

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 2 February 2017 (To Follow)

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)

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.

4. Coventry City Council - Route 21 (30 mins)

Matt Clayton and Young People

To receive information on their Facebook page Route 21.

5. LINX (Lancashire's Children in Care Council) (60 mins) (Pages 1 - 10)

Young People and Barnardo's

To receive feedback on the work our young people have been doing including the Performance Report.

Young Inspectors Update
Feedback on Performance Report
Care Leavers
Feedback on ASDAN Project – Jane Hylton

6. Research on Children Looked After and Care Leavers (20 mins)

Zachari Duncalf

To receive information specific to Lancashire, set within the national context.

7. Any Other Business

County Councillor Pryn

To receive any other business.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

County Councillor Pryn

Thursday, 15 June 2017 at 6.00pm (refreshments from 5.30pm) in the Duke of Lancaster Room – Cabinet Room 'C', County Hall, Preston, PR1 8RJ.

Information Item

9. Update on the New Beginnings Event

(Pages 11 - 12)

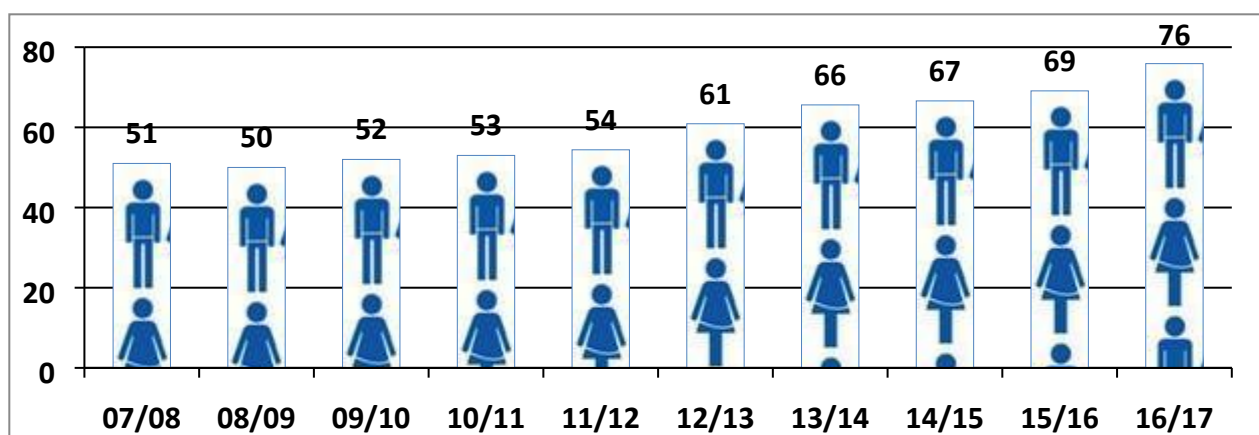
To note the report from the event which took place on 19 January 2017.

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD PERFORMANCE REPORT, APRIL 2017

ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND CARE LEAVERS

NUMBER OF CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

- As at the end of March 2017 there were **1,864** children looked after in Lancashire.
- For every **10,000** children and young people in Lancashire, **75.9** are currently looked after.
- The current number of children looked after further increased in March and is higher than 12 months ago (March 2016 - 1664)
- There are **more** children looked after in Lancashire than in England where 60 out of 10,000 are currently looked after and more than in Lancashire's statistical neighbours (63.7 out of 10,000).
- There are **less** children looked after in Lancashire than the North West (82 out of 10,000).



COMMENTS:

- ❖ Lancashire's number of children looked after further increased in March. There have been big increases in the number of looked after children over the last two years. The rate further increased in 2015/16 to 68 per 10,000.
- ❖ Lancashire's number of children looked after is higher than that of Lancashire's statistical neighbours and the national average but lower than the average of other North West local authorities.
- ❖ Lancashire's statistical neighbours are Bury, Calderdale, Derbyshire, Kent, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Sefton, Staffordshire, Stockport and Stockton-on-Tees.

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 any information received that doesn't lead to a referral.
- The social work teams have moved from initial and core assessments to a new single assessment from 1st April 2014.



