

Lancashire County Council

Corporate Parenting Board

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 22nd May, 2019 at 6.00 pm in
Committee Room 'D' - The Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston**

Present: Members

County Councillor Ian Brown	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Stephen Clarke	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Carl Crompton	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Jayne Rear	- Lancashire County Council
Marieta Birt	- Fostering Forum
Michelle	- LINX Representative
Kris	- LINX Representative
Sinead	- LINX Representative
Harmony	- LINX Representative
Natasha	- LINX Representative
Bradley	- LINX Representative

Co-opted members

Jeanette Woods	- Residential Providers
Audrey Swann	- Vulnerable and Looked After Children, LCC
Amanda Mansfield	- Independent Reviewing Officers, LCC
Mia Leyland	- Barnardo's
Michelle Dawson	- Barnardo's

Other Attendees

Andy Smith	- Safeguarding, Audit and Inspection, LCC
Jane Hylton	- Leaving Care, LCC
Sam Gorton	- Democratic Services, LCC
Gavin Redhead	- Participation, LCC
Charlotte Iddon	- Education, Quality and Performance Team, LCC

1. Introductions and Apologies

All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were received and noted from Angela Epps, Caroline Waldron, Lynda Pearson, Stephen Young and Rachel Blundell.

County Councillor Carl Crompton was in attendance for County Councillor Julie Gibson and Andy Smith was replacing Barbara Bath for this meeting.

County Councillor Jayne Rear was replacing County Councillor Phillippa Williamson as a Board member.

Catherine the adoption representative had resigned from the Board and a replacement was being sought.

The Chair congratulated Jane Hylton who had recently won an award at the PROUD celebration event.

2. Notes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from 28 March 2019

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 March 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

County Councillor Brown informed the Board that following the last meeting and the discussions on housing, he had contacted Onward Homes in Ribble Valley re social housing for care leavers. Their response was forwarded to Barbara Bath and Rachel Blundell for reference.

3. Getting to Good Plan

Andy Smith, Safeguarding, Inspection and Audit Team updated the Board on the progress of the Getting to Good Plan.

In 2018 the Authority moved from a rating of 'Inadequate' to 'Requires Improvement' on the journey to being 'Good'. Lots of work had and was being undertaken.

A Getting to Good Board had been set up which the Corporate Parenting Board links in to along with the Operational Board - Permanence and Children in our Care.

Children's Services had recently undergone a Peer Review around Permanence and a Joint Targeted Area Inspection.

Following this 11 recommendations were made and key issues were as following:

- Children Looked After Plans
- Leaving Care - Challenges for Managers and Independent Reviewing Officers
- Plans not progressing
- If things are not happening, young people can challenge them
- Permanence and Planning
- Data

The focus for improvement was not just for the local authority, it also included other agencies such as health. Good partnership working was needed to enable purposeful practice and that the needs of the young person was met all the way through the system.

There were currently 142 actions on the plan which are all RAG rated.

In permanence planning, and the Authority's corporate responsibility there should be no drift and delay. There should be a clear plan for permanence. This needs to be strengthened and Teams need to be a lot better at this. The Peer Challenge was taking place w/c 20 May 2019 and were looking at corporate responsibilities for children in care and care leavers.

The Permanence Policy had been rewritten.

Challenges the Service face were recognising the change of Social Workers and the impact this had on young people. The teams try to minimise this as much as possible. Another was the caseloads that Social Workers have which are around 25-28 per worker. Retention of staff and agency staff was also a big issue.

The number of children looked after going off child protection plans was increasing which has a significant effect on social workers caseloads.

4. Education, Employment and Training

LINX presented this item to the Board and had distributed around the room posters of their journeys through education and beyond if applicable. Members were then asked to look at the young people's journeys and then produce their own and compare them with the young peoples.

Following this exercise and discussion, the Board agreed that our young people's experiences in education should not be any different to its corporate parents' educational journeys.

Audrey Swann, Headteacher for Vulnerable and Challenging Groups, Education, Quality and Performance gave a presentation on Promoting the Education of Children Looked After in Lancashire to the Board.

