

Feedback from children and young people in residential and foster care

Children's feedback on their foster or residential placements are monitored by the following:

- Observations on visits by both the child's social worker and the supervising social worker
- Direct consultation with the child on visits
- The child is consulted as part of their own CLA review
- The child is consulted as part of the foster carer review
- Young people are consulted during Regulation 33 monitoring inspections, which are carried out by independent visiting officers. Regulation 33 monitors the residential Children's Home on a monthly basis.
- Regulation 34 facilitates monitoring and evaluation which is required by Ofsted on a monthly basis.
- Ofsted Inspectors, as part of their twice-yearly inspection, consult with all young people living at the Home.
- Young People are directly consulted on a formal basis each month as part of regular key-worker sessions.
- Young people are consulted as part of regular – often weekly – children's meetings.

The Independent Reviewing Officer for foster carers key worker reviews, reports the following;

PAF2's (foster carers review form) are generally being completed by carers and often these give me a better insight into how they have actually 'fostered' as the carers can reflect upon the specific children in placement in the review period and discuss what has gone well and what has been more challenging. The tier report is often an overall account of how they have met the general tier evidence requirements.

Carers own children often complete the consultation forms and these are generally positive, although some children do find it difficult when children display behaviour which they find difficult, such as hurting them or their parents.

It is pleasing to see that most of the children looked after do complete the consultation forms. Generally they report that they are happy and well cared for although this is often followed with concern for their parents and siblings and wishing they could see them more. Occasionally a young person may say that they are not happy in placement and when this is the case, I always contact the SSW to find out more information. Sometimes this will lead to the SSW contacting the CCSW or another worker involved with the children to see if they have noted any concerns. (Sue Briggs, Fostering IRO).

The fostering service this year introduced a scheme to support children at risk of becoming looked after (LIFT). Progress on the scheme to date reports.

LIFT has successfully supported and now ended involvement for 5 children and young people to secure a more positive outcome in their circumstances. We have in addition attempted to secure a more positive outcome for 1 child currently in foster carer however the young person in question did not wish to return home and therefore the plan was not progressed. We are currently actively engaged in support for a further 9 families (12 children directly involved in the project and linked to a mentor). The input provided to these families will also have a positive impact on other siblings in the households that are not currently linked to the project. In all 9 cases I have received very positive feedback from the families, the young people and the referring social workers regarding the LIFT project and the mentor's involvement to date. (Tracey Kelly, project lead).

Children in foster care, were consulted at their Children Looked After Reviews with regards to establishing a children in foster care forum, the outcome being that children in foster care did not want a separate forum.

Young people looked after in a residential setting take part in regular keyworker sessions which form a report thus influencing their Placement Plan, Risk Assessment and Individual Behaviour Support Plan.

There is also a system whereby young people are asked to evaluate all members of staff in regards to the care they receive from each individual. The feedback gained from this exercise, carried out on a regular basis, is fully discussed in team meetings and supervision sessions, and allows for reflective practice which has effected change to practice and care to the young people.

All young people in foster care and residential are informed of the Children in Care Council and encouraged to participate.