influence of looked after children and young people on service planning, delivery and evaluation.

Representatives of the Council have dedicated meetings with Senior Managers, Elected Members and front line staff to ensure that progress is monitored and reviewed, taking into account the views and wishes of children and young people who are in care.

<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>March 2014</b>
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# Looked After and Adopted Children and Young People Strategy

## Improvement Plan

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## Priorities

### 6.1 - Raising education achievement and attainment

Objectives	Key Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
To continue the improving trend in raising attainment and achievement at all key stages.	<p>Maintain the focus on Looked After Children's achievement with School Improvement Officers, schools, Early Years settings and education based services.</p> <p>Looked After Children achievement and progress built into all School Improvement Officers training.</p> <p>Regular updates and briefings for schools and Early Year settings via Forums and Provider Briefings</p>	School Improvement Officers	Ongoing
To continue to improve the attendance of Looked After Children	<p>To reduce any days lost to learning</p> <p>Looked After Children attendance and progress built into all school Improvement Officer training.</p> <p>Ensure that raising attendance of Looked After Children with targets is within the commission to MAT teams.</p>	<p>School Improvement Officers</p> <p>HoS (K Fletcher)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
To ensure that all schools meet the needs of all Looked After Children and have high quality personal education plans in place and which are based on the latest information.	<p>To ensure that all designated teachers have the skills and knowledge to produce and monitor high quality PEPs that clearly identify the needs of the child and the resources available to them to improve outcomes for each individual.</p> <p>Training for Looked After Children designated teachers on the production of high quality PEPs.</p>	Head of Virtual School	Ongoing

Objectives	Key Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
<p>To develop protocols with the Private and Voluntary sector to discuss and collect information about the learning development and progress of Looked After Children in early years settings</p>	<p>To agree Early Years Looked After Children protocols with Private and Voluntary Senior Managers</p> <p>Work with practitioners in early years settings, contribute to and monitor high quality PEPs that clearly identify the educational needs of the child and the resources available to them to improve outcomes for each individual child</p>	<p>School Improvement Officers</p>	
<p>To ensure that we have high quality tracking and monitoring systems in place to identify children and young people who need individualised support to ensure that they achieve their potential.</p>	<p>Further refine the intelligent use and analysis of data to influence practice and ensure the appropriate use of resources.</p> <p>Up to date information is provided by schools to ensure that the Looked After Children tracker holds high quality and real time information to influence actions and use of resource.</p>	<p>Head of Virtual School</p>	
<p>Ensuring that schools meet the needs of all Looked After Children and that the Local Authority provides appropriate support and challenge to schools.</p>	<p>Ensure that every School Improvement Officer in the city has the appropriate skills and knowledge to challenge schools on the progress of Looked After Children, to signpost them to appropriate avenues of support and to ensure that the Local Authority is informed of any concerns.</p> <p>Ensure that each SIP has received appropriate training on Looked After Children needs and knows the appropriate Local Authority contacts.</p>	<p>School Improvement Officers</p>	<p>Termly</p>
<p>To ensure that Looked After Children have stable experiences of schools, Early Years settings and other learning settings. Movement of school places should only ever be in the very best interest of the child</p>	<p>Ensure that any request for a change of school place is robustly scrutinised and challenged by the Admissions Team.</p> <p>Ensure that 3 and 4 year old Looked After Children attend eligible provision near to the primary school that they will transfer to for their Reception place</p> <p>Commission Data Team to produce a turbulence report.</p>	<p>Head of Admissions</p>	



Objectives	Key Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
To ensure that all Looked After Children's PEPs reflect the need to secure positive progression routes following their period in full time education.	To review PEP process to incorporate effective planning for post 16 learning	Virtual Headteacher	
Provide advice and support to schools working with children placed for adoption	Identify those schools that require support and guidance Provide information relating to the needs of children placed for adoption eg attachment	DHOS Adoption Manager	Ongoing

