

Please note refreshments are available in the room from 5.30pm

Agenda

1. Introductions and Apologies

County Councillor Prynne

To note who is attending and any apologies for absence.

2. Notes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from 11 September 2014 (Pages 1 - 6)

County Councillor Prynne

To agree for accuracy the notes of the meeting and receive any matters arising.

3. What our Elected Members have been doing (10 mins) (Pages 7 - 8)

County Councillor Prynne and other Elected Members

To note feedback from work undertaken by the Chair of the Board and our Elected Members as part of their role on the CPB, including Member visits carried out since the last meeting.

What have our Young People been doing?

4. LINX (Lancashire's Children in Care Council) (60 mins) (Pages 9 - 18)

Young People and Barnardos

To receive feedback on the work our young people have been doing including:

- Performance Report
- Children Looked After Young Inspectors Update
- Young People's Response to Budget Cuts
- Feedback on Independent Reviewing Officers Report
- Presentation of Rock FM Time to Shine Award

What Do We Need to Know

5. CLA Strategy and Leaving Care Strategy (5 mins) (Pages 19 - 52)

Diane Booth

To note the strategies.

- 6. CLA Educational Attainment (15 mins)** (To Follow)
Bob Stott
To note the current position.
- 7. Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) and Partnership Arrangements (10 mins)** (Pages 53 - 54)
Richard Cooke
To receive an update.
- 8. Lancashire County Council Provider Report** (Pages 55 - 66)
Diane Booth
To note the report.
- 9. Any Other Business (5 mins)**
County Councillor Pryn
To receive any other business.
- 10. Date and Time of Next Meeting**
County Councillor Pryn
Thursday, 5 February 2015 at 6.00pm in the Duke of Lancaster Room (formerly Cabinet Room 'C'), County Hall, Preston, PR1 8RJ.

Information Item

- 11. Customer Feedback Team** (Pages 67 - 76)
To note the Annual Report.
- 12. Office of the Children's Commissioner Care Monitor and Other Information** (Pages 77 - 78)
To note the information attached.
- 13. New Rights for Young Carers - Changes to the Care Act and Children Act Explained** (Pages 79 - 84)
To note the changes.

Agenda Item 2

Lancashire County Council

Corporate Parenting Board

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 11th September, 2014 at 6.00 pm
in Assembly Hall - County Hall Preston**

Present: Members

County Councillor Margaret Brindle	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Ian Brown	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Chris Henig	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Sue Pryn (Chair)	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Miss Kim Snape	- Lancashire County Council
Catherine Bob Stott	- representing Adoption - Director of Permanence, Protection and Schools
Bradley Mark	- LINX Representative
Sam	- LINX Representative
Gavin	- LINX Representative
Kristal	- LINX Representative
Anthony	- LINX Representative
Gina	- LINX Representative

Co-opted members

Marc Bentley	- Ambassador for Children and Young People
Katherine Ashworth	- Young People's Service, Lancashire County Council
Mark Hudson	- Independent Reviewing Officers
Nicola Bamford	- Designated Doctor and Consultant Paediatrician, representing CCG
Diane Booth	- Children's Social Care
Kate Baggaley	- Barnardos
Gareth Oates	- Barnardos
Louise Burton	- CCG (on behalf of Debbie Ross)

Other Attendees

Annette McNeil	- Integrated Health Service
Sam Gorton (Clerk)	- Governance Officer
Louise Storey	- Children's Social Care

Jane Gray	- Adoption Services
Sally Allen	- Safeguarding
Sarah Frankland	- ACERS
Brendan Lee	- Residential Services
John Simpson	- ACERS

1. Introductions and Apologies

All were welcomed to the meeting and the following apologies were noted:

County Councillors Beavers and Lord, Sue Parr, Caroline Beswick and Debbie Ross.

2. Notes of the Meetings and Matters Arising from 19 June 2014 and 24 July 2014

The notes of the previous meetings were agreed as an accurate record and there were no matters arising from them.

3. What our Elected Members have been doing

County Councillor (CC) Prynne informed the Board that she had met with the Chair of the Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB), along with Bob Stott, Director for Permanence, Protection and Schools and Sam Gorton, Clerk to the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) and discussed how we can work more collaboratively with them. It was agreed that they would meet again in six months time and that the annual report from the CPB would be presented to the LSCB meeting on 14 November 2014. There have been meetings held with the adoption rep from the CPB and the Head of Youth Offending Team, Fostering and Adoption regarding activity days. A meeting had been held regarding Out of Borough placements for CLA where a piece of work has been initiated to inform Directors of Children's Services in other Authorities around support offered should a child be placed within Lancashire.

CC Prynne reported that the issue regarding emails and communication with young people was still ongoing and regular updates will be reported as appropriate.

Regulation 22 visits had been carried out by various Elected Members to the following LCC and Independent establishments:

LCC - The Bungalow, Maplewood, Bowerham Road, Warwick Avenue, Belvedere House, Chorley Hall Road, Marsden Hall Road and Crestmoor.

Independent – Ashdene, Rowling House and Pier House.

The reports from these visits have been passed to relevant colleagues and issues raised will be addressed.

CC Prynne thanked the Elected Members for carrying out these visits especially during the holiday period and requested that at least one, possibly more be carried out prior to the next CPB.

It was also noted that County Councillors have expressed an interest in becoming more involved with CPB issues in between meetings and CC Prynne will look at setting up Task and Finish Groups for pertinent topics and present these to the Board at the next meeting. If there is any specific area a County Councillor would like to get involved with, please inform CC Prynne.

4. LINX (Lancashire's Children in Care Council)

Marc Bentley was introduced by CC Prynne to this item and indicated that this was going to be his last meeting as Ambassador for Children and Young People. He was thanked on behalf of the Board for all the work he has undertaken as a member over the years.

Marc led the Board through a leaving care activity which is attached to the minutes for reference.

A Care Leavers Bed and Breakfast Expose [video](#) was shown and Diane Booth confirmed that in the last year, nine care leavers had had to use hotels however for no longer than two nights which is better than the previous year. LCC do not use B&Bs, only hotels in an emergency. This continues to be addressed with housing as there should be no CLA in B&Bs or hotels.

The next activity was a group work session, where groups were asked to state in order of importance what they feel makes suitable accommodation for care leavers.

The results are attached. It was noted that the number one criteria was to feel safe and that access to TVs and phones was quite a low priority.

LINX then gave feedback on what they had been doing since the last CPB meeting. Attached is the powerpoint showing all their activities.

The Performance Report is attached with comments from LINX following their discussion prior to the meeting of which they raised with the Board.

Action: It was agreed that Diane Booth will visit LINX to discuss their comments further.

Mark was congratulated on his GCSE results.

5. Activity Day

CC Prynne informed the Board that prior to the next activity day on 5 October 2014, she is requesting that two County Councillors and a young person attend.

Prior to the day a debrief will be held by officers for those attending on behalf of the CPB.

Action: County Councillors and Barnardos to inform CC Prynne who wishes to attend.

Following the day, CC Prynne requested that a report be brought back to the CPB on the outcomes.

Action: Diane Booth agreed to speak to LINX about the day.

6. Service 6

The Board were given the presentation (attached) on Service 6. They were informed that officers had visited LINX introducing them to the new service, which they found extremely useful.

It was noted that they were looking at setting up further Hubs and that information should be sent to GP surgeries and to include in the letter that is being sent to other Authorities with regards Out of Borough placements to advertise the service being offered.

7. IRO Annual Report

Sally Allen and Mark Hudson gave a brief outline of the report which was attached to the agenda and encouraged all to read it as this document is the eyes and ears of the young people.

It was reported that the Missing Protocol was being presented to the LSCB on 17 September 2014 for approval.

The attached Then and Now quiz was tabled, however as time was running out, it was agreed that LINX take this away and work on it and bring back to the next meeting.

Action: LINX to report back on the quiz at the next meeting.

8. Any Other Business

Fusion Social Network Group

Bradley informed everybody about a group he had set up and if anybody would like to attend to contact him. Further information is attached.

Marc Bentley

Marc gave a speech saying what a pleasure it had been to be involved with the CPB over the last six years. He has felt it has continually changed for the better over the years and the work that the young people carry out on behalf of all CLA

in Lancashire is amazing and that they are an inspiration to everyone. Marc's sentiments were echoed.

9. Meeting Schedule 2015

The meeting schedule attached to the agenda with the proposed dates for 2015 were agreed. The venue was also confirmed as "The Duke of Lancaster Room" (former Cabinet Room 'C').

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 4 December 2014 at 6.00pm in the Duke of Lancaster Room (former Cabinet Room 'C'), County Hall, Preston, PR1 8RJ.

Member Visits

Date	Establishment	Carried Out by	Circulated to Brendan Lee, CC Prynn, Bob Stott, Tony Morrissey and Unit Manager	Date Reported to CPB	Sent to Unit Manager, cc Annette McNeil, John Marr (for private)
15/06/14	Warwick Avenue (LCC)	CC Brown	17/07/14	11/09/14	N/A
30/07/14	Belvedere House (LCC)	CC Beavers	06/08/14	11/09/14	N/A
11/08/14	Chorley Hall Road (LCC)	CC Snape	22/08/14	11/09/14	N/A
21/08/14	Marsden Hall Road (LCC)	CC Brindle	05/09/14	11/09/14	N/A
28/08/14	Ashdene	CC Beavers	08/09/14	11/09/14	N/A
28/08/14	Rowling House	CC Beavers	08/09/14	11/09/14	09/10/14
28/08/14	Bowerham Road (LCC)	CC Henig	12/09/14	11/09/14	N/A
28/08/14	Pier House	CC Beavers	08/09/14	11/09/14	09/10/14
02/09/14	Crestmoor (LCC)	CC Brown	05/09/14	11/09/14	N/A
	Bungalow (LCC)	CC Prynn	Report Outstanding	11/09/14	N/A
	Maplewood (LCC)	CC Prynn	Report Outstanding	11/09/14	N/A
13/11/14	Eden Bridge (LCC)	CC Prynn	13/11/14		N/A
18/11/14	Grange Avenue	CC Prynn	28/11/14		N/A

Agenda Item 4

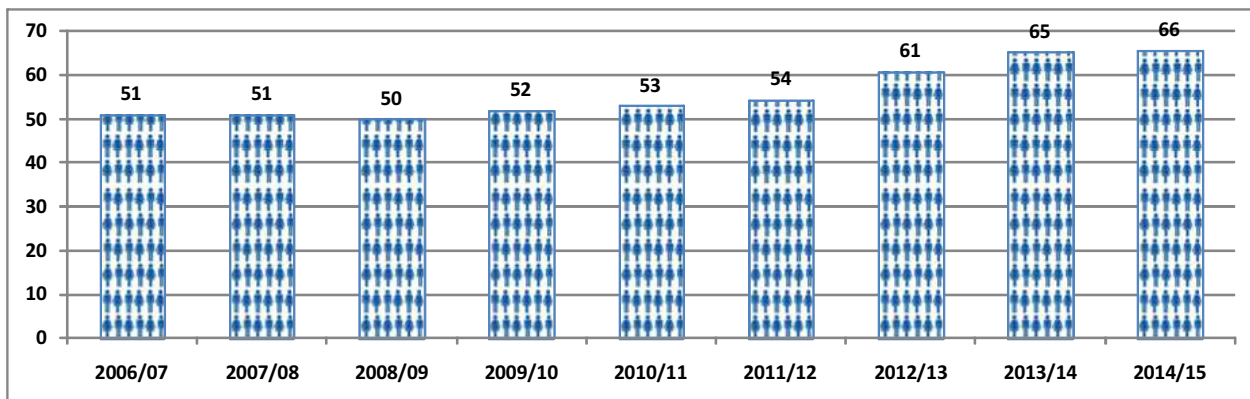
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD PERFORMANCE REPORT, 31ST OCTOBER 2014

Lancashire changed its integrated children's system from ISSIS to LCS in February 2014; this has an ongoing impact on the ability to report accurate performance, as such some information given below is subject to change.

ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND CARE LEAVERS

NUMBER OF CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

- As at the end of October 2014, there are **1,621** children looked after in Lancashire.
- For every **10,000** children and young people in Lancashire, **66** are currently looked after.
- The number of children looked after in Lancashire had risen each month until March 2014. After a period of 6 months around the same level, the number has risen again in September.
- There are **more** children looked after in Lancashire than in England where 60 out of 10,000 are currently looked after.
- There are **less** children looked after in Lancashire than the North West (81 out of 10,000) and slightly less than in Lancashire's statistical neighbours (67.5 out of 10,000).



COMMENTS:

- ❖ Lancashire's number of children looked after has recently increased in September and continued to remain stable into October after big increases over the last two years.
- ❖ Lancashire's number of children looked after is lower than that of Lancashire's statistical neighbours and lower than the average of other North West local authorities

SERVICE ACTIVITY

Service activity helps to explain the rise in the number of children looked after in Lancashire:

- The contact centre has received less referrals than in previous years, although more contacts.
- A referral is information received regarding a child that is deemed to require social care involvement. A contact is information received that doesn't lead to a referral for a child.
- The social work teams have moved from initial and core assessments to a new single assessment from 1st April 2014.



	Previous Performance				Current Performance
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Contacts <i>per month</i>	998	1284	1525	750	3513
Referrals <i>per month</i>	1389	1175	1370	1679	883
Initial Assessments	10071	9891	11288	11865	--
Core Assessments	4246	5019	5901	5724	--
Single Assessment <i>per month</i>	--	--	--	--	1009

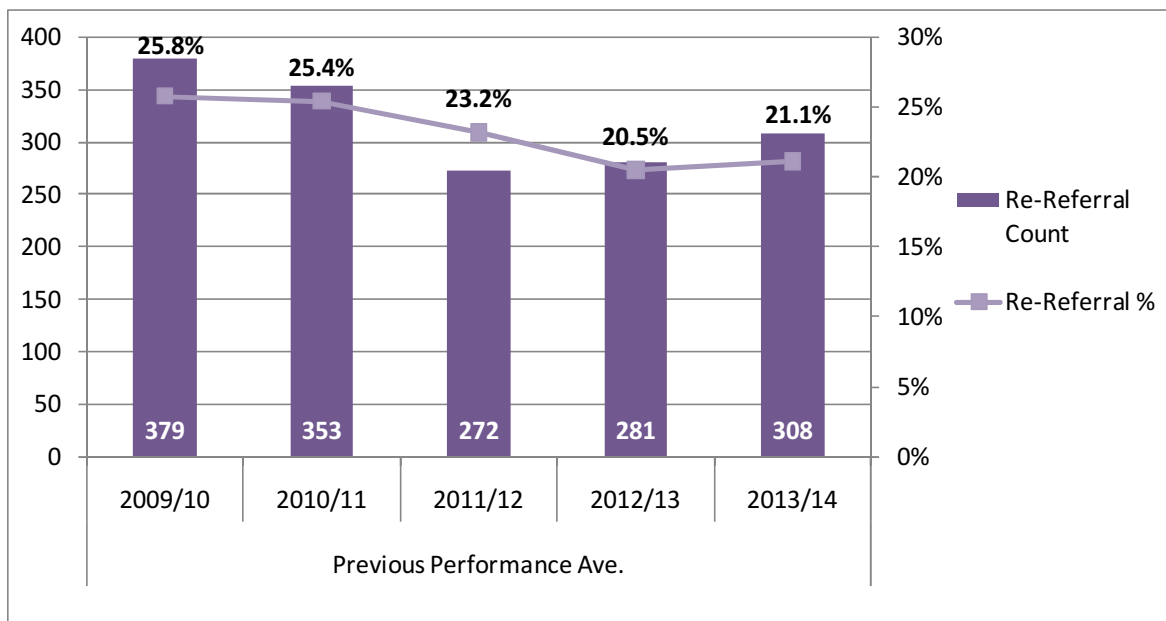
COMMENTS:

- ❖ Since the introduction of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in April 2013, a large number of contacts from the Police have been passed to MASH rather than going through Care Connect.
- ❖ From 1st April 2014, contacts were counted differently hence the number of contacts are not comparable to previous years. Monthly contacts seem very high as all contacts based on open cases are also included, which wasn't previously the case.
- ❖ From 1st April 2014 initial and core assessments were discontinued and the new single assessment was introduced. The first 7 months of data show an average of 1009 assessments being started per month.

RE-REFERRAL RATE

A number of referrals that the authority receives are re-referrals; that is a child or young person has been referred to Children's Social Care once and is being referred again.

- Re-referral rates have historically declined which was considered good performance
- Average re-referral rate for 2013/14 increased slightly to 21 re-referrals out of each 100 referrals received



COMMENTS:


- ❖ The re-referral rate has been calculated differently since LCS went live.
- ❖ The re-referrals rate for referrals that lead to a single assessment is 16.3% as at the end of October 2014, a decrease on previous months.
- ❖ Re-referral rates have stayed below 20% for the past 4 months.

STABILITY OF PLACEMENTS OF CLA: NUMBER OF MOVES

How many children looked after moved placement twice during the past year:



- Out of 100 children looked after, Lancashire targets to have less than 10 children looked after having to move twice or more during the year.
- Latest information for October 2014 shows that **6** out of 100 children looked after have moved twice or more which is good performance and within the target.
- This is also an improvement on last year when 9 out of 100 children looked after had to move twice or more during the year.