	Previous Performance					Current Performance
	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	2016/17 (YTD Ave.)
Contacts <i>per month</i>	1284	1525	750	1575	1788	1831
Referrals <i>per month</i>	1175	1370	1679	868	958	826
Initial Assessments	9891	11288	11865	-	-	-
Core Assessments	5019	5901	5724	-	-	-
Single Assessment started <i>per month</i>	--	--	--	1089	1253	1205

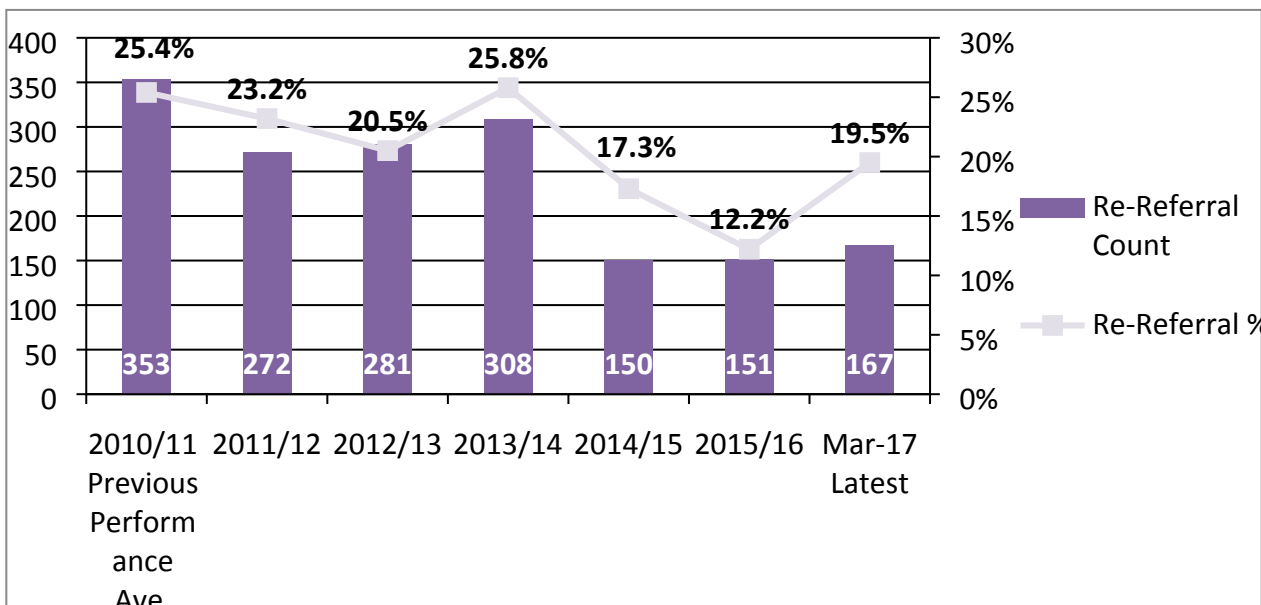
COMMENTS:

- ❖ 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 and referrals were counted differently hence the number of contacts are not comparable to previous years.
- ❖ From 1st April 2014 initial and core assessments were discontinued and the new single assessment was introduced. The first full year shows an average of 1089 assessments were started per month. The second full year shows a 15% rise, with an average of 1253 assessments starting per month.
- ❖ Latest average assessments started per month (1205) are lower than the monthly average experienced in 2016/17 (1253).
- ❖ Referrals per month have reduced in 2016/17, with an average of 826 referrals per month compared with 958 in 2015/16.

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 2015/16 decreased to **less than 16** re-referrals out of each 100 referrals received.



COMMENTS:







- ❖ The re-referral rate has been calculated differently since LCS went live in 2014/15 hence the large decrease.
- ❖ The re-referrals rate for referrals that lead to a single assessment was **19.5%** in March 2017 a return to the rate last observed in November 2016.
- ❖ Prior to the jump in September 2016, re-referral rates had remained below **20%** for over 12 months.
- ❖ Since September 2016, re-referral rates have hovered around the 20% level.

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 March 2017 shows that under **5** out of 100 children looked after have moved twice or more which is good performance and within the target.
- This is better than 15/16 performance of **5.4%** but a big improvement on 2013/14 when **9** out of 100 children looked after had to move twice or more during the year.