## 6.2 - Improved health and well-being

Objective	Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
To strengthen the leadership and joint strategic commissioning of services to meet the health needs of Looked After Children, including disabled Looked After Children.	<p>Overarching leadership</p> <p>To convene a LAAC Health and Wellbeing Group responsible and accountable for driving forwards action to strategically commission and deliver services to meet the health needs of looked after children</p>	Commissioning Manager CYPS/ NHS Derby Public Health Lead for Vulnerable Children and Young People	
To ensure timely and efficient Review Health Assessments (RHA's) are undertaken by the School Nursing and Health Visiting Services that meet quality standards and are DCC and NHS Derby legally compliant, and support by access to GP Patient Held Records.	<p>To implement a process for the delivery of quality Looked After Children Review Health Assessments by (RHA's) School Nursing and Health Visiting Services</p> <p>To establish a process to meet minimum standards and clinical governance of all partners</p>	<p>NHS Derby Safeguarding Lead</p> <p>Designated Doctor / Designated Nurse</p> <p>NHSDerby Public Health Lead for Vulnerable Children and Young People</p>	
To ensure timely and efficient processes are including IHAs, with cross-agency agreement regarding such issues as consent, information sharing and attendance of the social worker at IHAs.	Agree operational protocols	<p>Hos Children in Care</p> <p>Designated Doctor/Designated Nurse</p>	
To align Health, Education and Care Plans within statutory review timescales and implement effective monitoring processes and embed this within the formal care review process.	<p>Implement and embed a process whereby Looked After Children Health Plans are more effectively reviewed through the statutory review process</p> <p>To develop infrastructure support for Independent Reviewing Officers</p>	Hos Quality Assurance Service	

Objective	Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
<p>To raise and embed high expectations and practice by all partners in relation to their role and functions in securing secondary health care for those placed out of city</p>	<p>To increase expectations and standards of out of city providers of their role in securing secondary health care</p> <p>All Looked After Children placed out of Derby registered with a GP in the area they are placed and the GP is recorded on CCM</p> <p>To develop shared responsibilities between DCC and CCG Derby for the 'Responsible Commissioner Role'</p> <p>To implement process whereby IRO's will assess the need for a review at the point of a child being placed out of city</p>	<p>CYPS Commissioning Lead</p> <p>CYPS Commissioning Lead</p> <p>Head of Quality Assurance and Safeguarding</p>	
<p>To increase carers performance rates to complete the SDQ Questionnaire, support early identification of children's emotional and mental health needs and promote good health and well-being.</p>	<p>To promote and ensure the SDQ Questionnaires are completed by all carers responsible for looked after children.</p>	<p>DHOS Fostering &amp; Adoption Service/DHOS Residential Service</p>	
<p>To increase practitioners knowledge, skills and confidence in order to support early identification of children's emotional and mental health needs and promote good health and well-being.</p>	<p>To implement a workforce development programme</p>	<p>Hos Children in Care and Regulated Services</p>	
<p>To improve our understanding of the issues around transition arrangements for care leavers requiring access to specialist support and services (including adult mental health services) and identify where there are deliverable service improvements.</p>	<p>To review current arrangements and transition practices for Care Leavers</p>	<p>Hos Care Leaving Service</p>	
<p>To work in partnership to deliver strategies which will support appropriate referral of Looked After Children to specialist substance misuse services</p>	<p>Implement a workforce development programme in basic substance misuse, screening and referral processes. Offer training to residential staff and foster carers help them to support Looked after Children and Young People who maybe misusing substances.</p>	<p>HoS Children in Care and Regulated Services</p>	
<p>To track the progress against the CQC actions plan</p>	<p>Consider the CQC Action Plan and develop a progress</p>	<p>Director Specialist</p>	

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
	and align this with the LA Ofsted Action Plan.	Services	