Previous Performance		Current Performance	Target	Performance Direction?
2012/13	2013/14	2014/15		
8.7%	7.8%	5.8%	9.5%	
↘	↘	↘	✓	

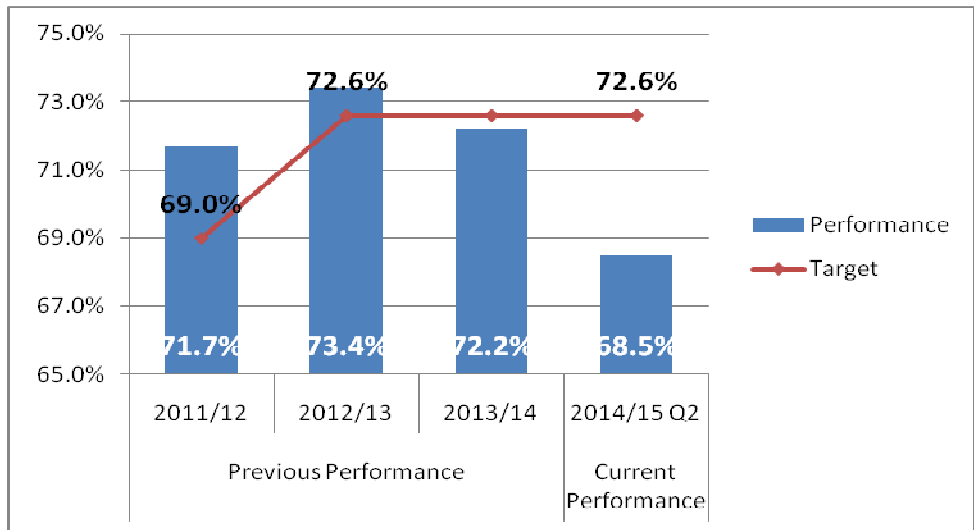
COMMENTS:

- ❖ Lancashire has carried out good placement stability work through research projects and improved processes, which has resulted in better performance and improved stability.
- ❖ Fewer children than ever have more than 2 placement moves.
- ❖ Young people are happy that this is less than last year however they would like to see more research and reasons into what causes placement moves.
- ❖ Young people are happy that the number has reduced but feel that placements could be better researched to suit the needs of the young person which may reduce moves.

STABILITY OF PLACEMENTS OF CLA: LENGTH OF PLACEMENTS

How many children looked after have been in their current placement for at least 2 years:

- Out of 100 children looked after, Lancashire targets to have more than 72 children looked after settled at least two years in their current placement.
- October 2014 information shows that **69** out of 100 children looked are in a long and stable placement, which is good performance, but below our target.
- Current performance is slightly lower than last year's performance.



COMMENTS:

- ❖ Lancashire has carried out good work on placement stability through research projects and improved processes.
- ❖ This has resulted in better performance and improved stability for children looked after.
- ❖ However, recently performance has declined slightly and remains below the target of 72.6%.

CHILDREN MISSING FROM CARE

Lancashire County Council and its partners are changing processes for children missing from care, and there will be a new protocol whereby young people are not reported missing straight away in case they are just running late. Also the Police will now be able to change missing to absent on the young person's record.

Lancashire County Council works with multiple agencies including Lancashire Police, to monitor the levels of children missing from care and this year's information is below:

	2013/14	2014/15 Q1	2014/15 Q2
Lancashire CLA missing	355	62	49
Number CLA from other LAs missing	355	101	111
Other Children known to Lancashire CSC	408	232	187
Other Children Missing	1338	276	253
Children Missing with Lancashire boundaries	2456	671	600

COMMENT:

- ❖ In Lancashire, around **3** out of 100 children looked after went missing during quarter two (July to September 2014), which is lower than in previous quarters.
- ❖ Over the whole year, **22** out of 100 children looked after are reported missing (2013/14)
- ❖ The numbers represent the number of children looked after, and some children have multiple instances of going missing, an average of 1½ missing episodes per child.
- ❖ LINX have welcomed the changing protocols for children missing and feel this is good, however are worried about those individuals that do actually go missing.

OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER



Outcomes data from education is displayed by academic year rather than financial year.



Educational Attainment of Children Looked After

The key indicator used to measure attainment is the number of children and young people who get 5 GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and Maths:

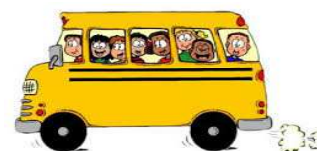
- Performance for 2012/13 has been published and performance remains at 12.9% as it was in 2011/12 which was higher than the previous year.
- CLA attainment remains significantly lower than attainment for all children and young people of whom **6** out of 10 achieve 5 GCSEs at A*-C

	Previous Performance		Current Performance	Target	Performance Direction?
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13		
Lancs	11.9%	12.9%	12.9%	18.0%	
	↘	↗	↗	✘	
England	13.6%	15.0%	15.3%	Higher	

COMMENT:

- ❖ In Lancashire, attainment at GCSE among the children looked after remained stable in 2012/13, but remains below performance of 18.6% from 2009/10.
- ❖ Across England, just over **15** per 100 children looked after achieved 5 A*-C, slightly more than Lancashire's **13** per 100.
- ❖ Attainment by children looked after remains someway behind their peers with **6** out of 10 children and young people achieving 5 GCSEs at grades A* to C inc. English and Maths.
- ❖ The young people were shocked at these statistics and suggested the following reasons as to why this may be:
 - CLA are pulled out of lessons by social workers. Meetings may also run over and as such CLA are missing too much time from their lessons. One young person missed an exam due to this and did not receive an apology which upset them.
 - The young people suggested that if staff have to visit them whilst in school, to plan better in terms of meeting the young person on a break or at lunch time. It was also suggested that it may better suit the young person better to be removed from certain lessons if they are confident or feel that they're ahead within the lesson.
- ❖ *Figures are still awaiting validation for 2013/14. An update on performance for 2013/14 will be provided in the next report.*

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL BY CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER



Attendance at school is expressed as a percentage of all possible school sessions attended by all children looked after:

- Attendance in primary school was slightly below target with all children looked after only missing **5** out of every 100 sessions in school
- Attendance in secondary school was slightly worse than last year, with all children looked after missing **8** out of every 100 sessions possible in school. There are two sessions possible each school day; a morning session and an afternoon session. If a child is absent for a lesson in either they are deemed as absent.

	Previous Performance		Current Performance	Target	Performance Direction?
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13		
Primary	96.3%	96.2%	95.0%	96.0%	☹️
	↗️	↘️	↘️	✘	
Secondary	92.5%	94.3%	92.0%	96.0%	☹️
	↘️	↗️	↘️	✘	

COMMENTS:

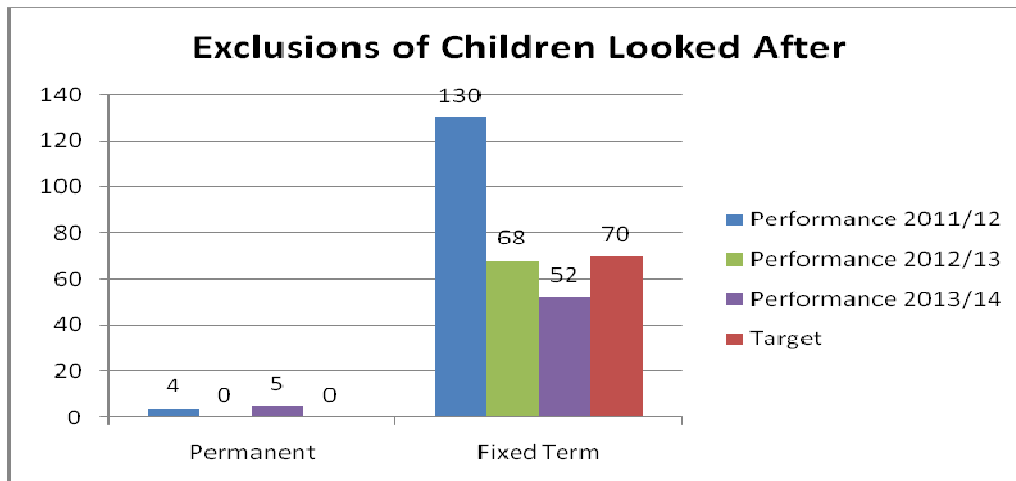
- ❖ Young people would like to know more about why young people are missing school and what factors are impacting on their ability to attend school?
- ❖ Young people feel that they should be able to choose what they do at school, for example, completing exams or doing practical courses and perhaps going to college earlier than usual to start these courses.
- ❖ Young people believe CLA could be marked as absent from a lesson if they are attending a CLA meeting instead, which is not necessarily the young person's fault. If the young person does not attend for the morning/afternoon, this would be classed as an absent, but potentially authorised, session.
- ❖ Young people feel that sometimes young people withdraw themselves from lessons if they are not able to cope and speak to their designated teacher or someone they feel comfortable talking to.
- ❖ 2013/14 information is anticipated to become available in December 2014 and as such updated statistics will be provided within the next report.

EXCLUSIONS FROM SCHOOL OF CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

Exclusions from school are included as a pure number of children looked after either permanently excluded or on fixed term exclusion:

- In the last year there were 5 permanent exclusions of children looked after, an increase from 0 the previous year.
- In the last year there were 52 fixed term exclusions of children looked after, down from 68 the previous year.
- The number of fixed term exclusions has fallen again and is well within the targets set by the Corporate Parenting Board. However, there were a number of permanent exclusions within

the last year which means, unlike last year, the target of zero permanent exclusions has not been met.



COMMENTS:

- ❖ Young people would like there to be more research into the reasons for fixed term exclusions. Are schools aware of other factors in the young persons' lives that may be affecting their behaviour at school? If so, are schools offering the right support for those young people?

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER IN YOUNG OFFENDER INSTITUTIONS OR SECURE UNITS

- There are a small number of children looked after placed in young offender institutions or secure units, 2 as at 31st October 2014.
- Just under **2** out of **100** children looked after are involved with the youth offending teams, while **1** out of **1000** children and young people are involved with youth offending teams.
- Children looked after are fifteen times more likely to be involved with youth offending teams.

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER WITH AN UP-TO-DATE HEALTH AND DENTAL ASSESSMENTS

- **67** out of 100 children looked after have an up-to-date health assessment (October 2014)
- This is a lower level of up-to-date health assessments than in the previous year.
- **78** out of 100 children looked after have an up-to-date dental assessment (October 2014)
- This is a slightly lower level of up-to-date dental assessments than in the previous year.

COMMENTS:

- ❖ Lancashire is investing in the improvement of oral health through the Smile 4 Life campaign which has been running since 2010.
- ❖ This has been nationally acclaimed for its successes in raising awareness and improving oral health.
- ❖ Lancashire is currently focusing on improving the timeliness of health assessments in partnership with health colleagues.



- ❖ Young people feel that the percentage of those with an up-to-date health assessment should be higher – somewhere between 90% and 95%.
- ❖ Young people feel that they should be given a choice as to whether they want a health assessment or not. Young people should only be made to have one if there is a cause for concern. Young people feel health assessments should be different for each individual. Also, if a young person has a check up at the doctors, this should be counted as a health assessment.
- ❖ Young people also feel that health assessments need to be confidential as in the past some LINX members have had foster carers in the assessments which can be uncomfortable when they are being asked personal questions.

ADOPTION AND PERMANENCE

ADOPTION ORDERS

- **227** children looked after have been adopted over the last 3 years.
- The number of adoptions increased to **83** children looked after being adopted in 2013/14, higher than in previous years.
- Provisional figures shows that **66** children looked after were adopted in the first 7 months of 2014/15, which indicates a higher number of adoptions than in the previous year.



SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDER (SGO) OR RESIDENCE ORDERS (RO)

Special guardianship orders or residence orders are an alternative to adoption, but still provide children looked after with a permanent home:

- **17** out of 100 children looked after were given a permanent home under special guardianship order during 2013/14, a big improvement on previous years
- **10** out of 100 children looked after were given a permanent home under residence order during 2013/14, a slight decrease on performance last year

COMMENTS:

- ❖ Overall more children looked after than ever are being provided with a permanent home under adoption, special guardianship order or residence orders; 134 in the year to date (2014/15) which represents considerable success.

OUTCOMES FOR CARE LEAVERS

CARE LEAVERS IN SUITABLE ACCOMMODATION (OLD NI 147)

Suitable accommodation is regarded as suitable if it provides safe, secure and affordable provision for young people. The percentage of care leavers at age 19 that are living in "suitable accommodation":

- In 2013/14, out of 100 care leavers, **82** are considered to be in suitable accommodation
- This is lower than two years ago, when **93** out of 100 were in suitable accommodation



COMMENTS:

- ❖ The number of care leavers in suitable accommodation has declined from a high level in 2010/11 to a lower level in recent years. This is below the target of **89** out of 100.
- ❖ Performance as at the end of September 2014 was 64.3%

CARE LEAVERS IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (OLD NI 148)

The percentage of care leavers at 19 who are engaged in education, training or employment:



- As at the end of 2013/14, **48** out of 100 care leavers were in education, training or employment on their 19th birthday.
- This is lower performance than in 2012/13 when **55** out of 100 care leavers were in education, training or employment in 2012/13.
- Nationally **85** out of 100 young people aged 16-24 are in education, training or employment (Sep 2013)

COMMENTS:

- ❖ Performance improved slightly in 2012/13, but dipped to low performance in 2013/14.
- ❖ Current performance for 2013/14 suggests that just under half of those leaving care since April 2013 were in education, training or employment, some way behind the target of **67** out of 100.
- ❖ Performance as at the end of September 2014 shows **32** out of 100 care leavers were in education, training or employment on their 19th birthday which was a further drop from end of June figure of **41** out of 100.
- ❖ Young people feel that this isn't good enough and more young people should be in education or training
- ❖ Young people feel that individuals, due to potentially poor school grades, need more apprenticeships and volunteering schemes to be accessible. Funding could be used as an early intervention to help young people with grades in the form of extra tuition.
- ❖ Young people feel more help could be given to help young people to find courses and employment. Furthermore, available funds in the form of college bursaries should be more accessible as not everyone is aware of what they are entitled to financially.

CARE LEAVERS AT UNIVERSITY

- In 2011/12 there were 25 care leavers at university
- In 2012/13 there were a record 37 care leavers studying at university around the country, including 22 first year students. There were 7 graduates in 2012/13.
- In 2013/14 there are 36 care leavers studying at university including 13 first year students.
- Of the previous year's 22 first year students; 15 progressed to the second year, 1 completed with a one year foundation degree, 2 returned to repeat the first year, and 4 left their course.
- There are currently 8 students in their final year, hoping to graduate in 2013/14.



COMMENTS:

- ❖ There is a good level of Care Leavers at University in each of the last two years showing that Leaving Care support is there for potential students.
- ❖ However there it is concerning that **2** in 10 first year students dropped out of university, and a further **1** in 10 repeated their first year. The decision to study at University must be an appropriate choice for the applicant and suitable students need to be well supported.
- ❖ Young people feel that these figures show good progress, but there should be many more care leavers going to university.
- ❖ Young people believe other CLA are not aware of the support and funding available to them. The extra provisions that are available could support more young people through university.
- ❖ Currently, the staying put policy applies to Lancashire "in-house" foster carers but discussions are encouraged to occur surrounding those looked after children placed with independent fostering agencies regarding the possibility of staying put.
- ❖ Young people also suggested that leaving care and starting university occurs at the same time and this can be a stressful time for the young people involved. Individuals may also be put off the idea of attending university as they may be worried about not having anywhere to live during the holidays.
- ❖ Information for those attending university in 2014/15 is currently being collated.

Children Looked After Strategy

2014- 17

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Introduction

This strategy sets out our approach to how we will look after and care for those children and young people who come into the care of Lancashire County Council. The strategy will demonstrate what actions need to be taken to ensure that outcomes for children and young people who are looked after, are improved and that they can go on to lead happy, independent and successful lives.

Lancashire County Council has already made a Pledge to children and young people. This has been developed in partnership with children and young people who are looked after and forms the basis of the how the Corporate Parenting Board oversees how we fulfil our responsibilities as a Corporate Parent. The Children Looked After Strategy and associated Action Plan will highlight our priorities and how we will achieve them.

The strategy will sit alongside the newly refreshed Children and Young People's Plan 2014- 17 which sets out a wide range of actions, including specific measures regarding children and young people who are looked after. The Sufficiency Strategy 2014- 17 has also been published, which sets out our Commissioning approach to how children who are looked after are placed and cared for.

The strategy will cover the following;

1. What children and young people say
2. Legislation
3. Sufficiency Strategy
4. Local Context
5. Our commitment as Corporate Parents and the role of the Corporate Parenting Board
6. The issues facing children and young people in and leaving care
7. Prevention and early help- ensuring that the most appropriate children and young people come into Local Authority Care
8. The Children and Young People's Plan 2014- 17 and how services will work together to improve outcomes for children and young people who are looked after
9. What needs to happen for children and young people who are looked after
10. How the Strategy and Action Plan will be delivered, monitored and evaluated

Vision

Lancashire County Council wants to provide outstanding opportunities for children and young people in our care. Lancashire County Council, as Corporate Parent, will do its

best to ensure that children and young people feel valued and loved with access to high quality placements and support so that young people grow up to be resilient and independent, feeling confident to fulfil their goals.

Strategy Aims and Objectives

The Children Looked After (CLA) strategy must continue to close the gap between the outcomes for children looked after and all children in Lancashire.