Previous Performance			Current Performance	Target	Performance Direction?
2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	March 17		
9.6%	6.8%	5.4%	4.9%	9.5%	
					

COMMENTS:

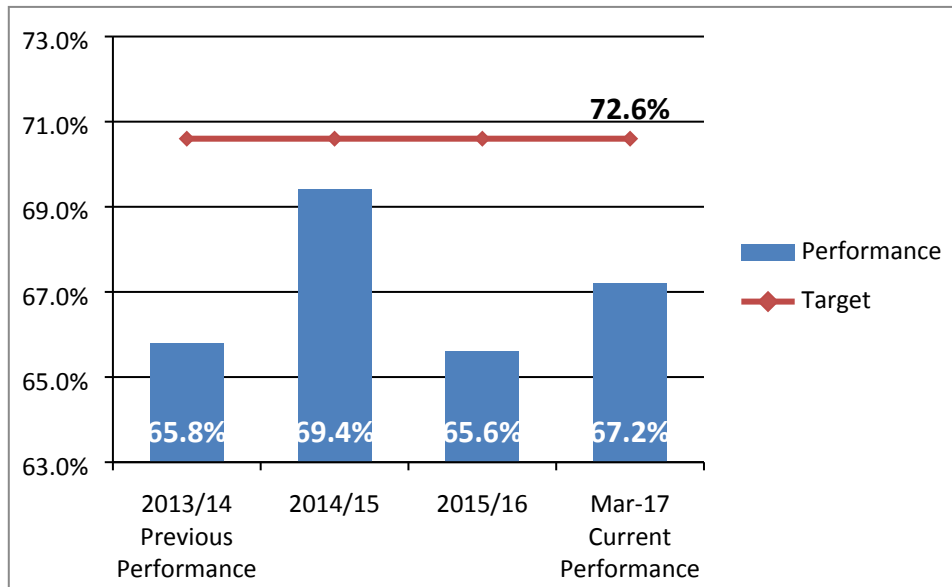
- ❖ Performance has deteriorated in March, but there are still less than 5 out of 100 children looked after moving at least twice over the past year.
- ❖ Lancashire has carried out good placement stability work through research projects and improved processes, which has resulted in better performance and improved stability.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Young people are happy that the figure is low and that the target has been met, however they would like current performance to further improve.

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.
- March 2017 information shows that **67** out of 100 children looked after are in a long and stable placement, which is good performance, but below our target.

- Current performance remains the same as 2015/16 performance (66 out of 100).



COMMENTS:

- ❖ Lancashire has carried out good work on placement stability through research projects and improved processes.
- ❖ This has historically resulted in better performance and improved stability for children looked after.
- ❖ Performance reduced in 2015/16, down to 65.6% of CLA.

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. The Police will also now be able to change missing to absent on the young person's record.

Lancashire County Council worked with multiple agencies including Lancashire Police, to monitor the levels of children missing from care and the yearly breakdowns below are based on that information. However, as of 2016, Lancashire County Council are now solely using LCS to report missing figures and are no longer checking police lists, hence the breakdowns will not be provided for every category going forwards.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Q1 16/17	Q2 16/17	Q3 16/17
Lancashire CLA missing	355	361	166	90	85	76
Number CLA from other LAs missing	355	365	145	63	63	63
Other Children known to Lancashire CSC	408	764	-	-	-	
Other Children Missing	1338	742	-	-	-	
Children Missing within Lancashire boundaries	2456	2222	891	414	422	307

COMMENT:

- ❖ Over the whole year, **22** out of 100 children looked after were reported missing in 2014/15, slightly less than the **24** out of 100 children in 13/14.
- ❖ The numbers represent the number of unique children looked after, and some children have multiple instances of going missing
- ❖ LINX have welcomed the changing protocols for children missing and feel this is good and that they are listened to, 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 2014/15 has been published and performance increased to 14% from 8% the previous year.
- CLA attainment remains significantly lower than attainment for all children and young people of whom almost **6** out of 10 achieve 5 GCSEs at A*-C including English and maths.

	Previous Performance			Current Performance	Target	Performance Direction?
	11/12	12/13	13/14	2014/15		
Lancs	12.8%	12.9%	8%	14%	18.0%	
England	14.9%	15.5%	12%	13.8%	Higher	

COMMENT:

- ❖ In Lancashire, attainment at GCSE among the children looked after increased in 2014/15 with **14** out of **100** CLA achieving 5 A*-C including English and Maths.
- ❖ Across England in 2014/15, just under **14** per 100 children looked after achieved 5 A*-C inc. English & Maths, slightly less than Lancashire's **14** per 100.
- ❖ 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.