Audrey reported on the results from last year for all Key Stages.

At Key Stage 1: age 7, children in our care achieved better than the national average in Reading, Writing and Science, however did not do so well in Maths. There was a gap between children who are in care and those who are not, however, results were going in the right direction. These results have been compared with the rest of the County and previous years in Lancashire. When children move schools, Maths attainments tends to suffer more and this was also the case if a child misses a number of weeks of school also.

At Key Stage 2: age 11, children in our care did better than the national average in Writing, Maths and Reading Writing and Maths together. An improvement was needed on Reading. Results were much better than the previous year.

At Key Stage 4: age 16, children looked after achieved better results than the last four years with average Attainment 8 scores rising by 3.4% and these were very close to the national average. More of our young people achieved Grade 4 and above in English (25%) and Maths (18.5%). This was a good significant rise, however there was still a gap between attainments for children in care and those who were not in care.

At Key Stage 5: age 17/18, 12 of our young people achieved Level 3 qualifications with four achieving distinctions. 84% of our year 13 young people achieved at least one qualification.

Higher Education – the number of our young people going on to university had increased from 32 (April 2017) to 54 (March 2019). This figure still needs to increase, especially with the number of care leavers in Lancashire (approximately 900) who are aged 16-25. Care leavers are supported with higher education up to the age of 25.

Audrey informed the Board what was happening next:

- Attachment aware schools – whole school training for up to 84 schools over the next two years – this will raise awareness, understanding and knowledge of adverse childhood experiences such as separation and the impact on children. It will also help school staff to provide the appropriate support for the pupils affected.
- Empower Academy, Key Stage 4 Conference.
- Home reading project.
- New Personal Education Plans (PEPs) – pupil voice a priority.
- On line learning tool for all our children, young people and their carers.
- More recognition and celebration of success: we need ideas.

Young people were asked for ideas on how they can celebrate success. There are the annual PROUD awards, however, wanted to look at something on a more regular basis.

Resolved: LINX to discuss ideas for regular celebrations and feedback to Audrey Swann their suggestions.

Care leavers who had undertaken apprenticeships in 2017, 10 had gained employment, 34 had gained employment in 2018 and this year there were 21 doing apprenticeships. Two of the apprentices at Lancashire County Council had now changed to attend University.

5. Protection from Harm and Risk of Exploitation and Permanence and Planning

This report was deferred due to apologies from the presenter and will come back to the Board at a future meeting.

6. LINX/Care Leavers Forum Update

The Board received an update from LINX (Lancashire's Children in Care Council) and the Care Leaver's Forum on what they had been involved with since the last Corporate Parenting Board meeting:

- Virtual Schools Peer Review
- Social Workers Academy
- Annual Review meeting for Barnardo's participation
- PROUD Awards
- Care Leavers Network Journey in Glasgow
- All Party Parliamentary Group to discuss personal advisors (PAs) and knife crime
- Care Leavers Forum
- LINX (Lancashire's Children in Care Council)
- Interviewed for the Council's Director of Children's Social Care

7. Corporate Parenting Board Strategy Action Plan

The Board discussed the Action Plan. It was felt that there needed to be names against objectives as to who was leading on each objective and following each Board meeting, the plan should be updated and be a working document for the Board to refer to. It was agreed that:

Resolved: That a sub-committee look at the Action Plan and that County Councillor Ian Brown would take this forward and speak to Barbara Bath, Gavin Redhead and Edwina Grant about it.

8. Any Other Business

Mind of My Own

Gavin Redhead reminded the Board that Mind of My Own was a commissioned tool and still had two years left. The Board were asked to encourage young people to sign up to the tool and get an account. If anybody requires a booklet or training, these are still available.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at Hothersall Lodge Outdoor Education Centre, Longridge on Wednesday, 24 July 2019 at 1.30pm and young people are looking at issues that are top priority and will bring it to the next agenda setting meeting. Gavin Readhead will work with the young people and Barnardo's for this meeting.