The strategy sets out how we will improve the outcomes for this group of children and young people and ensure that we fulfil our statutory requirements. An Action Plan will be produced alongside this strategy to identify what actions should be put in place to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Outcomes include;

- Providing a varied range of high quality placement choices that are judged to be 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.
- That children and young people receive their entitlement to statutory visits, are listened to and are seen alone.
- That young people continue to be safeguarded and protected and their concerns are responded to quickly and effectively.
- Consistent support from the same social worker.
- Attendance and attainment in education, employment or training is improved to be as good as their peers.
- Better engagement in the Pathway Planning process.
- Increased engagement with decision makers.
- Increased use of new schemes such as 'Staying Put'. (See separate policy)
- Ensuring that appropriate agencies and services (Children's Social Care, Fostering (internal and external), Adoption, Youth Offending Services, Inclusion and Disability Support Services, Residential Care Services and all commissioned projects working with CLA children and young people) work together effectively to reduce the number of times a young person 'tells their story' and ensures that there is continuity of care.

1. What children and young people say

Children and young people in our care have been increasingly engaged with Lancashire County Council. It is vital that young people are able to describe how they're feeling and what they need to make sure being looked after helps them to thrive. A Participation Strategy has been devised to;

- set out our commitment to implementing a common approach for the participation of children and young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of services and priorities
- to outline our vision to empower children and young people to become active citizens within their localities, the county and the country

<http://www.lancashirechildrenstrust.org.uk- Active Participation>

Barnardos have been commissioned to further develop the role of the Children in Care Council and the group, known as LINX, are actively involved in a number of activities and regular events. LINX have also been part of the review process for the Care Pledge which sits alongside this strategy. Through the Corporate Parenting Board, LINX have contributed to and debated a number of issues including education, children and young people who go missing and raising awareness of their profile.

LINX have been consulted throughout the development of this strategy. This includes attending the Corporate Parenting Board and speaking directly to children and young people in care.

Key messages from young people include;

- Having a consistent social worker who they know and trust
- To be included in decision making about their own lives
- Having access to support when they need it, especially after they've left care
- Having a place to live that they feel comfortable in
- Having financial security

In addition to LINX, a range of other projects are in place to ensure that children and young people are able to get their voices heard and to influence decisions that affect their lives.

Lancashire Children's Rights Service currently delivers Advocacy Services to and for young people leaving care on our behalf.

Since April 2011, Lancashire Children's Rights Service has been commissioned to deliver an advocacy service for CLA (including care leavers and those with disabilities who access services through a series of short breaks, for whom Lancashire has a responsibility of care).

Overall, the Service aims to promote the rights of children and young people looked after through the provision of effective and independent children's rights and advocacy services, and in accordance with the National Standards for the Provision of Children's Advocacy Services.

The service also involves an 'independent visitor' scheme which includes the recruitment, training and matching of volunteers to young people.

The views of care leavers are actively sought through Speak out Lancashire, which is a group of care leavers who were formed last year to ensure that young people are able to contribute and inform how support is delivered and where improvements can be made.

Barnardos has been commissioned to deliver the Children and Young People's participation commission, which includes facilitating the voice and influence of CLA, both formally and informally in the decisions that are made for them and about them. A strategic approach to participation has been developed to engage children and young people across all groups. This includes the use of training, formal meetings, informal groups, consultations and newsletters.

Children and young people who are Looked After have been actively engaged in a placement consultation to inform the Sufficiency Strategy. This has been undertaken by Barnardos. For the full document, please see the Sufficiency Strategy Appendices.

2. Legislation

- Children & Families Act 2014

Amongst its priorities, there is an aim of reducing the length of time taken to complete adoption placements with new families and to promote the increase in the number of adoptions. The Act also proposes further changes to improve the quality of care and the stability of placements for children and young people who are looked after either in foster care or in residential care. Additionally, there is a requirement on local authorities to have a 'Virtual School Head' who can have a positive impact on the educational achievement of looked after children.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

(See Appendix 2)

- SEND Reforms

As part of the Children and Families Act 2014, a number of key measures have also been introduced to improve outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Key measures include;

- Replacing SEN statements and learning difficulty assessments (for 16- to 25-year-olds) with a single, simpler 0-25 assessment process and Education, Health and Care Plan from 2014.
- Providing statutory protections comparable to those currently associated with a statement of SEN to up to 25 in further education - instead of it being cut off at 16.
- Requiring local authorities to publish a local offer showing the support available to disabled children and young people and those with SEN, and their families.
- Giving parents or young people with Education, Health and Care plans the right to a personal budget for their support.

- Introducing mediation for disputes and a new trial, giving children the right to appeal if they are unhappy with their support.

- **Public Law Outline (PLO)**

Reforms introduced in 2013 should result in reducing delays with applications for care and adoptions. These reforms are part of a number of changes being made under the Family Justice Review designed to improve the family courts system. <http://www.justice.gov.uk/protecting-the-vulnerable/care-proceedings-reform>

- **OfSTED Single Inspection Framework**

The new Framework was implemented in October 2013 and includes children looked after and care leavers. A new key judgement 'The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence' sets out 13 key principles and 27 inspection criteria. The new framework focuses on the effectiveness of partnership working between services inside the County Council such as education, public health, youth justice and legal services and those key external agencies such as the Police, Health and the third sector. Inspection teams will spend more of their time directly meeting with and listening to children and young people being cared for by the County Council. <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-and-evaluation-schedule-for-inspection-of-services-for-children-need-of-help-and-protectio>

- **Care Leavers Strategy**

The guidance was issued by the Department for Education in October 2013. It sets out their expectations and principles in relation to what care leavers should expect. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-leaver-strategy>
A Leaving Care Strategy has been written in line with the new principles and this has been reviewed by LINX.

- **Children Missing**

The Government issued new statutory guidance in January 2014 on children who run away or go missing from home or care. Lancashire County Council's existing Strategy and Protocol is due to be refreshed.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care>

- **Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010.**

The guidance has been issued in relation to children who are looked after and in contact with Youth Justice Services. This has been issued following changes in the Youth Remand Framework. The changes came in December 2012 as a result of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPOA), which came

into effect in April 2013. These Regulations modified the Care Planning Regulations to take into account the LASPOA. The Review covers Local Authorities, (Children's Social Care) and YOT areas of responsibilities,

For Further information, refer to Appendix 3

3. Sufficiency Duty

The Sufficiency Duty (as laid down in Section 22G of the Children Act 1989) requires the local authority to have regard to the benefit of having a number of accommodation providers in their area and a range of accommodation capable of meeting different needs of children looked after. Access to a range of accommodation enables the local authority make the most appropriate placements. Ensuring that there is a wide range of appropriate accommodation is a vital element of improving outcomes for children who are looked after. Factors such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, learning difficulties and mental health issues also influence the accommodation needs of the young person. Young people must be able to exercise some preference in choosing their accommodation to help them feel that they have ownership of the leaving care process.

The local authority must take the following into consideration when deciding the most appropriate placement:

- Allowing the child to live near his/ her home
- Not disrupting the child's education or training
- Enabling the child and a looked after sibling/s to live together
- Meeting the particular needs of disabled children and those with special educational needs
- Providing accommodation within the local authority's area, unless that is not reasonable practicable

The effectiveness and appropriateness of a child's placement is supported by effective assessment, planning, placement finding, emotional health and wellbeing support and identifying and reviewing individual goals and achievements.

The Sufficiency Duty applies to all children who are looked after under the 1989 Children Act. However, it is also imperative for the local authority and its partners to seek to reduce the need for children to come into or stay in care through effective prevention, early help and family support. There will, unfortunately, always be some children who cannot safely remain or return home and research shows that adoption or other permanence arrangements often promote the best outcomes for children.

The Sufficiency Strategy therefore seeks to improve outcomes for children and young people during prevention, protection and permanence. **It can be found here. [Insert hyperlink.](#)**

4. Local Context

There is a significant amount of performance data relating to children who are looked after. It is a rapidly changing picture across Lancashire. For an in depth analysis, the Sufficiency Strategy has a good range of local and district information, alongside informative analysis. It includes a breakdown by district, protected equality characteristics as well as comparisons against our statistical neighbours. The JSNA can also be found below which gives a good picture of the needs of children and young people.

[CYP JSNA](#)

5. Corporate Parenting

Lancashire County Council is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities as a Corporate Parent and is accountable for discharging its parental responsibilities towards children and young people in and leaving care. As an effective Corporate Parent, we will do what any good parent would do for their child to help them reach their potential throughout life. We will work in partnership with agencies such as Health, District Councils, the Police and Third Sector organisations who play a vital role in helping children and young people to reach their goals. Social Workers, Foster Carers, Designated Teachers and Nurses, alongside other frontline professionals, working with children and young people who are looked after, are committed to working effectively and collaboratively to achieve our ambitions in ensuring that children and young people are safe and are able to fulfil their aspirations.

Corporate Parenting Board

The Corporate Parenting Board has been established to ensure that Lancashire County Council, and its partners, commit to excellent standards of Corporate Parenting. The Board also takes on the responsibility to make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People.

The Board meets on a regular basis and states the following priorities;

1. To set high expectations and stable relationships for all children in care.
2. To seek improved long term outcomes for children in care and their families – for their happiness; well-being; educational success; and future prospects.
3. To make sure that the voice of the child and young person in care influences both policy and the services that they receive, and that young people are engaged with any action intended to develop and improve services or to recruit key staff members.
4. To oversee and monitor the key performance indicators for the health, well-being and education of looked after children.

5. To consider the outcomes of regulatory visits and inspection reports on provision for children in care and to receive regular reports on:
 - the work of the adoption and fostering services;
 - work experience schemes;
 - provision for leaving care, housing and training for care leavers; and
 - Work with those in the Secure Estate.
6. To ensure that relevant key plans, strategies and associated resources identify and make explicit the contribution that they make to targets agreed for improvement.
7. To celebrate the achievements of children looked after and their carers.
8. To develop an informed view of County Council provision and services through a programme of well planned visits and feedback from Board members.
9. To ensure that children looked after by the local authority are offered the protection of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 2 September 1990.
10. To establish and maintain specific task groups as necessary to make recommendations to it.

For further information about the Corporate Parenting Board, please follow the link.

<http://lccintranet2/corporate/web/view.asp?siteid=4183&pageid=17628&e=e>

The Board will review the Action Plan associated with this strategy.

6. Needs of Children Looked After

Society and how we interact with services and each other is changing rapidly. We will ensure that we are fully up to date with the latest developments and research, using the most effective approaches to achieve excellent outcomes for children and young people who are looked after. Best practice will be shared and become standard practice. We will strive for continuous improvement and excellence of service.

Through our ongoing research, we have a wide range of data and information that can inform practice and service development.

The Social Research Unit analysis of a sample number of children who became looked after in Lancashire during 2012 found that:

- 60% had been recently ill-treated
- 39% had experienced some form of neglect
- 18% had been subjected to physical harm
- 39% were not achieving their potential

- 36% had special educational needs
- 32% were regularly missing school
- 46% of 12 – 17 year olds were misusing drugs and alcohol
- 11% were explicitly described as stressed

Consultation with Children's Social Care staff, carried out by Oxford Brookes University in early 2014, raised concerns about the increased complexity of needs of children and young people becoming looked after, including; sexualised behaviour, social media issues, emotional neglect, aggression, offending and unresolved relationship issues. In addition, further consultation also identified; sexual exploitation, sexual offender/ registered sex offenders, those who are in danger of becoming a perpetrator and sexually abused younger children; self harmers with suicidal tendencies; arson; suicide risk and pregnancy. It was felt to be challenging to find placements to support these specific needs. In addition, it can be particularly challenging when searching for appropriate placements for young people aged 16 and 17.

In relation to children who are currently looked after; a range of provision is in place. Lancashire County Council has a wide range of accommodation to offer children and young people and permanence is a high priority. Through the provisions laid out in the Sufficiency Strategy, a range of targets have been put in place to ensure that children and young people are able to be cared for in high quality and appropriate accommodation. (See Sufficiency Strategy)

Inspection Reports

- Adoption Services were inspected in June 2011 and was rated 'good'
- Fostering Services were inspected in November 2011 and was rated 'outstanding'.
- 83% of residential care homes (15 out of 18) were rated as 'good' or 'outstanding'.
- Safeguarding and Children Looked After Services were inspected in January 2012 and received an overall grading of 'good' for both. A post inspection plan was drawn up following the inspection and this has been fully implemented.

7.Prevention and Early Help

A wide range of preventative services have been established to try and reduce the number of children and young people coming into care. What is fundamentally important is that the children and young people, who do come into care, are the most appropriate and who need specialised support.

A Prevention and Early Help Strategy has been devised and its vision for Lancashire is to secure a county-wide approach within which all partners coordinate, prioritise and maximise their collective efforts to enable children, young people and families to achieve success, resist stress, manage change and uncertainty and make safe decisions about their future.

For further information about the Prevention and Early Help Strategy, [Prevention and Early Help](#)

8.Children and Young People's Plan 2014-17

The new Plan re-emphasises the vision of what all organisations and partnerships would like to achieve in delivering positive outcomes for Lancashire's children and young people. The rise in demand for children's services and further budget restrictions presents two significant challenges to the County Council and its partners and how we deliver our services.

Key outcomes and measures

In Lancashire, we want all children and young people to:

- Feel safe
- Do well
- Be happy
- Be healthy
- Be listened to

We also recognise that in many instances children, young people and families will engage with universal services and successfully achieve these outcomes and are *thriving*.

The key focus for the Plan is those families that may need some additional support, those families that are, for whatever reason, *just coping* or who are *struggling to cope*. We want to ensure that this additional support enables them to thrive and build towards the aspirations that we should expect for all children and young people.

There are several actions within the Plan which directly relate to Children Looked After. These actions will be monitored by the Corporate Parenting Board and the Children and Young People's Partnership Board.

Actions in the Plan which specifically link to this strategy include:

Outcome 1 – To Feel Safe

- We will develop and deliver integrated services so that children and young people receive effective and timely early help and protection.
- We will ensure that the right children and young people become looked after and manage the increase in demand whilst delivering safe child protection.

Outcome 2 - To do Well

- We will ensure that young people leaving care receive the support they need to do well in education, employment or training.
- We will ensure that support is available for vulnerable children and young people so that they are able to perform well in education.

- We will better understand child poverty in Lancashire and target resources and support to those in most need. (See Child Poverty Strategy)

Outcome 3 - To be Happy

- We will ensure that children and young people wherever possible will live at home with their families and where this is not possible we will find them permanent homes and families without unnecessary delay and with minimum disruption.
- We will ensure the social and emotional wellbeing of vulnerable children

Outcome 4- To be Healthy

- We will ensure that children and young people are able to access a range of quality sports activities

Outcome 5 – To be Listened to

- We will ensure that the way we provide support to children and young people is driven by what they tell us.
- We will ensure that children and young people are listened to, practice is focused on their needs and experiences and influenced by their wishes and feelings or, where they cannot represent their view themselves, that these are advocated for upon their behalf.
- We will embed the principle of 'tell us once' across all services.

The participation of children and young people is promoted via the Active Participation Strategy, endorsed by the Children and Young People's Trust Board. For further information, please follow the link; [Active Participation Strategy](#)

For further information, see the new Children and Young People's Plan 2014- 17. <http://www.lancashirechildrenstrust.org.uk/CYPPlan/>

9. Service Provision

It is imperative that all agencies work together effectively to reduce the number of times a young person 'tells their story'.

Below is a breakdown of what Lancashire County Council seeks to achieve. Further details of the Action Plan, which includes measures, expected outcomes and responsible services is attached.

**Our Goals for all Children Looked After and Leaving Care
(The Action Plan will incorporate all actions stated below and how they can be achieved)**

The Perfect Placement

The Sufficiency Strategy outlines how Lancashire County Council will commission, manage and monitor placements to ensure that the best quality and most appropriate accommodation is provided to children and young people.

Placement matching is a complex process and one that we must get right.

We will ensure that children and young people will be actively involved in the recruitment and selection of commissioned projects. They will be participants in the process, from initial marking through to recruitment, selection and review. This will be done in conjunction with the Children in Care Council (LINX) and Lancashire Children's Rights.

Young Inspectors will form part of a team to evaluate practice within existing providers. It is envisaged that the Young Inspectors will widen their practice to include a wide range of internal and external providers, including external fostering.

Actions

- We will endeavour to ensure that children and young people will have a varied choice of placement. (As outlined in the Sufficiency Strategy).
- We will endeavour to ensure that children and young people are able to visit accommodation prior to decision making.
- Children and young people will be well supported by a consistent social worker.

For thorough information on how this will be undertaken, please see the Sufficiency Strategy. (Insert hyperlink)

Education

The Virtual School

The Virtual School for Children Looked After (CLA) forms part of the Alternative and Complementary Education and Residential Service (ACERS).

There are currently approximately 1500 children in care who are the responsibility of Lancashire County Council. Of these, around 900 are educated in Lancashire's schools. 25 nursery, 484 primary, 84 secondary, 31 special and 14 short stay schools within Lancashire.

Approximately 250 children are educated in schools in other Authorities. Lancashire County Council also has educational responsibilities for children who are resident in and / or educated in Lancashire and are looked after by other local authorities and these will be included within the longer term virtual school developments.

The Virtual School plays a strategic role in ensuring the corporate parenting responsibilities of the Local Authority with regard to the education of CLA are met.

The team offers support and advice to a range of professionals working with CLA and supports children through personal visits to schools.

The overall aim of the service is to improve educational outcomes and enhance personal and social development in order to ensure that our children, who are looked after, have better life chances.

Core Work of the Virtual School

1. To promote the educational achievement of;
 - children who are looked after within Lancashire
 - children who are looked after but are the responsibility of other Local Authorities
2. To provide training for Designated Teachers, Social Workers and Carers.