- The stress of placement moves, which sometimes require a change in school, was also highlighted. Due to the nature of schools covering parts of the curriculum at different times of the year, those moving schools may miss vital parts of the syllabus.
- Young people would like additional tutors to be made available in children's homes and for those children that are fostered. Looked after children should be entitled to additional support where school moves occur.
- ❖ Young people believe the target performance for CLA achieving 5 GCSEs at A* - C should be 100%. They feel that children undertaking other courses would mean that this wouldn't be attainable, therefore those completing other courses and qualifications should also be included.
 - Whilst the above is a good idea to include the results obtained by children undertaking alternative education, this performance indicator is calculated in this manner as it is a national indicator and all authorities are required to provide information on those achieving 5 GCSEs, including English and Maths.

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 above target in 2013/14 with all children looked after only missing **4** out of every 100 sessions in school
- Attendance in secondary school was better than last year, with all children looked after missing **5** 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	Above target?
	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15		
Primary	96.3%	96.2%	97%	97.2%	97%	96.0%	😊
	↗	↘	↗	↗	↘	↗	
Secondary	92.5%	94.3%	92%	95%	92.7%	96.0%	😞
	↘	↗	↘	↗	↘	✗	

COMMENTS:

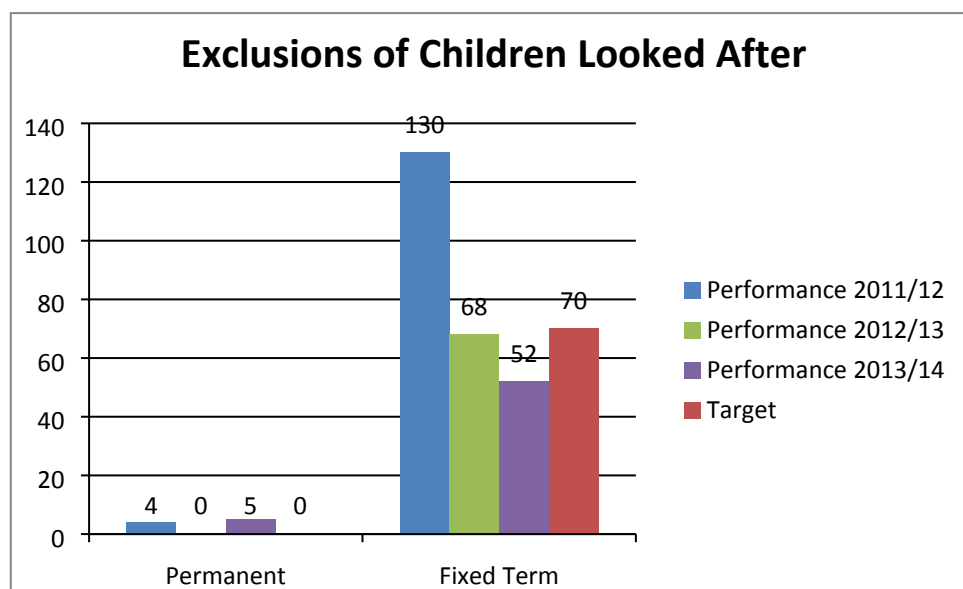
- ❖ Young people feel that the lower performance for secondary school pupils are a reflection of the increased age of these pupils and the free will exerted by those who are older leading them to miss school. The stress of placement moves and of being in care were also cited as reasons for non-attendance, particularly in those secondary school age children and young people.

- ❖ 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.

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 – both lower than the target of **70**, which is good.
- 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.



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, **11** as at 31st March 2017.
- 1.8% of eligible Lancashire CLA were known to the Youth Offending Team in Q3 2016/17.
- 12.7% of young people receiving YOT orders were CLA in Q3 2016/17.

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

- **92** out of 100 children looked after have an up-to-date health assessment (March 2017)
- This is a smaller percentage of up-to-date health assessments than the previous year (March 2016 - **95**)
- **83** out of 100 children looked after have an up-to-date dental assessment (March 2017)
- This position has improved recently after reaching a new in-year low in July 2016 of **66.7%**.

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 and dental assessments in partnership with health colleagues.
- ❖ 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

- **323** children looked after have been adopted over the last 3 years.
- The number of adoptions increased to **119** children looked after being adopted in **15/16**, similar to **14/15** performance of **121**, but much higher than in previous years.
- In the fourth quarter of 2016/17, **18** adoption orders were granted.



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:

- **149** looked after children were given a permanent home under special guardianship order during 15/16, up from **120** in 14/15.
- **10** looked after children were given a permanent home under residence order during 2015/16, a slight decrease on performance last year of **16**.

- In the first quarter of 2016/17, **30** SGOs were granted with a further **5** residence orders. In the second quarter, the figures were identical. Q3 saw a further **23** SGOs granted, with an additional **6** residence orders. In Q4 16/17, 15 SGOs and 4 residence orders were granted.