### 6.3 - Promoting safeguarding and reducing vulnerability

Objectives	Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
Establish joint information management systems	Qualitative analysis of return home interviews through collated information	Lead Officer Missing Persons	
Develop a more strategic response to Looked After Children who run away, offend, or are vulnerable to offenders.	Establish regular and effective information-sharing practice between SY Police and CYPS	Lead Officer Missing Persons/ Derbyshire Senior officer	
Increase profile of Looked After Children within city-wide work on Runaways	Review Derby-wide action plan to sharpen focus on addressing running away of Looked After Children	Lead Officer Missing Persons	
To produce timely and effective outcomes for children missing from care through multi-agency working	Review multi-agency Missing from care Procedures	Lead Officer Missing Persons	
Revise and extend the multi-agency partnership around reducing offending behaviour of Looked After Children	Revise and reinvigorate the 'Tackling Offending' protocol	Lead Officer Missing Persons/HosYOS	
Improving Safer Neighbourhood engagement in tackling those who target or offend against Looked After Children and care leavers	Ensuring Safer Neighbourhood representation in the 'Tackling Offending' Protocol	Hos YOS	
Improve our shared intelligence on and understanding of the vulnerability issues for looked after children, including what they tell us	Review intelligence gathering and information sharing systems between partner agencies around vulnerability factors Establish a multi-agency Vulnerable Young persons sub-group reporting to the DSCB	Lead Officer Missing Persons  Hos Quality Assurance/Hos YOS	
Support the children's workforce to reduce the number of offences committed by children and young people and provide Restorative Justice Interventions.	Create opportunities to prevent offending behaviours or act expediently and creatively in addressing offending behaviour through the 'Tackling Offending' protocol	Hos YOS	
Reduce the number of Looked After Children coming to the attention of the Courts and improve links with YOS Prevention Services	Establish timely identification and referral of looked after children at risk of offending	Hos YOS Hos Children in Care & Regulated Services	

Objectives		Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
	To maintain a service to children and young people at risk or involved in sexual exploitation	<p>To continue to raise awareness of sexual exploitation with parents/adoptive parents/residential support workers/foster carers, professionals and young people</p> <p>To continue to support young people at risk of sexual exploitation through face to face specialist intervention by workers</p> <p>To continue to identify young people at risk, to offer support to the young people, their parents/carers, to take action on offenders and provide a city wide picture of Sexual exploitation</p>	Child Sexual Exploitation Manager	
	To further improve multi-agency responses to meeting the additional needs of more vulnerable or complex looked after children and care leavers including enhanced links with Universal / Transition services	Multi-agency decisions made at the Children's Trust Resource Panel to address more vulnerable or complex case issues	Commissioning/Specialist Services	
	Ensure multi-agency work on offending reduction covers all Looked After Children	Revise the existing multi-agency protocol	Hos/DHOS Regulated Services/HoS YOS	

## Development areas

### 6.4 - Engagement and influence of children and young people

Objective	Key Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
To ensure the co-ordination of consultation and participation activity so that it is aligned to service improvements, informs commissioning functions and the reviewing and performance management processes.	To coordinate and monitor consultation and participation activity through a multi-agency focussed delivery group		
To improve and strengthen the role of CiC to act as the central voice of Derby Looked After Children and Young People, and form the link with the strategic planning, commissioning and reviewing of services	<p>Revise, strengthen and define the Terms of Reference for CiC Council</p> <p>To ensure that CiC represent the views of Looked After Children at key planning and review stages across relevant services</p> <p>Encourage and support CiC to enhance engagement and consultation with children and young people through specific groups (care leavers; adoption service; residential service and fostering service; social workers)</p>	<p>Director Specialist Services/ Hos Quality Assurance</p> <p>Director Specialist Services/Director EIS/ HoS Quality Assurance</p> <p>All Practitioners</p>	
To re-commission the independent Advocacy, Independent Visitors and CiC services based upon a Children's Rights approach	To undertake an Open Procurement Tender exercise	HoS Quality Assurance/HoS Commissioning	