Actions

- Designated teachers will make themselves known to CLA as soon as possible.
- Designated teachers will support CLA consistently throughout their school life, supporting them as required.

Health

We will support all those who care for and work directly with our CYP to promote healthy lifestyles through effective role modelling.

Actions

- Appropriate information, support and training will be provided in high risk areas such as smoking, sexual health and substance misuse.
- The importance of dental health and provision will be promoted via CLA nurses and carers.
- Health needs will be incorporated into care planning. Care Plans will actively involve health partners for development and review.
- Health training will be extended to include CLA nurses to support training to foster carers and residential settings.
- Individual health needs will be assessed and addressed swiftly. Analysis of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire is one method that will be used to check that health support is provided to CYP.
- Strategies will be maintained that prevent unhealthy activities such as smoking,

alcohol and substance misuse and domestic abuse.

Actions have been identified by the Health and Wellbeing Board on all of the above priorities and also include Emotional Health and Wellbeing and a range of other priorities outlined in the Children and Young People's Plan. For further information, please see the Action Plan for the Health and Well Being Board.

➤ Healthcare Assessments

- Assure confidentiality
- Show young people what has been written in the assessment
- Provide a variety of ways to undertake the assessment. (Not all young people feel it is necessary to attend an appointment).
- Provide consistent CLA nursing
- *SCAYT+* (Supporting Carers and Young People Together) is a therapeutically based team operating across Lancashire County Council consisting of Clinical Psychologists, Emotional Health Workers and Social Workers. It is a targeted early access service dedicated to addressing the social, psychological and emotional needs of children who are looked after and adopted, which will have an impact on placement stability and other outcomes for our CLA and adopted children.

Action

- Regular completion of the My Goals questionnaire as part of ongoing intervention with children and young people. Information to be recorded on LCS.

Positive Activities

Actions

- The number of CLA accessing activities will be monitored to ensure that they have access to a wide range of positive activities. Activities should provide opportunities for CLA to develop friendships, increase confidence, self esteem, confidence and well being.
- The Personal Education Plan Support Allowance (PEPSA) will be used to provide for any identified need through additional activities which will enhance progress and development.
- An annual celebration event will take place to recognise and promote the excellent progress made by children and young people who are looked after. This

event will organised with input from LINX.

- Carers will be fully aware of their role in ensuring CYP engage positively in healthy activities.
- Summer activities programme (coordinated by the Children and Young People's Trust) will be advertised to all residential children's homes and internal and external fostering placements.
- A Lancashire pack will be devised to promote all relevant support groups/ opportunities available to CLA. This will include LINX (Barnardos), Children's Rights Service (Children's Society), Lancashire Youth Council and Young People's Centres and YPS support groups.
- The pack will be sent directly to all residential children's homes, internal/ external fostering and adoption.

Participation and Engagement

- Children and young people who are looked after will have the opportunity to participate in LINX, our Children in Care Council, supported by Barnardos.
- LINX will engage with and influence Senior Managers and Elected Members to help make decisions affecting their lives. This will include planning how the Corporate Parenting Board budget will be allocated and spent.
- We will continue to provide apprenticeships through LINX to develop their work skills and for children and young people to be involved in the development of LINX.

Leaving Care

Children and Young People will be fully prepared for adulthood. For those moving to independence, Lancashire County Council will endeavour to provide a range of good quality housing and continued support as necessary. This priority forms part of Lancashire's Sufficiency Duty 2014.

Actions

- A Leaving Care Guide will be published by Lancashire County Council to prepare young people for independence.
- A Leaving Care Policy will be published as part of the CLA documentation.
- All CLA will be given the opportunity to attain accreditation through the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Course (CoPE).
- A mentor will be offered to all care leavers.

- Continue to provide a 'setting up home' allowance.
- Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) will routinely check that CYP leaving care are being equipped with the necessary skills to cope. A skills checklist will be incorporated into the Pathway Plan.
- We aim to ensure that social workers stay with CYP and their families. Where this isn't possible, we will reduce the number of social work transitions.
- Where a child or young person is also subject to statutory involvement from the youth justice service and children's social care; a decision will be taken on an individual basis to determine who will undertake primary responsibility for that young person.
- Plans will be agreed with CYP (Care, Pathway and Sentence Plans) and their families (Working Together with Families). They will be individually tailored to meet their needs with agreed timescales and set objectives. Social workers will work with children and young people to explain the reasons why they need a plan and help them to understand what is contained within their plan.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Corporate Parenting Board will monitor and review the Action Plan associated with this strategy on a quarterly basis. This group will also oversee the monitoring of the new Children and Young People's Plan which has specific actions relating to Children Looked After. Children's Social Care will manage the target setting and ensure that all relevant services are aware of how they will contribute to the achievement of these targets

The Children in Care Council (LINX) will also play an important role in reviewing progress of this Action Plan to ensure that Children Looked After experience positive changes in the services that are being provided to them.

In addition to these groups, regular data gathering and performance information has assumed greater priority. Through the JSNA data, a number of key CLA indicators are monitored and performance data is produced every month, with reports being prepared for the LINX group and Corporate Parenting Board meetings.



Leaving Care Strategy

2014- 17

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1. Introduction

Lancashire County Council strives to ensure that all young people leaving care are provided with the very best support to ensure a smooth transition into adulthood and independent living. All young people leaving care will be provided with the necessary support and skills to thrive as adults once they leave our care. This will include children and young people leaving residential or foster care and the small number of young people looked after and cared for by their parents.

This strategy links to the priorities set out in the new Children and Young People's Plan 2014- 17 which seeks to improve outcomes for all children and young people.

This strategy links to;

- The Children Looked After Strategy 2014- 17 which clearly states our aspirations for children and young people.
- The Sufficiency Strategy which is focused on developing placement choice and services for CLA and Care Leavers.

Detailed actions have been identified throughout the strategy, particularly in relation to the Key Priorities section. These actions have been based on new Government recommendations, in addition to feedback presented by young people who recently attended a Care Leavers event. Their suggestions were mature and insightful and have been attached as an appendix. Actions within the Strategy will also directly contribute to improving outcomes specified in the Children and Young People's Plan 2014- 17.

The Strategy will be used to ensure progress is monitored and evaluated on an annual basis and the County Council and its partners can be held to account. Our Corporate Pledge will be a key part of this evaluation.

A key feature of the strategy will be the participation and engagement of children and young people. Children and young people's wishes and feelings will be gathered on an individual basis and through LINX (our Children in Care Council). The Corporate Parenting Board and LINX will be actively involved in the monitoring and progress of this action plan.

2. Leaving Care Service Values

- The quality of the planning and preparation for independence and the after care provided will profoundly affect the rest of a young person's life.
- Young people's transition from childhood to adulthood is a gradual process. Young people leaving care should receive positive preparation and support so that they are enabled to participate fully as active citizens once they reach adulthood. Significant attention should always be given to preparing and implementing Pathway Plans with young people.
- All preparations for leaving care and throughout after care, must consider ethnic, linguistic and cultural background, language needs and any additional support that may be required in relation to religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender.
- Care leavers with special educational needs or disabilities will be fully supported to ensure that the above principles are applied equally to them.
- Young people will play a full and active part in decision making and will be encouraged to fully participate in decisions that affect them.

3. Strategy Aims and Objective

The key objectives of the Leaving Care Strategy are as follows;

- Provide placement choice from the outset of the care experience.
- Stable placements, continuity of carers and the maintenance of positive relationships.
- Look after young people until they are prepared and ready to leave care.
- Where appropriate, promote and maintain relationships with carers and families, after young people leave care.
- Prepare young people on an ongoing basis and as soon as appropriate in preparation for independence.
- Enable young people leaving care to fulfil their potential in education, training and employment.
- Ensure young people leaving care have access to a choice of independent and semi independent accommodation and the support and skills to maintain themselves in their accommodation.
- Ensure there is a contingency plan to support care leavers in the event of a crisis.
- Provide ongoing personal support via personal advisors, Social Workers, carers and mentors.
- Support young people to access benefits when necessary.
- Fully involve young people in their assessments, planning, review and decision-making for leaving care.

4. Who are young people leaving care?

Leaving Care legislation identifies four distinct categories for young people leaving, or who have left the care of Lancashire County Council.

These broadly, are as follows;

- Eligible children are those aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and are still looked after.
- Relevant children are those who are aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the aged of 14 and have left care following their 16th birthday.
- Former relevant children are aged 18- 21 who have been eligible and/ or relevant children. If at 21, the young person is still being supported by the authority with education or training; he or she remains a former relevant child until the end of the agreed programme of education and/ or training, even if that exceeds the age of 21.
- Qualifying children are any children who are aged 21 or below and cease to be looked after in other settings (education/ health) or are privately fostered after the age of 16. This includes young people leaving care after 16 but not qualifying as eligible children.

Lancashire County Council has differing duties and powers in relation to each status, but all are entitled to expert advice and assessment of needs and support.

5. Legislation

1. Care Leavers Strategy 2013

New guidance was issued by the Department for Education in October 2013. It sets out their expectations and principles in relation to what care leavers should expect at this critical part of their lives. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-leaver-strategy>

2. Children Leaving Care Act

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 was introduced in England and Wales in October 2001.

To meet these aims, the key responsibilities are:

- A duty to assist YP until they are 21, or up to the age of 24 if they are in approved programmes of education or training
- A duty to assess and meet the needs of young people in and leaving care
- Pathway Planning
- Financial support
- Maintenance in suitable accommodation and
- A duty to keep in touch by the responsible authority.

6. How well are we doing?

In the first nine months of 2013/14, 84% of young people leaving care were considered to be in suitable accommodation. This is lower than two years ago, when the figure was 93% but it is still below the target of 89%.

Performance

In addition to the actions identified in the Children and Young People's Plan and in the accompanying action plan, Lancashire County Council is also obliged to gather information based on the National Performance Indicators;

- NI 147 Care Leavers in suitable accommodation
- NI 148 Care Leavers in education, employment and training

For NI 147, care leavers in suitable accommodation aged 19, is currently 71.6% compared to 2013 which showed an overall performance of 88%.

For NI 148, care leavers in EET aged 19 is currently 32.5%, compared to the overall performance in 2011 was at 51.6%. The previous year, neither of the PIs met the target set.

Care Leavers attending university has also increased. In 2011/12- 25 care leavers attended university. This has risen to 37 in 2012/13 and 36 in 2013/14.

The number of care leavers with a Pathway Plan at age 19, is currently standing at 89.2%. Ensuring that all care leavers have a Pathway Plan in place has been highlighted as a priority.

Lancashire County Council was successful in securing funding through the Home Offices' Vulnerable and Disengaged Young People's Fund to help address the need for increased support to care leavers. It includes the extended remit of the existing ACERS Outreach Service through the appointment of a Care Leavers Outreach Coordinator.

The project offers support, over and above that being offered through Personal Advisers, to those young people age 17 years and above leaving care. Local hubs are to be created to provide support out of hours and weekends around transition into independent living with a particular focus upon reducing feelings of isolation.

The project also includes the extension of the existing CLA texting and website service to care leavers. In addition, care leavers will be helped to identify specific needs and request the support of a volunteer. This element of the project has strong links with the existing Lancashire County Council's volunteering service; with young people encouraged to work as volunteers at the hubs, delivering support on a 'peer to peer' basis.

A Leaving Care Guide has also been published, aimed at young people moving into independent and semi independent living.



3762 Care Leaver
leaflet finalpdf (2).pc

7. Children and Young People's Plan 2014- 17

There has been significant progress made for children and young people, including those who are looked after or leaving care. These successes have been summarised in the new Children and Young People's Plan. <http://www.lancashirechildrenstrust.org.uk/CYPPlan/>

The new plan for 2014- 17 sets out how we want to work alongside children, young people and families and in doing so, the outcomes we want them to achieve. It is a statement of our collective ambition for how services, teams and individuals involved in improving the wellbeing of children and young people will work together in a way that provides the best support. It articulates our aspirations for children and young people and the families and carers that support them.

There are still some challenges that need to be overcome. These include;

- Limited choice of accommodation particularly for those care leavers with complex needs.
- The potential impact on reduced financial support to for care leavers attending university.
- The numbers of care leavers accessing apprenticeship opportunities.

The recently approved plan re-emphasises the vision of what all organisations and partnerships would like to achieve in delivering positive outcomes for the County Council's children and young people. There are significant challenges not least the rise in demand for children's services at a time when budgets are being further reduced.

Within the plan, the 5 key outcomes and measures relevant to CLA and care leavers are:

1. To feel safe – Performance measure - Numbers of CLA

- To ensure that the right children and young people become looked after.
- To ensure that Lancashire County Council can manage the increase in demand whilst ensuring that children and young people remain safe.

2. To do well – Performance measure - Care leavers, their numbers and percentages in education, employment and training

- Young people leaving care are in suitable accommodation.
- All children and young people who are looked after perform well in education

3. To be happy – Permanence measure – the numbers of children adopted

- Children and young people wherever possible will live at home with their families and where this is not possible they will be found

permanent homes and families without unnecessary delay and with minimum disruption.

- To ensure the social and emotional wellbeing of vulnerable children

4. To be healthy –

- Children and young people can access a range of sports activities

5. To be listened to – Inform service delivery and decision making.

- Support for CLA is driven by what they tell us.
 - Children and young people are the focal point for how needs are assessed. Their views are recorded and acted on.

Children and Young People's Partnership Boards

The Children's Partnership Board (CPB) is a means by which local agencies come together to ensure effective collaboration in the development and delivery of services to children and their families. It provides a means by which local priorities can be influenced by local people and is a sub-group of the county-wide Children and Young People's Trust.

The purpose of the Children's Trust Partnership Boards is to drive and deliver effective multi-agency working that safeguards and promotes the well-being of children and young people and improves outcomes for families.

8. What do children and young people say?

In July 2014, a consultation event took place with a wide audience of care leavers, strategic leaders of the County Council and County Councillors with responsibility for Corporate Parenting. The feedback can be found in the attached appendix.

The event was held to celebrate the wide and varied achievements of children and young people who are currently looked after or who are now living independently. In addition to the activities and celebrations, there were a range of presentations focusing on various topics, including finance, further education, pathway planning and new guidance such as the Staying Put policy. The event gave young people the opportunity to have their say and influence key decision makers. The event evaluation is included in the appendices.

Lancashire Young Inspectors (YI) is a group of young people, supported by the Lancashire Participation Network, who inspect services across Lancashire and put forward recommendations about how each service could be improved from a children and young people's perspective. These recommendations are based on speaking to staff and CYP in the service and are revisited by the Young Inspectors at an agreed future date to see how successfully they have been implemented.

Funding has been secured to utilise the YI programme to support the monitoring of fostering and residential provision. During 2014/15, providers will be approached to see whether they would wish to be involved. It is hoped that both in house and agency providers will participate. CLA will be invited and supported to become Young Inspectors.

9. Key Priorities

a) Improving Preparation for Leaving Care

Young people leaving care face many challenges in their transition to independence. Pathway Plans play a key role in ensuring that young people leaving care have the support and skills to participate fully within the community and maximise their opportunities. It is important that care leavers feel ready and prepared for independent living.

The preparation process aims to mirror the transition to independence experienced by young people who benefit from effective parenting and will be part of a continuous process of personal development.

Fostering services and children's homes are required to ensure that their services help children and young people to develop skills and competences and knowledge necessary for adult living.

The Fostering National Standards (14.4) require that foster carers understand that they need to provide all children in their care with age and developmentally appropriate opportunities for learning independence skills.

Children's homes are subject to National Minimum Standards. Standard 12 states that Children's Homes should promote independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care.

b) Tailoring Individual Support for Care Leavers

It is vital that support is given to young people when they are preparing for independence. Lancashire will enable care leavers to 'find their feet' at their own pace. The support delivered will be consistent and continuous, mirroring what a good parent would provide. This will also involve, if possible, the young person's immediate and extended family.

HOW?

1. A 'Staying Put' Policy has been developed which will allow some young people to remain with their carers beyond their 18th birthday to ensure that those young people are appropriately prepared for independent living.
2. Lancashire will engage with other services to ensure appropriate support is available for care leavers who need additional support for their health needs including their emotional and mental health.
3. A Leaving Care Grant is available for all care leavers to assist in the setting up of the young person's home.
4. A Care Leavers Guide has been published to support young people transitioning to independent and semi independent living. (See appendix)

c) Pathway Planning

Pathway Plans are a statutory requirement and fulfils the requirement for assessing the young person's needs and planning future services.

HOW?

1. Review of quality of pathway plans as part of the new audit process.
2. Young people will be actively involved in this key assessment and planning process.
3. A consultation document is being developed to support young people's involvement.
4. Pathway Plans will be developed by the Young Person with assistance from his/ her social worker and the identified Young Person's Advisor (YPA). The

YPA will continue to contribute to and review the young person's Pathway Plan after 18 with the young person.

5. Young people with special needs, particularly where there are greater dependency needs through disability, may require agreed funding arrangements which extend beyond their 18th birthday. Transitional arrangements will require agreement with Adult Social Care through the Transition protocol arrangements. This includes health and education provisions for the commissioning and managing of services for care leavers with disabilities.
6. Review and develop the role of the PA.

d) Accessing Education, Training and Employment

Performance at school or college and a young person's skill and potential should be a key aspect of individual Pathway Plans.

HOW?