COMMENTS:

- ❖ Overall more children looked after than ever are being provided with a permanent home under adoption, special guardianship order or residence orders; **278** in 2015/16 which represents considerable success and further improvement on the previous record of **257** in 2014/15.

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":



- As at the end of March 2017, out of 100 care leavers, **92** were considered to be in suitable accommodation

COMMENTS:

- ❖ Young people feel that the target should be 100% as everyone is entitled to be safe and secure. Young people wish to know where the others are residing to not meet this definition.
- ❖ Young people feel that when a young person leaves care, placement options should be available for the young person to consider, review and be approved before the change. Moreover, more support needs to be given around budgeting, as this could be lead to problems paying for rent. Young people think that all children looked after should be involved in this process.

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:

- March 2017 data suggests **49%** of Care Leavers were in education, training or employment.
- Nationally **88** out of 100 young people aged 16-24 are in education, training or employment (March 2016)



COMMENTS:

- ❖ Latest performance suggests that almost half of all care leavers are in education, training or employment.
- ❖ 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. Assistance with writing CVs or developing ICT and/or skills were highlighted as key. 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 were 36 care leavers studying at university including 13 first year students.
- In 2014/15 there were 40 care leavers studying at university, including 10 first year students.
- In 2015/16 there were 44 care leavers studying at university, including 15 first year students. Furthermore, 9 graduated in 2016. However, 5 also dropped out of university.
- In 2016/17, there were 37 care leavers studying at university, including 7 first year students.



COMMENTS:

- ❖ There is a good level of Care Leavers at University in each of the last five years showing that Leaving Care support is there for potential students.
- ❖ Young people feel that these figures show good progress, but there should be many more care leavers going to university.
- ❖ 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 2016/17 is provisional and is subject to change.

New Beginnings Event held on 19 January 2017

Purpose of the report and Summary

The purpose of the report is to provide the Corporate Parenting Board with information regarding the recent New Beginnings event held by Lancashire County Council (LCC) Fostering and Adoption Service.

Key Information for Board Members

Children profiled

Approximately 35 children's profiles were made available at the event. Lancashire profiled 13 children and this was made up of three sibling groups of three, one sibling group of two and two single children both of whom were boys. The profile of the children featured were all children who were likely to be waiting longer given they were siblings of differing age range and boys all of whom tend to wait longer.

Adopters

In total approximately 45 families were invited; 23 of these were Lancashire approved families.

Outcomes

A Lancashire family who were initially considering adopting a sibling group of two attended the event, which enabled discussions with the social worker for a sibling group of three. This has now progressed to a formal link and we are pursuing the placement of these children under Foster to Adopt Regulations. This will enable the children to be placed with the adopters prior to the linking being formally agreed at adoption panel which will be early May 2017.

Whilst only one match has been achieved from this event, as a service we feel the event was successful on many fronts; for a number of Lancashire adopters it was the first time they had attended such an event. It therefore gave them the confidence to attend other such events, they were able to network with other families in similar situation to themselves. For some families it was the first time they had seen children profiled in this way and therefore gave them a greater insight into the types of children who were waiting to be adopted. Also, for a number of families who only thought of adopting one child, it has opened their mind to considering adopting siblings.

The feedback from the families who attended was extremely positive.

In future years, Lancashire hopes to hold two such events a year. Our next event is planned to take place in September 2017.

Background

On the 19 January 2017, Lancashire County Council hosted a New Beginnings Event. The event was arranged with a focus on the 'harder to place children'. Whilst the event was arranged by Lancashire, it was extended to our colleagues from other North West Local Authorities and adoption agencies. In attendance were colleagues from Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Bolton Council, Blackpool Borough Council, Tameside Council and Caritas Care. All the Authorities profiled children and Caritas Care invited a few of their families.

The event was opened by County Councillor Prynne, chair of the Corporate Parenting Board who spoke about the need to avoid delays for children and if families could open their minds to considering Fostering for Adoption/concurrency as an option, this would allow children to be placed with adopters at a much earlier stage thus ensuring the reduction of fracture attachments and ensure greater stability.

An adoptive parent who had adopted one child and was in the process of adopting the sibling gave very inspiring talk about her experience of adopting children whose matching consideration was different from what she originally thought she could consider.

Decisions required

No decisions are required. This paper is for note and information only.

Georgine Lee
Senior Manager
Fostering, Adoption and Scayt+ service
Lancashire County Council