Objective	Key Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
<p>To review our effectiveness against the Derby Care Experience Pledge, to build upon this within the revised Pledge, and establish a 3 year pledge with annual review.</p>	<p>To review effectiveness of the pledge</p> <p>Revise the Pledge</p> <p>Undertake Annual Reviews</p>	<p>Director Specialist Services/HoS Quality Assurance</p>	
<p>Develop a 'Children's Guide to Adoption which will facilitate the process of gaining the views and experiences of children and young people placed for adoption</p>	<p>A guide to be available to each child with an adoption plan to assist their understanding of their care planning</p>	<p>DHOS Adoption/Derby Design Team</p>	



## 6.5 - Adopted children

Objectives	Key Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
To ensure the co-ordination of consultation and participation activity to support the engagement of Adopted Children and ensure their views inform service improvements, commissioning and review	To coordinate and monitor consultation and participation activity through a multi-agency focussed delivery group	DHOS Adoption Manager	
Develop our communication and engagement with the parents of adopted children through the implementation of a web based interactive adoption service site which will enable the service to consult on a wide range of issues	To introduce and develop a web based interactive site which will aid consultation and assist with the dissemination of information about services available to support prospective adopters and adoption placements	DHOS Adoption Manager	
Further develop the relationship between the Adoption Service, CAMHS and Psychology in order to increase practitioners understanding the emotional needs of children with an adoption plan and to improve the planning and provision of adoption support.	Increase the partnership working in order to ensure the specific emotional needs of children placed for adoption is identified early and appropriate services engaged	CYPS Commissioning lead/ DHOS Adoption	Ongoing
Develop and implement a recruitment strategy that is targeted at recruiting prospective adopters who have the knowledge, understanding and skills which reflects the diversity of children within Derby.	To identify the specific needs of Derby children with an adoption plan, including emotional, physical, religious and cultural	HoS Children in Care & Regulated Services/ DHOS Adoption Manager/CYPS Commissioning	
Strengthen the assessment of children's needs by implementing a multi-professionals meeting to inform the adoption planning process prior to presentation to the Adoption Panel.	Increase the range of post approval training for prospective adopters	DHOS Adoption	

Objectives	Key Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
		<p>Team Managers/Panel Adviser/Panel Chairs</p> <p>DHOS Adoption HoS Children in Care Regulated Services</p> <p>Director EI&amp;ISS</p> <p>Virtual Head</p>	
	<p>Regularly review the process of 'family finding' for children to ensure that wherever appropriate children are placed with Derby adopters and that where this is not possible all possible placements are considered in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Regular meetings with Family Finders to review the family search process and identify any barriers to placement with Derby adopters Implementation of child focussed individual meetings to</p>	<p>HoS Regulated Services/DHOS Adoption/ HoS Locality Services</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Objectives	Key Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
	include fieldwork and adoption staff to identify at an early stage if a child will require an external placement		
	Continue to develop a range of support services offered	Increase the adoption support services available	HoS Children in Care & Regulated Services
	Strengthen our understanding of the needs of Adopted Children and Adoptive Parents	Identify patterns of specific need in both adopted children and their families	Hos/DHOS Adoption Service Analytical Services
	Strengthen the membership of Elected Members to the Adoption panels to reflect the council's commitment to the corporate parenting role.	Recruit an elected member to each of the Adoption panels in order to meet the regulatory requirements and reflect the council's commitment to the corporate parenting role.	Director Specialist Services/HoS CiC & Regulated Services

## 6.6 - Integrated placements and placement stability

Objectives	Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
Review the Case Review and Placement Panel and linkages to other Panel arrangements.	Revise the Terms of Reference to include a monthly multi-agency Children's Panel	Director Specialist Services/Director Commissioning Services	
To increase the number of Local Authority Foster Carers over 5 years, and increase the number fostering 2 children or more	To implement the Fostering Service Recruitment Strategy	Director Specialist Services/Director Commissioning/Hos Regulated Services/DHOS Fostering	/
To use a variety of commissioning mechanisms to secure a range of accommodation options and drive effective delivery based on outcomes	<p>Improved information intelligence and strategic needs assessment around placement provision and accommodation market</p> <p>Develop joint initiatives between social care, education and health commissioning.</p> <p>Develop performance expectations upon outcomes focused Health, Education and Care Plans</p>	<p>Director Specialist Services/Director Commissioning,</p> <p>CYPS Commissioning lead</p> <p>HoS CiC &amp; Regulated Services/Performance</p>	
To strengthen a robust and collaborative support wrap around system for placement provision including the police, health and education services for Looked After Children	<p>Bring all commercial interactions with the independent sector into one location</p> <p>Develop partner representation of Wrap around services such CAMHS and Educational support on the multi agency panel</p>	<p>Director Specialist Services/Director Commissioning Services</p> <p>Director Specialist Services/Director Commissioning Services</p>	