1. Lancashire will support it's looked after children and care leavers to achieve their potential at school and to access a range of education, training and employment opportunities.
2. Comprehensive EPEPs will be completed.
3. Effective Virtual school team
4. Effective use of pupil premium
5. Improve the number of care leavers gaining 5 A*- C GCSEs
6. The service will act as a parental advocate in order to ensure that young people feel that someone has a continuing interest in their achievements.
7. Links between colleges and training providers will be maintained and enhanced to ensure the provision of appropriate education and training opportunities are available for care leavers.
8. A range of employment support programmes will be offered to all young people who are looked after or leaving care. This is will be based on an opt system. Varied experiences will be offered alongside education or as an employment route. (See appendix 4)
9. Appropriate apprenticeships opportunities will be sought and the needs of our young people are promoted to ensure that our care leavers have the same employment opportunities as other young people

10. Some financial support will be available for those care leavers who wish to attend a further education course.

e) Health

1. Care leavers have timely access to specialist/ universal health provision (Govt target).
2. Explore with health providers, the development of a dedicated care leavers CAMHS worker who can provide levels of support for young people leaving care.

f) Suitable Accommodation

1. Reduce numbers of homeless young people.
2. Review and refresh the Lancashire Housing Strategy.
3. Explore the possibility of utilising existing Lancashire County Council properties with a view to convert into additional accommodation for care leavers.

Between 2013 and 2014, the majority of care leavers were in independent living with 42.6% across the age range either living in a flat, house, bedsit or accommodation provided by a college or university, with an average across the age range of 13.5% living with a parent or relative. 17 young people were living in semi-independent transitional accommodation, for example supportive hostel/training flat or self-contained accommodation with either specialist personal assistance support or floating support. There were a total of 46 young people across the age range whose residency was unknown with 4 young people aged 19 years and 2 young people aged 21 reported as having no fixed abode/homeless. There were a total of 6 young people across the age range of young people living in other accommodation (including homeless and temporary stays with friends/relatives as an emergency measure), with only one young person aged 20 years receiving emergency accommodation (e.g. night shelter, direct access, emergency hostel).

The statutory guidance suggests that best practice in securing sufficiency includes CYP Partnership Board stakeholders, including housing, working together to secure a range of provision to meet the needs of those who become looked after at the age of 16 and 17 and support the continuity of accommodation beyond the age of 18.

As identified earlier within this strategy, stakeholders have identified that it can be challenging to find appropriate placements for young people who are aged 16 to 17 years old. Stakeholders have also reported that there is a need to develop the market to build capacity to support care leavers with more complex needs, particularly those aged 18 and over. The provision of vacation accommodation for university students was also identified.

The need for increased support and provision to aid transition into independence, including semi-independent living was identified through consultation with Children's Social Care staff and providers.

Children and young people also requested improved support and more information on the transition to becoming independent including education and accommodation options.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

The strategy should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is up to date and still meeting the needs of care leavers, Lancashire County Council and its partners. The Action Plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by Children's Social Care Senior Management Team, the Children in Care Council and the Corporate Parenting Board.

The Children and Young People's Plan is reviewed annually and all actions related to care leavers and children and young people who are looked after will be updated via the attached action plan. It is vital that care leavers are given the opportunity to feedback their thoughts and opinions about the strategy and action plan and this can be achieved by LINX.



Partnerships – changing the way we do things in Lancashire

You can read all the below but if you don't want to/ don't have time then focus on the **green** bits. If you have more time or are interested then there is loads more info here:

<http://www.lancashirechildrenstrust.org.uk/about/?siteid=6006&pageid=44664> or you can email cyp.childrenstrust@lancashire.gov.uk

Partnerships are when different agencies and services who work with and for children, young people and families come together in the hope to improve things for them. It's about working together to achieve better outcomes.

What we know:

In the past we have had lots of partnerships working on many different but often overlapping things to do with children, young people and families. Everyone agreed we could probably make these partnerships work better. Together services and agencies commit quite a lot of cash and time to making these partnerships work but don't always get value for money as they don't have time to play an active role in them all.

People in Lancashire started to discuss how they could change things and hopefully make them better. They agreed that:

1. They wanted to continue to work together but needed to make the partnerships work better;
2. The Children and Young People's plan <http://youtu.be/BHeJOVAILXk> was the thing they all agreed with and signed up to as a set of aims and objectives for children and young people in Lancashire;
3. As Ofsted will inspect us all together (from April 2015) it makes sense to have partnerships that are in place and ready for this;
4. There are lots of staff in Lancashire, 80,000 plus, working with children and young people and they have lots of shared training needs which the partnership should work to develop and deliver;
5. There were some key things that partnerships should do: including; setting priorities, influencing things, making sure that the voice and participation of children and young people is included, monitoring what difference it makes, challenging when things go wrong, sharing information and identifying and learning from what works;
6. Things in Lancashire are different depending where you live- we need to have a local focus not just a Lancashire wide one;
7. We need to build on what works so future partnerships need to reflect this good practice that we have in place;
8. Partnerships should focus on making a difference and proving it.

So, they agreed to **stop a number of partnerships** (District Children and Young People's Trust and Locality Safeguarding groups to name two) and **create less new ones**. There would be **less meetings and more focus on getting it right** for children and young people.

So, they agreed to **set up 5 locality Childrens Partnership Boards (CPB)** in the following areas:

1. Burnley and Pendle
2. Hyndburn, Ribble Valley and Rossendale
3. Preston
4. Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire
5. Lancaster, Fylde and Wyre

What is the Children's Partnership Board?

- A way for local agencies and services to come together to ensure effective working in the development and delivery of services to children and their families.
- To drive and deliver effective multi agency working that safeguards and promotes the well-being of children and young people and improves outcome for families.
- A sub-group of the county-wide Lancashire Children and Young People's Trust
- A way for local priorities to be influenced by local people

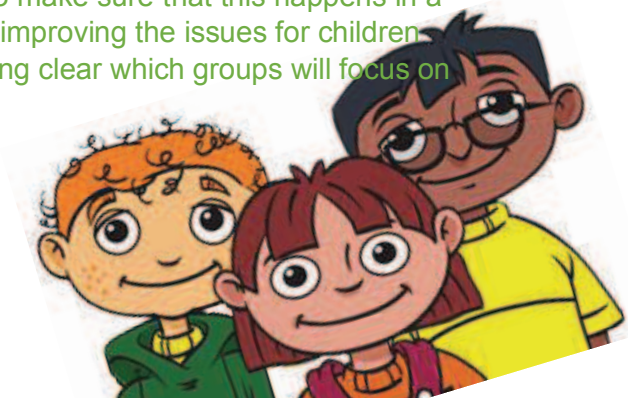
What will this achieve?

- Improved outcomes for children, young people and families
- Joint (known as multi agency) policy and practice that safeguards and promotes the well-being of children and delivers good outcomes effectively
- Engagement of children young people and families in shaping and influence service design
- Better joint working and use of resources
- Improved sharing of information
- Better understanding of needs, risks and opportunities

What next?

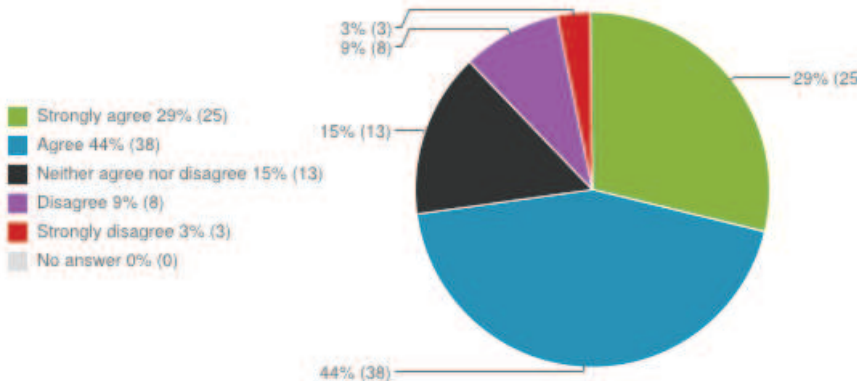
There are still lots of different partnerships and sometimes they focus on the same issues without realising it and because of this we are wasting money and time and not making the difference to children lives that we could be. Some of these partnerships include: Community Safety, Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board, Lancashire Safeguarding Adult Board, Children and Young People's Trust, Road Safety, Corporate parenting Board.

All these partnerships receive lots of reports, set priorities, share information, measure progress, and make decisions about services. We want to make sure that this happens in a more organised way so that more of our time is spent on improving the issues for children and families by removing some of the duplication and being clear which groups will focus on which issues.

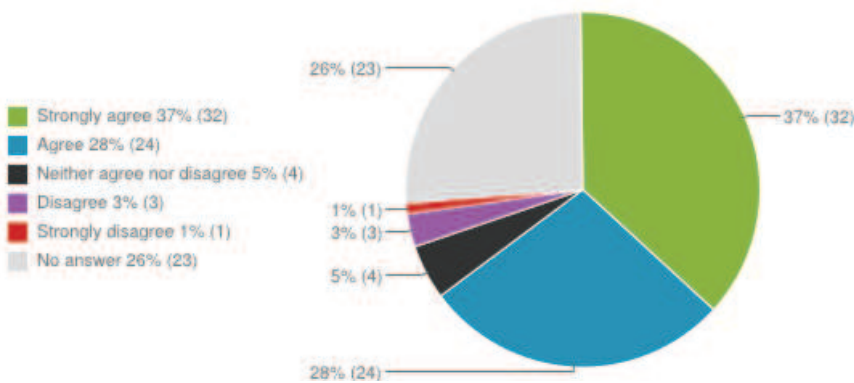


Fostering: Approved foster carers and people who are being assessed to be foster carers (2014)

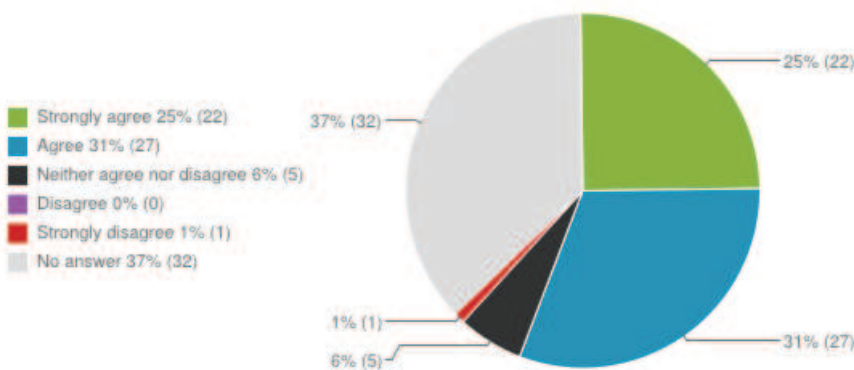
1 The support, guidance and training provided to me by the fostering service is excellent



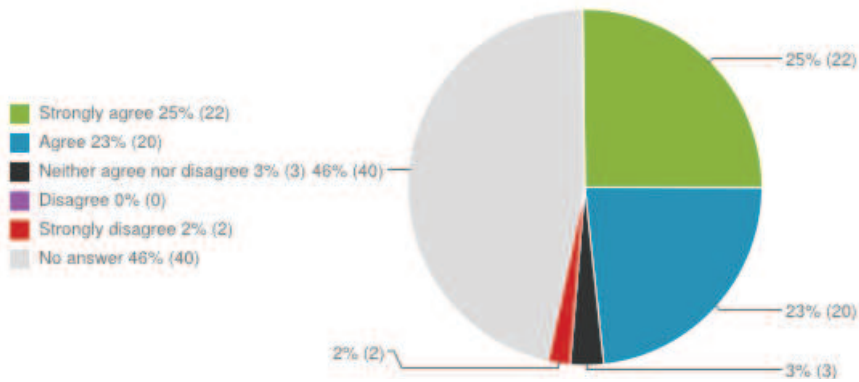
2 My initial enquiry about becoming a foster carer was dealt with efficiently and promptly



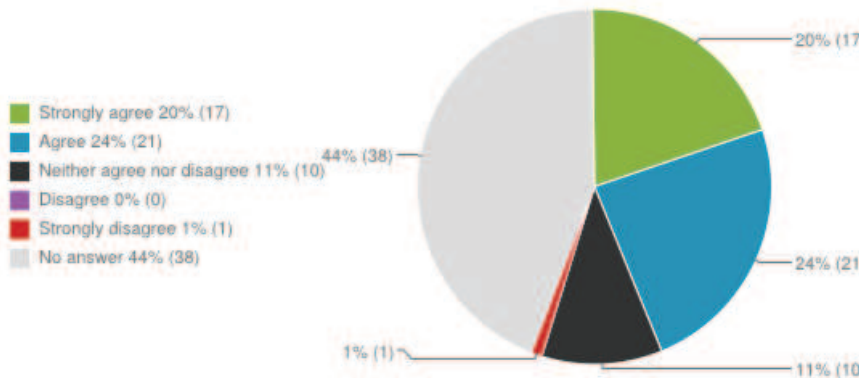
3 From my first contact with the agency I felt welcomed and supported



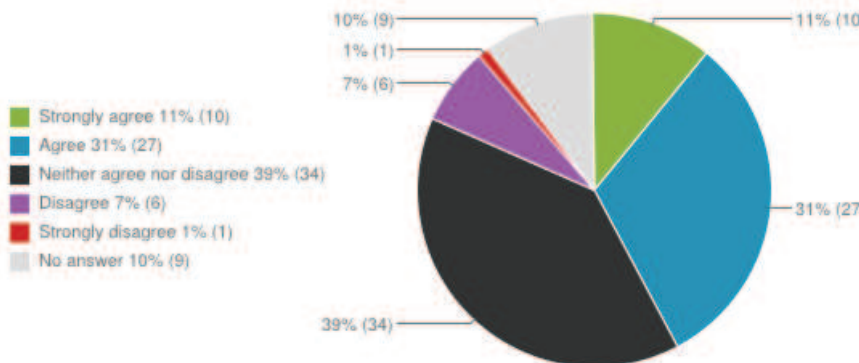
4 My assessment as a foster carer was well organised and comprehensive



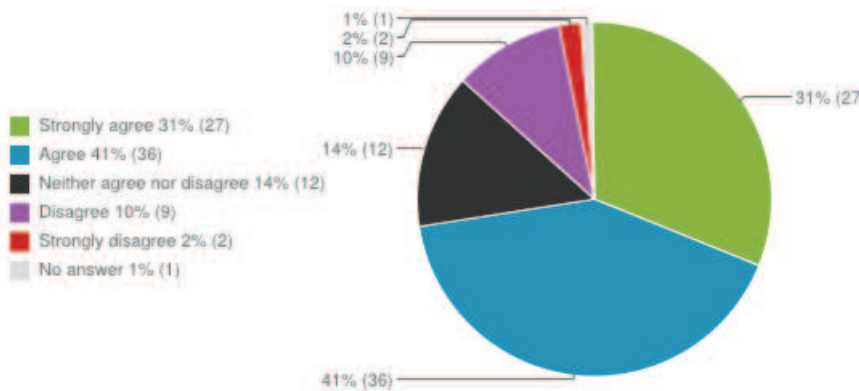
5 My training since approval has helped me to meet children's needs



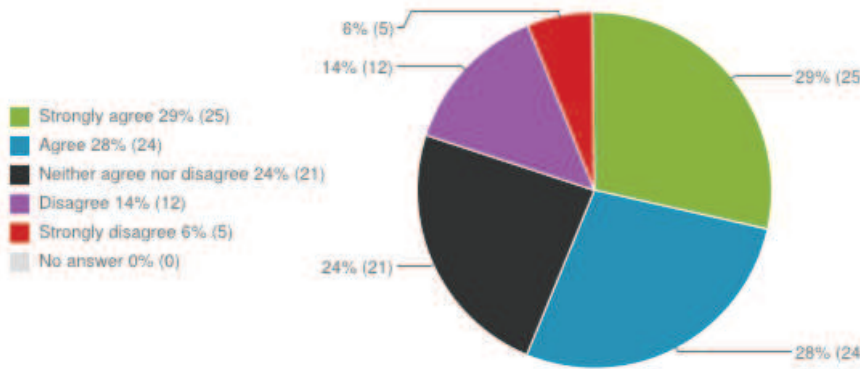
6 My own children have access to support from the fostering service



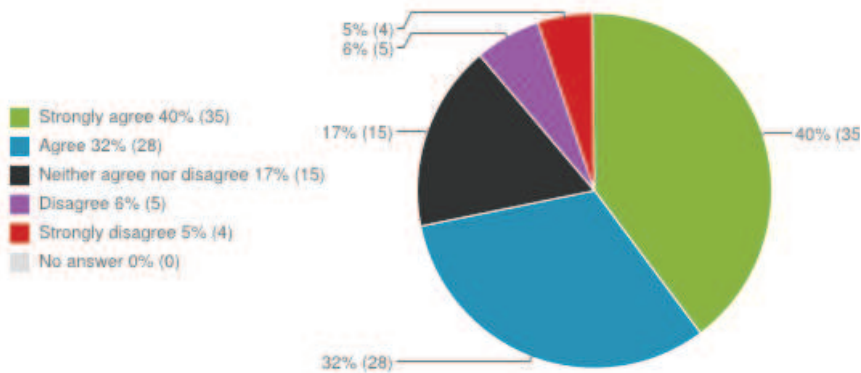
7 My supervising social worker helps me to understand and meet my foster child's needs



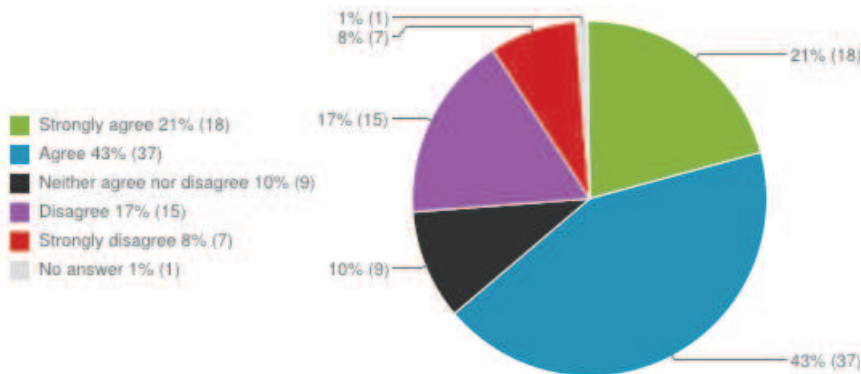
8 My supervising social worker helps me to balance how I meet my foster child's needs and those of my own family



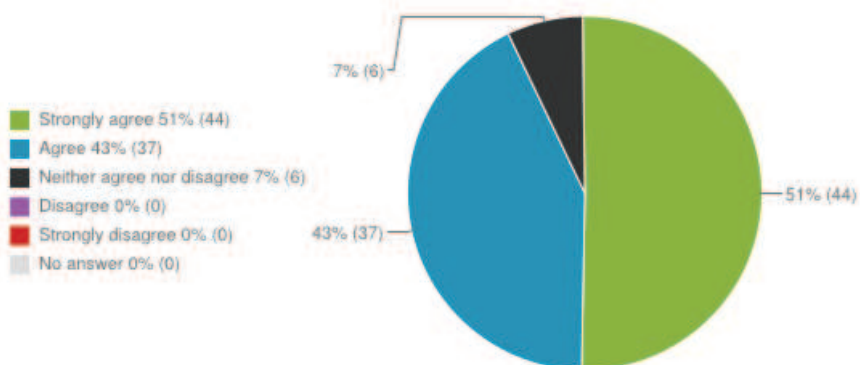
9 My supervising social worker is supportive and talks about things I find difficult. This helps me to provide the best possible care to my foster child and my own family at the same time



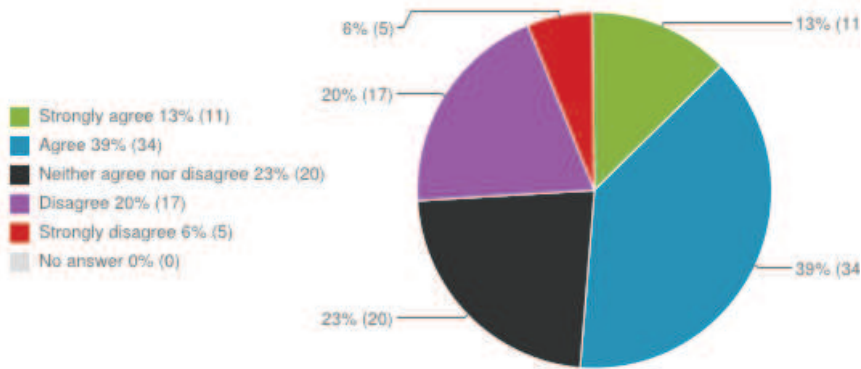
10 I am treated as part of the professional team working with fostered children



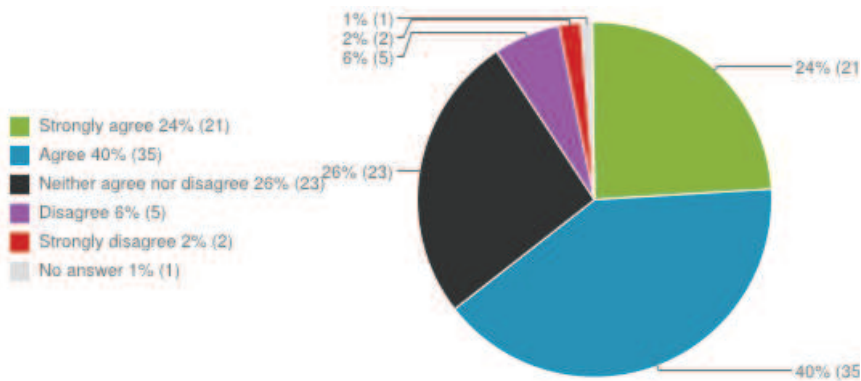
11 I am confident that I can deal with any child protection concerns or issues relating to bullying about my foster child



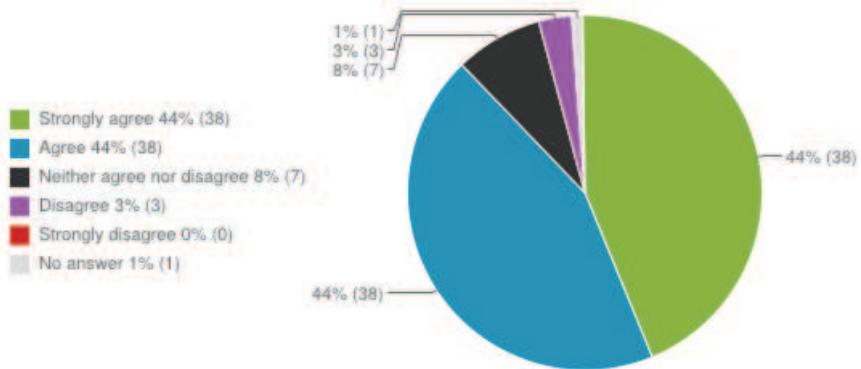
12 The fostering service asks me what I think of its services and how it can improve



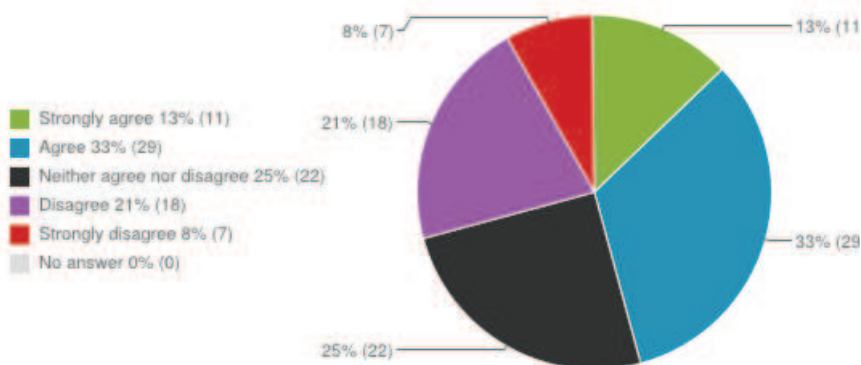
13 The fostering service has a good out-of-hours service that I can call if necessary



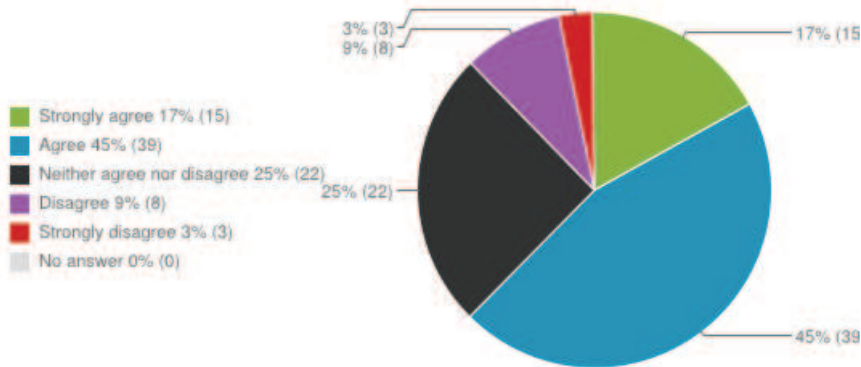
14 I am clear about what decisions I can make about the child I foster



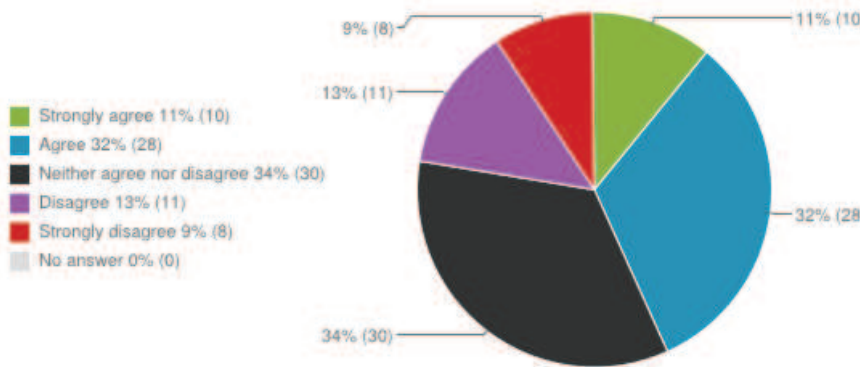
15 I was able to find out lots of useful things about my foster child before he or she moved in or started coming to my home for a short break



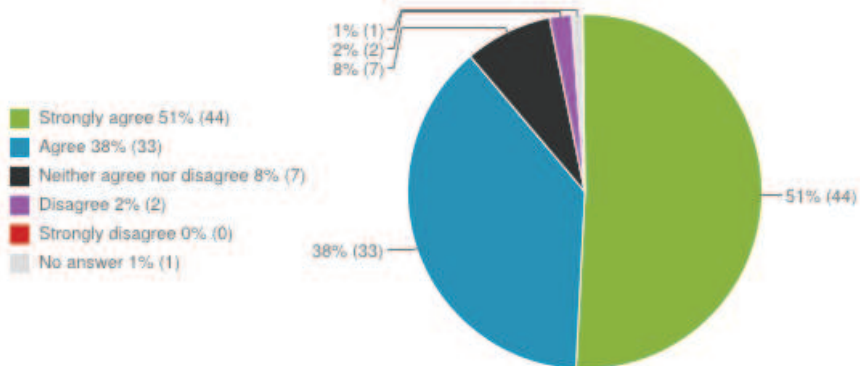
16 I continue to get information that helps me to understand my fostered child's needs, including any issues relating to their family



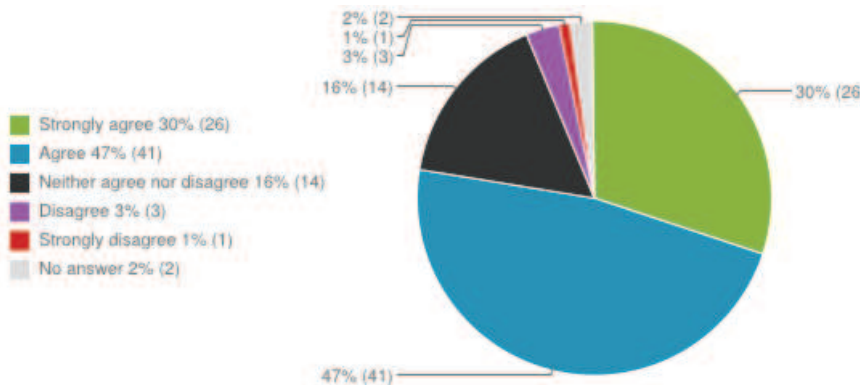
17 If I complain my complaints are taken seriously and dealt with properly



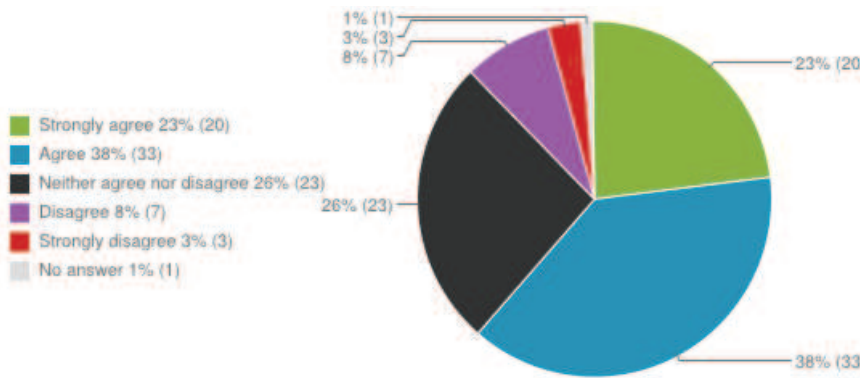
18 I am well matched with the child I foster



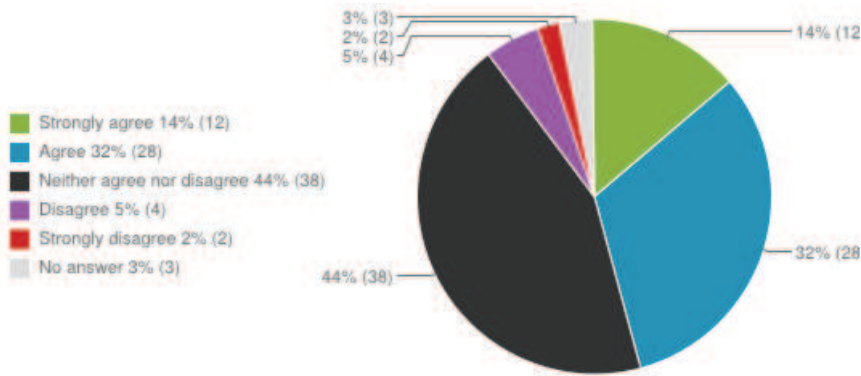
19 The fostering service helps me to support the child I foster to understand why they are in care (not for short breaks)



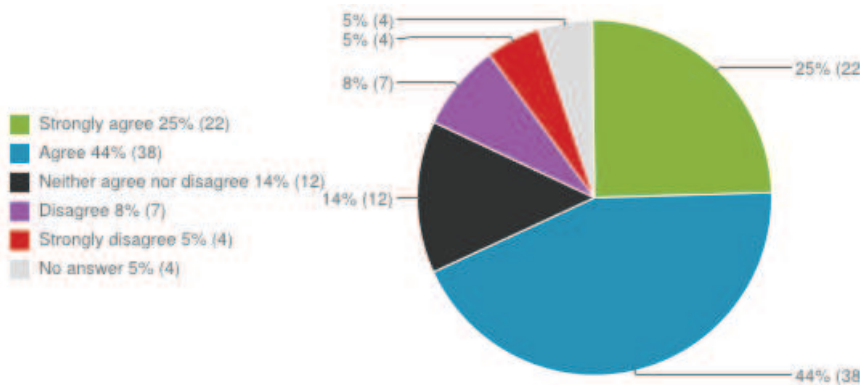
20 The support the fostering service gives me helps me to build strong relationships with the child I foster



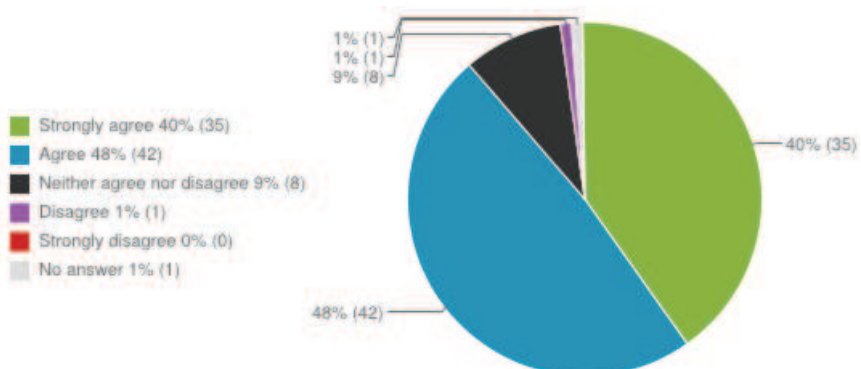
21 The fostering service helps me to support young people to develop independence skills and/or move on to live in adult care establishments



22 The fostering service helps me to manage the contact that my foster child has with their family

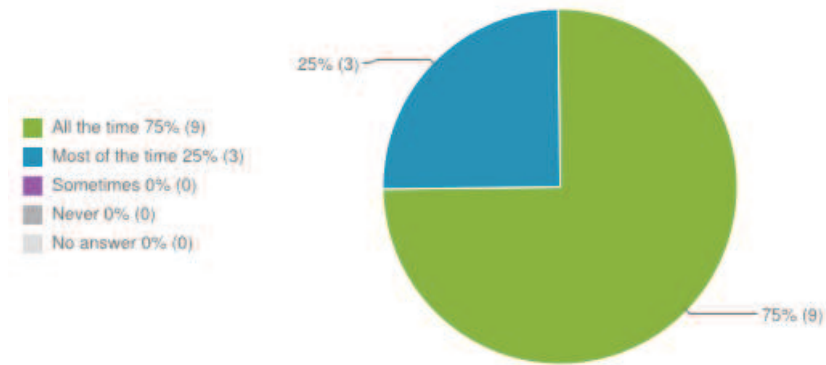


23 I know how to prevent the child I foster from going missing and what I must do if they do go missing?

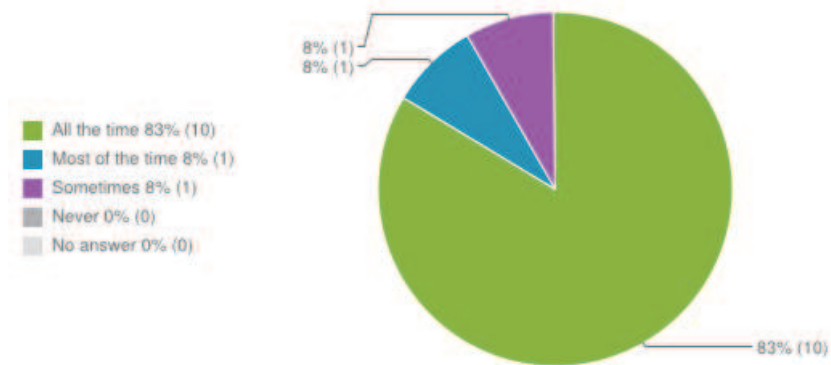


Fostering: Children and young people (2014)