Objectives	Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
	<p>Further develop relationship between Adoption Service and CAMHS</p> <p>Links to MATs in localities through the Locality Meetings</p> <p>Producing and maintaining a Children and Families Partnership Resource Directory to maximise the opportunities for Looked after children to access the right service at the right time.</p>	<p>HoS CiC &amp; Regulated Services/Camhs Commissioner</p> <p>Localities HoS/HoS Children in Care &amp; Regulated Services</p> <p>Director Specialist Services/Director EIIS</p>	
<p>To implement a workforce development initiative in order to increase the skills and confidence of practitioners, with a particular focus on Looked After Children with disabilities</p>	<p>Analysis of preventative and support work that occurs prior to family breakdown, with a particular focus upon children with disabilities</p>	<p>Hos IDCS and Performance / Analytical Services</p>	
<p>To develop a detailed understanding of the position of, and issues for, Looked After Children with disabilities and implement commissioning decisions with respect to placements and short breaks.</p>	<p>To implement a data analysis project considering 5 years data on Looked After Children by disability, ethnicity, placement type, etc, rate of families reunited.</p>	<p>HoS IDCS/Commissioning Service/ Analytical services</p>	
<p>To develop a range of housing options to meet the needs of, and support the transition to independent living for, Care Leavers and those who become looked after at the age of 16 and 17</p>	<p>To develop a stepped approach to support tenancy.</p>	<p>HoS YOS/accommodation Partners and Adults, Health and Housing</p>	
<p>To ensure Derby City Council has the appropriate mix of flexible, quality and cost effective placements to meet the needs of our looked after child population, including children with disabilities</p>	<p>To increase the quality of care provided in our local children's residential homes</p>	<p>DHOS Residential Services/HoS IDCS</p>	

Objectives	Action(s)	Owner	Timescale
To develop and maintain an equitable and sustainable financial support package for care leavers alongside the aims and outcomes contained in their personal Pathway Plan.	Revise financial procedures for Care Leavers	HoS Care Leavers Service	

## Abbreviations

BESD:	Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties
CAMHS:	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CQC	Care Quality Commissions
ECM:	Every Child Matters
ETE/EET:	Education, Employment and Training
FTE:	Fixed Term Exclusion
IHA	Initial Health Assessment
IROs:	Independent Reviewing Officers
LDD:	Learning Difficulties and Disabilities
MAT:	Multi Agency Team
MLD:	Moderate Learning Difficulties
Ofsted	The Office for Standards for Education Children's Services and Skills
PD:	Physical Difficulties
PEP:	Personal Education Plan
PMLD:	Profound Multiple Learning Difficulties
RHA	Review Health Assessment
SAP:	School Action Plus
SDQ:	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SEN:	Special Educational Needs
SIP:	School Improvement Partners
SLCD:	Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties
SLD:	Severe Learning Difficulties
SMART:	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely
UASC:	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children
YOS:	Youth Offending Service

If you would like this information in any other way, style or language that will help you access it please let us know.

You can contact us on 01332 XXXXXX,  
Minicom 01332 XXXXXX.

Punjabi

ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਅਸੀਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਹੋਰ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਨਾਲ, ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ,  
ਜਿਹੜੀ ਇਸ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ  
ਮਿਨੀਕਮ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Urdu

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مٹی کام پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

Polish



Aby ułatwić Państwu dostęp do tych informacji, możemy je Państwu przekazać w innym formacie, stylu lub języku.

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