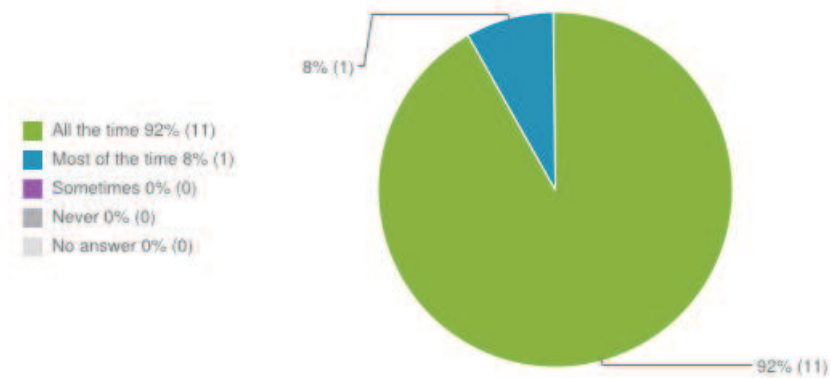
1 The care and support I get from my foster carers is very good



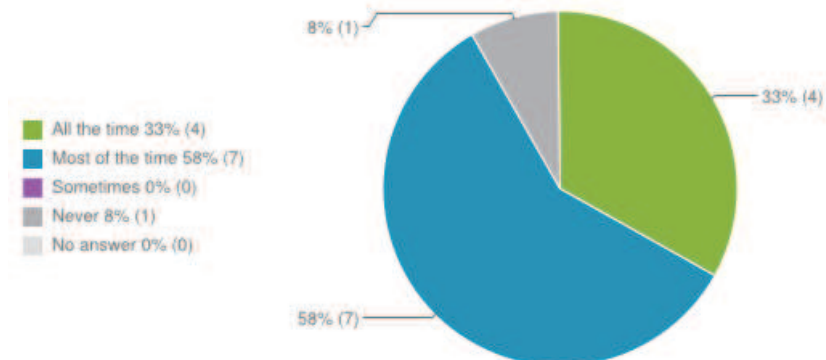
2 My foster carers help me to feel good about myself



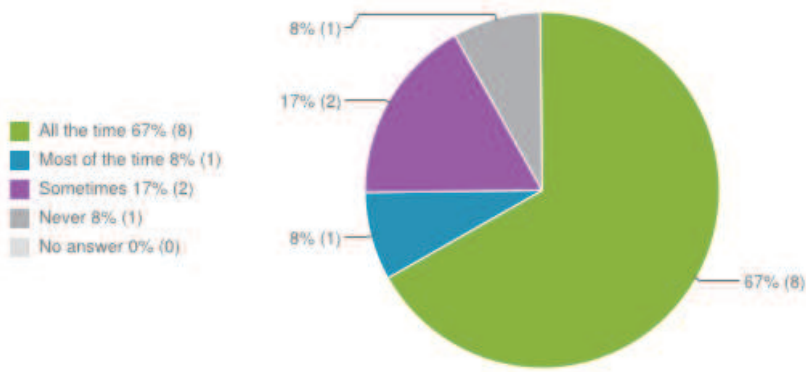
3 My foster carers listen to what I have to say



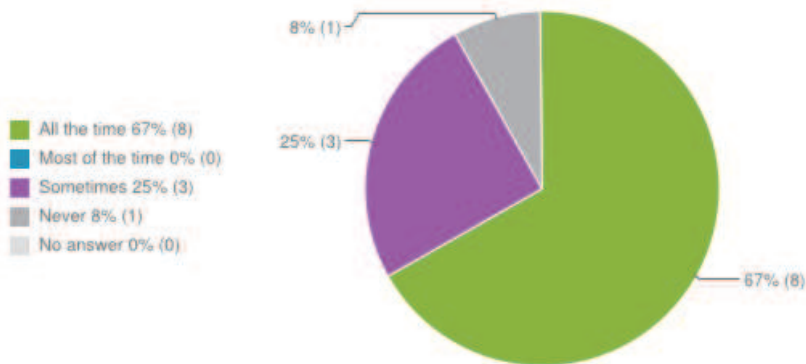
4 My foster carers make changes to my care because of what I say



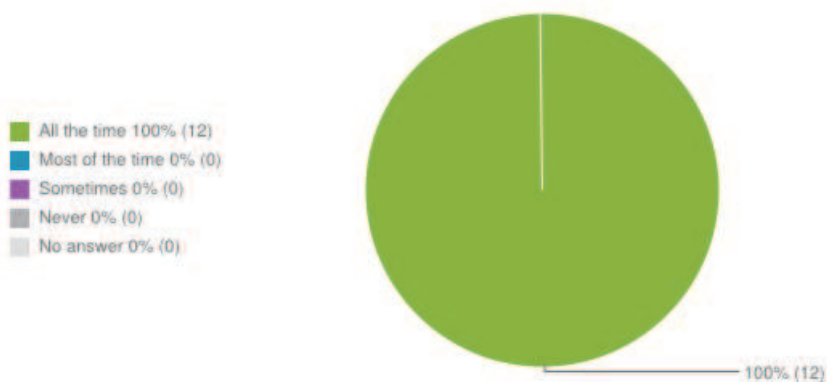
5 My culture is respected and supported



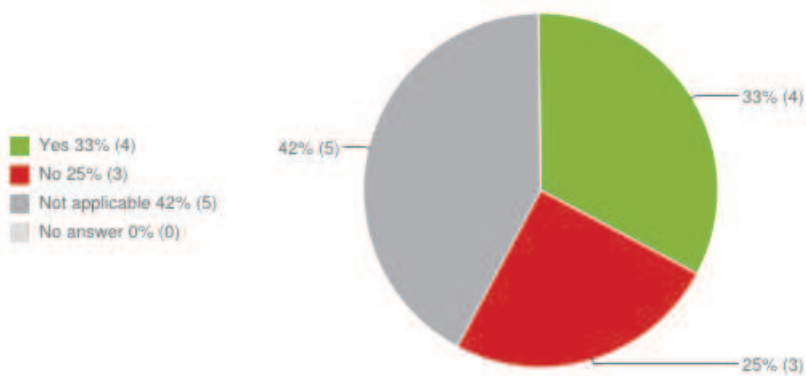
6 My religious beliefs are respected and supported



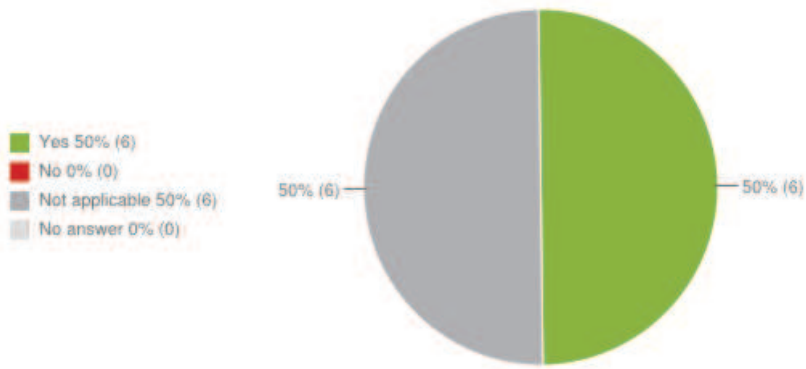
7 I feel safe with my foster family



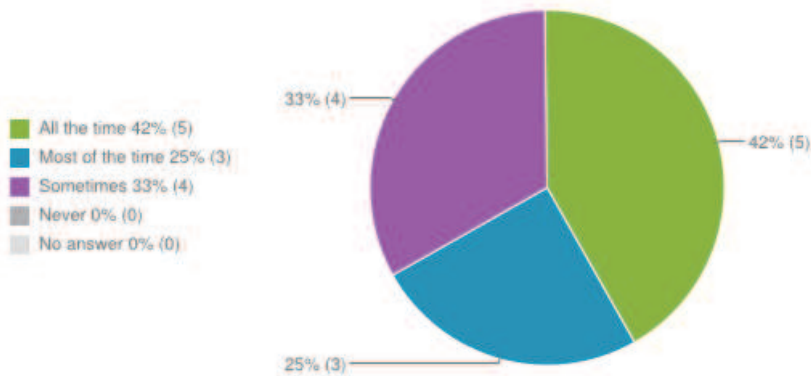
8 I was able to find out lots of useful things about my foster family before I moved in with them or had a short break



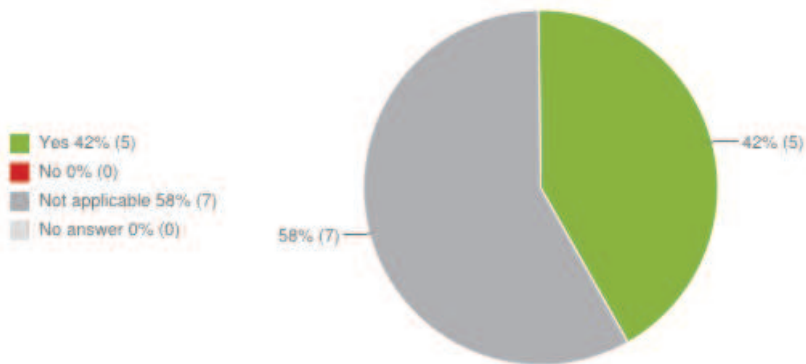
9 My foster carers helped me when I was bullied



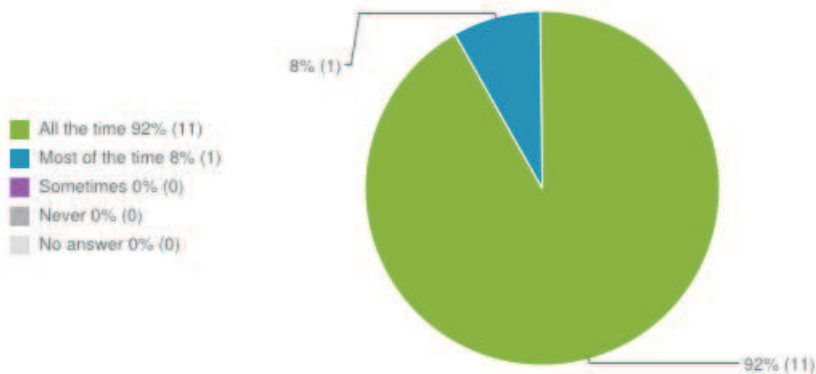
10 The staff from the fostering service ask me what I think about my foster carers



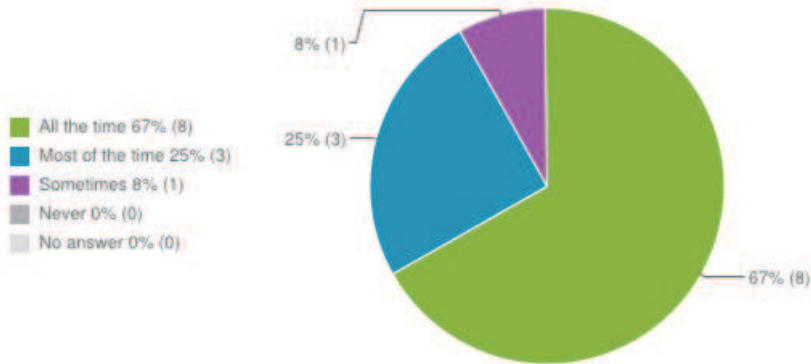
11 If I complain my complaint is taken seriously and dealt with properly



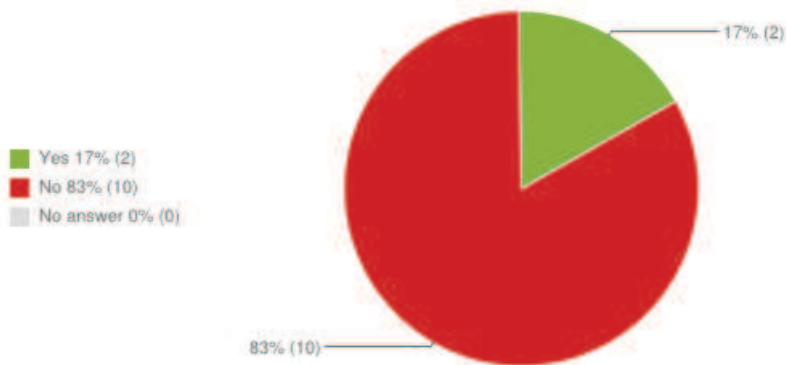
12 My foster carers help me to deal with things that I worry about



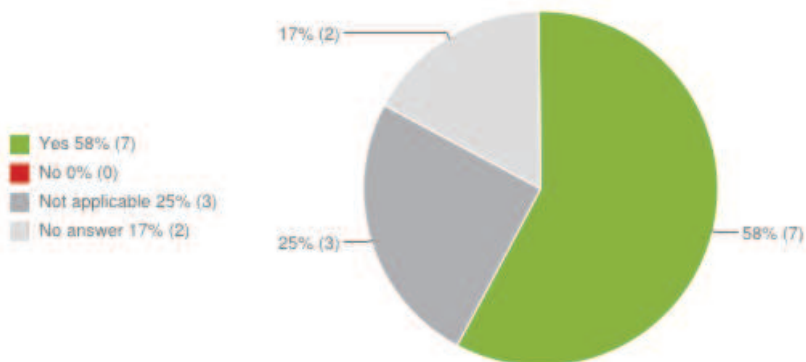
13 I take part in activities I like: things like dancing classes, football, scouts, art classes, rock wall climbing, theatre groups, horse riding, swimming or singing



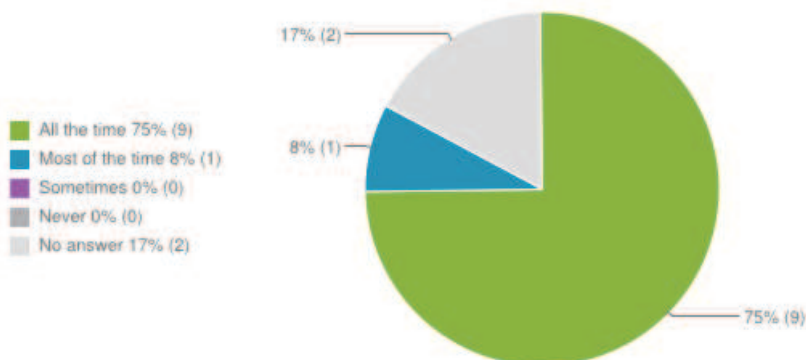
14 Do you get a short breaks service (respite care)?



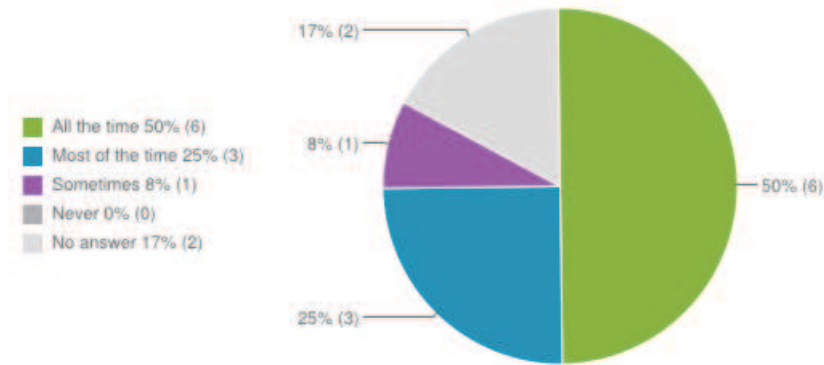
15 My foster carers help me to prepare for when I will live independently. Things like paying bills and being able to cook and keep a house clean



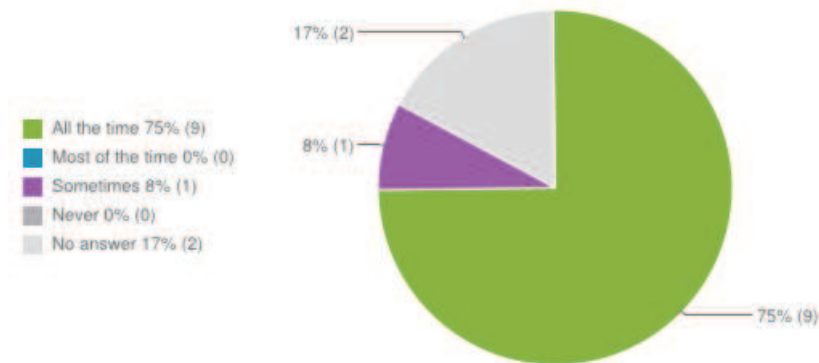
16 I feel like a member of the foster family



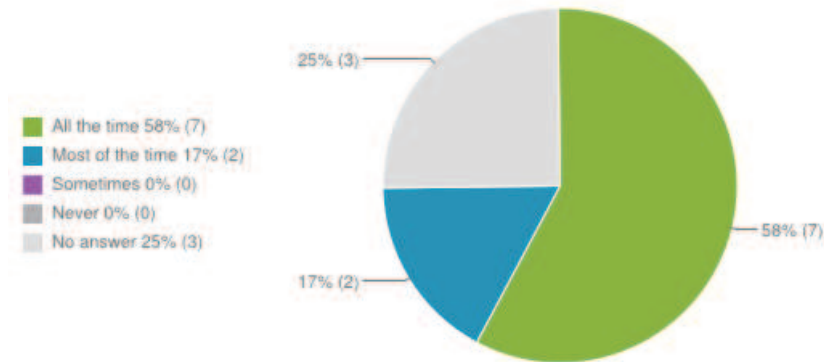
17 I am doing well at school, college, university, in home education or another place that provides education, such as a pupil referral unit



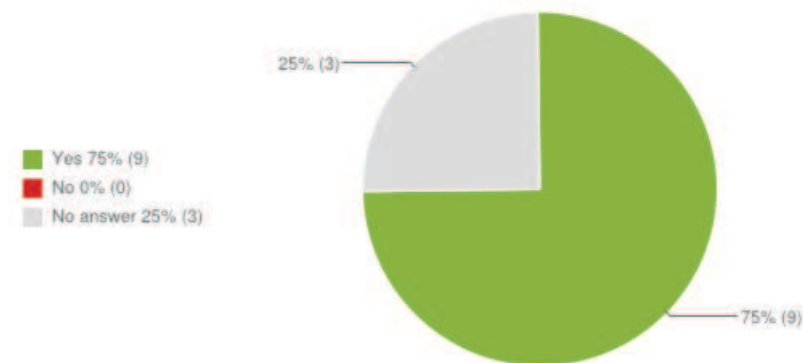
18 My foster carers help manage my behaviour if it is getting me into trouble



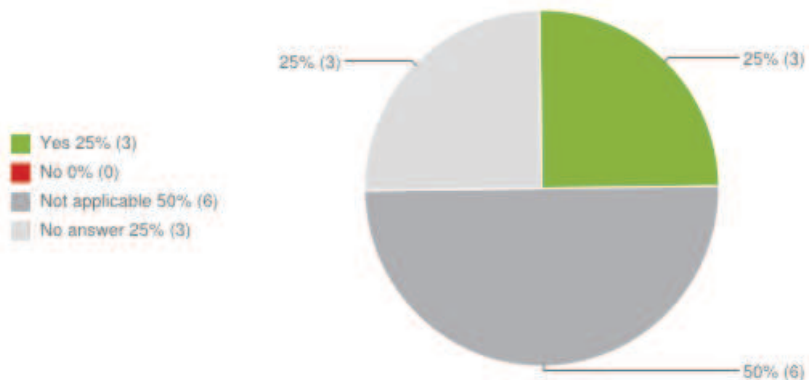
19 My foster carers help me to understand what has happened to me and why I cannot live with my family



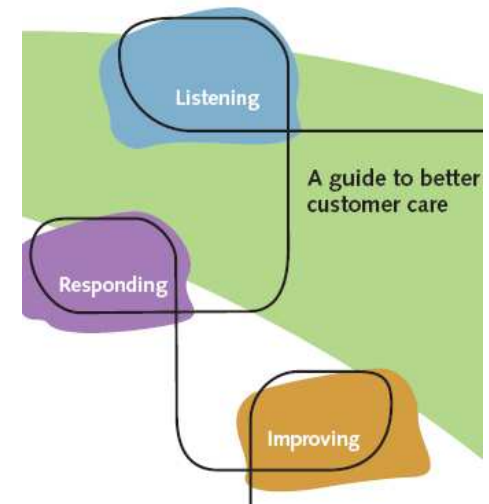
20 My foster carers help me to take part in meetings about me



21 If I go missing, my foster carers welcome me back and try to understand why this happened



Listening, Responding and Improving



Children's Social Care - Feedback Service

Children's Social Care Feedback Service -

What is Feedback

- Complaints
- Compliments
- Comments
- Local Government Ombudsman enquiries

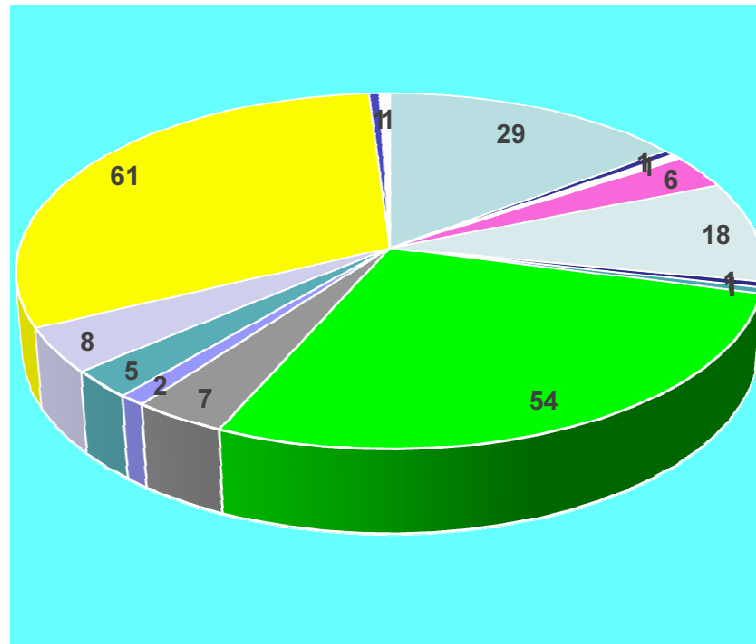
What do we do with feedback?

We:

- Record and count all feedback so we know how many Compliments, Complaints and Comments people send us!
- When someone wants to complain make sure the manager responsible answers the complaint
- When Children Looked After complain we talk to their advocate and
- Ask for someone to visit them with their advocate and listen to the Young person and
- Ask the Young Person what we can do to put things right and
- Explain when we can't change anything and why!

What do people complain about?

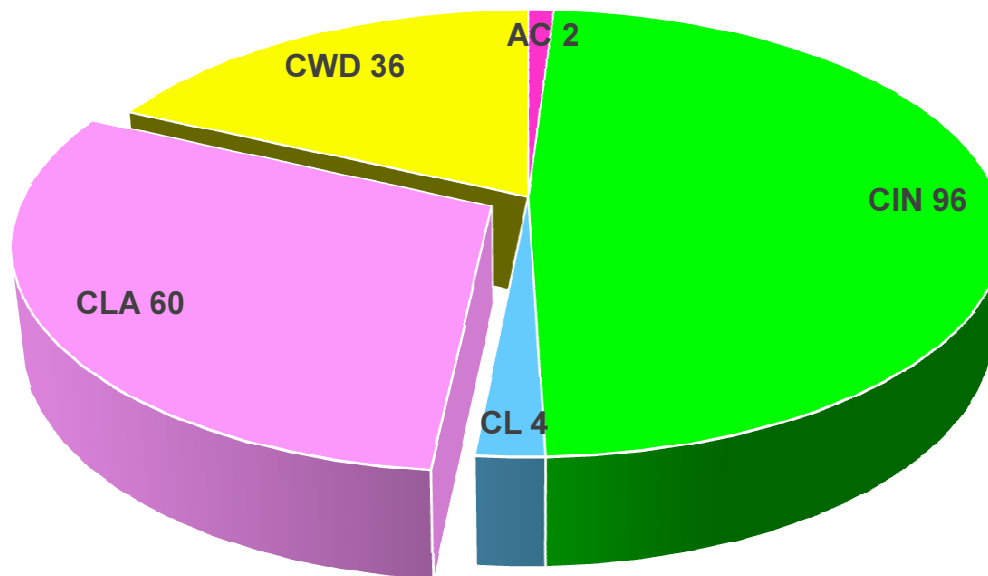
All Children's Social Care Feedback



- Assessment/Care Planning/Review
- CAPSS
- Day Care Provision
- Family Support Resource Service
- Financial
- Fostering/Adoption Services
- Leaving Care Service
- Other
- Residential Provision
- Respite Care
- Safeguarding Process
- Services For Children With Disabilities
- Social Work Practice
- Transition Process
- Transport

How many compliments do Children Looked After send to us?

Compliments Received under the Children's Social Care Procedures 1
April 2013 - 31 March 2014

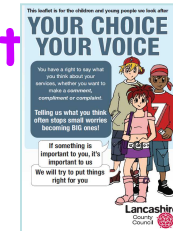


AC – Adopted Child
CIN - Children in Need
CL – Child Leaving Care
CLA – Children Looked After
CWD – Children With Disabilities

How do people give us Feedback!

- E-form email (internet)
- Telephone
- Your Choice Your Voice Leaflet - Contact (for Looked After Children only)
- Other Leaflets - for everyone else
- Social worker
- Independent reviewing officer
- Case worker
- log book in Residential Children Homes
- foster carer,
- "The Line"

(Available 365 day free 0800 - 511 111 txt 0778 - 6511 111, Children's Rights Service of Lancashire)



What we do when we receive a complaint?

What we can do to put things right:

- Explain what we have done and why we have done it
- Say we are sorry
- Look at how we can do things better in the future
- Look at how we can change things, sometimes we can't change anything
- Ask you how we can put things right

Things we do to improve our service

- Review our leaflets and information to make it easier to understand
- Making sure that we keep young people informed about their complaint to avoid unnecessary delays
- Introducing new ways of working with young people to help develop our service
- We will be asking young people who have made a complaint what their experience was
- Using the learning from young people and families to improve services

Any Questions?

Contact us:

Customer Feedback Service

01772 - 530671

Email: cyp.telluswhatuthink@lancashire.gov.uk

Website:

www.lancashire.gov.uk/childrensservices/telluswhatuthink

Agenda Item 12

Office of the Children's Commissioner Care Monitor and Other Info

The Office of the Children Commissioners (OCC) would like children in care to tell them what they think in their Care Monitor survey. The results will inform their report to the Government and other decision makers. As with previous years could we promote this throughout the authority?

<http://www.mycaresurvey.com/>

Also, please note that the OCC can help children and young people in or leaving care, living away from home or receiving social care and also advise the professionals who support them, for more info please follow this link:

http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/latest_news/content_138?utm_source=OCC+E-Newsletter&utm_campaign=54593c59a2-Newsletter_3_20149_30_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8e436d4513-54593c59a2-169360861

New Rights for Young Carers

Changes to the Care Act and Children Act Explained

Introduction

'Young carer' was not a term that had previously appeared in any English legislation. For a local authority to have an obligation to a young carer (ie someone aged under 18 who provides care on an unpaid basis for another person), she or he had to be labelled a 'child in need'. There were also broader existing obligations to consider the needs of carers with no lower age limit (and so apply to carers under 18). There were several references to young carers in previous guidance but the overall effect was convoluted and difficult to understand.

This has now changed, as both the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 address the needs of young carers clearly and directly. This short paper aims to explain the background to this and how it should work in the future.

Policy Background

In the **National Carers Strategy** ['Recognised, valued and supported: next steps for the carers strategy'](#) the Government emphasize that effective whole family approaches to assessment are essential to improving support for adults and young carers alike.

Every Child Matters is a Government initiative for England and Wales first launched in 2003. It covers children and young adults up to the age of 19, or 24 for those with disabilities. Its main aims are for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- stay safe
- be healthy
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being

The law concerning young carers has now been strengthened to support delivery of these principles for young carers and their families. Children's Minister Edward Timpson had commented that "***we must put in place a system that supports them and enables them to live a full life, as well as protecting them from excessive or inappropriate caring responsibilities***".

The changes to the law will mean that when a child is identified as a young carer, the needs of everyone in the family are to be considered. This should trigger action from both children's and adults services – assessing why a child is caring, what needs to change and what would help the family to prevent children from taking on this responsibility in the first place”.

Government joint statement of principles

A joint statement by Ministers Edward Timpson Department (Education) and Norman Lamb (Department of Health) identified Key principles to underpin implementation (including the Regulations and guidance on both Acts).

These provide a high level summary of what is intended and includes:

1. *“The starting point should be to assess the needs of the adult or child who needs care and support and then see what remaining needs for support a young carer in the family has.*
2. *The presence of a young carer in the family should always constitute an appearance of need and should trigger either an assessment or the offer of an assessment to the person needing care.*
3. *A whole family approach is key when assessing an adult needing care where there are children in the family providing care to the adult or undertaking wider caring responsibilities. The adult's assessment and eligibility for support should take into account their parenting responsibilities and the functioning of the family.*
4. *Assessments should ascertain why a child is caring and what needs to change in order to prevent them from undertaking excessive or inappropriate caring responsibilities which could impact adversely on their welfare, education, or social development. The views of both adults and children within the family should be sought separately where appropriate.*
5. *Consideration must be given to whether a young carer is a ‘child in need’ under the Children Act 1989, and whether their welfare or development may suffer if support is not provided to them and/or their family.”*

Amendments to Section 17 of the Children Act

The Children and Families Act 2014 has amended the Children Act 1989. This has been done by inserting a new Sections 17 ZA to 17 ZC to deliver this change. The new clauses come into force from 1 April 2015 to coincide with the implementation of the Care Act.

This amendment to the Children Act has clarified the law relating to young carers' and addresses the council as a whole (applying to both adult and children's services). The new provisions include;

- Ensuring the right to an assessment of needs for support will be extended to all young carers under the age of 18 regardless of who they care for, what type of care they provide or how often they provide it;
- Placing a clearer duty on local authorities to undertake an assessment of a young carer's needs for support on request or on the appearance of need,
- Requiring councils to ensure that young carers are identified and that consideration is also given as to whether they are a 'child in need' * see note
- Making links between children's and adults' legislation to enable local authorities to align the assessment of a young carer with an assessment of an adult they care for (preventing inappropriate care).
- Requiring Councils to be proactive about identifying young carers in their area and acting to help reduce their need for support through the provision of information and preventative measures (for example in schools).

* Note: Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 defines a child as being in need in law if:

- He or she is unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without provision of services from the LA;
- His or her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of services from the LA;
- He or she has a disability.

Development can mean physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioral development. Health can be physical or mental health.

The Care Act and Young Carers

As described above the amendment to the Section 17 of the Children Act will work with provisions in the Care Act 2014 so as to apply equally to both children's and adult services. The Care Act Regulations and Guidance link to this in a number of ways. For example Eligibility Regulations for the Care Act require councils to consider the support disabled parents and carers may need in carrying out their responsibilities to care for a child (who may potentially be a young carer).

The Guidance for the Care Act includes issues around whole family approaches and young carers (see Statutory Guidance 6.43 to 6.50). This includes a statement that:

“When carrying out an adult's or carer's assessment, if it appears that a child is involved in providing care the local authority must consider:

- the impact of the person's needs on the young carer's wellbeing, welfare, education and development;
- whether any of the caring responsibilities the young carer is undertaking are inappropriate.”

The Guidance stresses that young carers should not be left with inappropriate levels of caring and says that “Inappropriate caring responsibilities should be considered as anything which is likely to have an impact on the child's health, wellbeing or education, or which can be considered unsuitable in light of the child's circumstances and may include:

- personal care such as bathing and toileting;
- carrying out strenuous physical tasks such as lifting;
- administering medication;
- maintaining the family budget;
- emotional support to the adult.”

The Care Act regulations and guidance also specify that Adult Services must identify children in the household, consider whether they are young carers and if so whether they are children in need.

There will be a need for young carers to either have a carers assessment or for the care assessment of the adult they look after to identify support needed to prevent inappropriate care. These will be adult services responsibilities with referrals made to childrens services largely only where there are safeguarding issues.

Young Carers in Transition and Young Adult Carers

The Care Act (sections 63 – 64) will introduce important new obligations to young carers ‘in transition’ to adulthood. The Act requires councils to undertake an assessment for a young carer if it considers that she/ he is likely to have needs for support after becoming 18 and that the assessment would be of significant benefit to him / her. If a local authority decides not to undertake such an assessment it must give reasons for its refusal.

This change will also provide new opportunities to improve the identification of young adult carers (aged 18 to 24); a group whose needs have often been overlooked. There is a developing awareness across the country about the need to better address the needs of this group and these changes to the law should help this happen. Work in this area is also to be enhanced through the establishment of a national Task and Finish Group to consider what further action can be taken to support young adult carers to fulfil their education and employment potential.

Whole Council Approaches

The new responsibilities created by the Children and Families Act and the Care Act are placed on a local authority as a whole (not just Adult or Childrens Services). Together these pieces of legislation are intended to provide a legal framework that will support local authorities to consider the needs of the whole family, deliver coordinated packages of support and protect children and young people from excessive or inappropriate caring roles.

Guidance to the Care Act suggests that there should be joint protocols between adult and childrens services to support joint working.

Children’s and Adult Social Care; who does what?

The responsibilities for identifying and supporting young carers are placed on the local authority as a whole. There are potential overlapping responsibilities for Adult and Children’s Services. The primary responsibility for responding to the needs of a young carer **rests with the service responsible for assessing the person they support**, rather than the age of the carer. This means that:

- Young carers of disabled children are, therefore, the responsibility of the Children’s Service.
- Adult Services have to identify children in the household/ family network and ensure that young carers are not left with unreasonable levels of caring responsibilities.

Where a young carer is thought to be a “Child in Need” adult workers will need to discuss the case with the Childrens Services to see if further action is needed. Further action might include:

- A referral to an independent Young Carers service
- Accessing preventative support through the “Early Help Network”
- Further investigation by Childrens Services about safeguarding issues
- A jointly undertaken assessment by adult and childrens workers (there is provision in the Care Act Guidance and in Section 17 of the Children Act to combine a young carers assessment with that of the adult)

Where disabled young people are in “Transition” this will be an area of joint activity including where any sibling young carers are identified as needing support through transition.

Responsibility for supporting young adult carers aged 18 to 24 also rests with the service responsible for the person they support, rather than the age of the carer.

ADASS draft guide version 2: 4th November 2014: Whole Family Approaches to Assessment (Annex)