

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting	Children and Young People Select Committee
Date and Time	Tuesday 11th July 2023 at 10.00am
Place	Ashburton Hall, Elizabeth II Court, The Castle, Winchester
Enquiries to	members.services@hants.gov.uk

Carolyn Williamson FCPFA
Chief Executive
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting may be recorded and broadcast live on the County Council's website and available for repeat viewing, it may also be recorded and filmed by the press and public. Filming or recording is only permitted in the meeting room whilst the meeting is taking place so must stop when the meeting is either adjourned or closed. Filming is not permitted elsewhere in the building at any time. Please see the Filming Protocol available on the County Council's website.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 10)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

4. DEPUTATIONS

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements the Chairman may wish to make.

6. SCHOOL TRANSPORT UPDATE (Pages 11 - 20)

To receive a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an update to the Children and Young People's Select Committee on the implementation of the changes to School Transport Policy made in 2022.

7. SERVICES SUPPORTING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME IN HAMPSHIRE (Pages 21 - 40)

To receive a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the existing services for children and young people with Down Syndrome in Hampshire which Hampshire County Council contributes to and/or supports, alongside the wider children's partnership.

8. ANNUAL CHILDREN IN CARE REPORT 2022-23 (Pages 41 - 110)

To receive a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the achievements, progress and challenges of the services provided by Hampshire Children's Services to children in the care of Hampshire County Council.

9. ANNUAL CARE LEAVERS REPORT 2022 (Pages 111 - 128)

To receive a report from the Director of Children's Services providing the Children & Young People Select Committee with an overview of the achievements, progress, and challenges in meeting the needs of Hampshire's Care Leavers in 2022.

10. UPDATE ON AUTISM SERVICES COMMISSIONING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HAMPSHIRE (Pages 129 - 136)

To receive a regular written information update on Autism Services Commissioning for Children and Young People in Hampshire, from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Partnership of Clinical Commissioning Groups.

11. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 137 - 142)

To consider and approve the Children and Young People Select Committee Work Programme.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

ABOUT THIS MEETING:

The press and public are welcome to attend the public sessions of the meeting. If you have any particular requirements, for example if you require wheelchair access, please contact members.services@hants.gov.uk for assistance.

County Councillors attending as appointed members of this Committee or by virtue of Standing Order 18.5; or with the concurrence of the Chairman in connection with their duties as members of the Council or as a local County Councillor qualify for travelling expenses.

This page is intentionally left blank

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

AT A MEETING of the Children and Young People Select Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on Monday 6th
March 2023

Chairman:

p Councillor Neville Penman

p Councillor Juliet Henderson
p Councillor Prad Bains
p Councillor Jackie Branson
p Councillor Ann Briggs
p Councillor Steven Broomfield
Councillor Tim Davies
a Councillor Christopher Donnelly
p Councillor David Drew

p Councillor Zoe Huggins
p Councillor Gavin James
a Councillor Melville Kendal
p Councillor Arun Mummalaneni
p Councillor Jackie Porter
p Councillor Jacky Tustain
a Councillor Malcolm Wade

Co-opted members

p Robert Sanders, Church of England Schools Representative
p Gemma Rainger, Parent Governor for Primary Schools
p Hannah Cheek, Parent Governor for Secondary Schools

86. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Kendall and Cllr Donnelly; Cllr Pankhurst and Cllr Meenaghan was present as the deputy for the Conservative Group.

Apologies had also been received by Cllr Wade; Cllr Irish was present as the deputy for the Liberal Democrat Group.

87. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

No declarations were made.

88. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

89. **DEPUTATIONS**

The Committee did not receive any deputations.

90. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman noted that members of the committee had received a report from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board providing the usual written update on Autism Services Commissioning for Children and Young People in Hampshire. As this report was not available in time for the meeting's publication it did not form part of the agenda. Their Associate Director had apologised for this and assured the Chairman that future updates would be provided in time.

The Chairman also noted that this was to be the last Select Committee for Brian Pope, Assistant Director for Education and Inclusion ahead of his retirement. The Chairman thanked Brian for his dedicated service to the Select Committee, Hampshire County Council and it's residents and wished him well for the future.

91. **ATTAINMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HAMPSHIRE SCHOOLS 2022**

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the attainment of children and young people in Hampshire schools and Post-16 settings (see Item 6 in the Minute Book).

Officers reminded the committee of the context surrounding this update, including the impact of the pandemic on attendance and the increase of pupils experiencing disadvantage. Members noted the attainment levels across Primary and Secondary schools, covering Foundation through to Key Stage 4. This included details of the Attainment 8 and Ebacc measures, which both remained above the national average.

The Committee heard that attainment at Post 16 remained strong with all key performance indicators above national measures for both A level and vocational qualifications. Members also received an update on pupils experiencing vulnerabilities and the school improvement work being undertaken in this area. It was noted that there were several research led initiatives to ensure that the right support was provided at the right time through workstreams built to allow capacity across the system.

In response to questions members heard that:

- School improvement was the responsibility of the individual schools, but Hampshire's School Improvement Service offered assistance in this area.
- Following the pandemic, it has been recommended for schools to develop a SEND plan due to the impact on this area. Mental Health Support Teams are available in some areas of the county, alongside SENCO networks and outreach from special schools.

- That a breakdown by district or borough could be made available, but the data would need to be considered with caution as many families choose to educate their children away from their immediate area.
- There is a need for a focus on attendance as this has been identified as the key issue to improving attainment.
- The County Council does well with new teacher recruitment but there are challenges with retention, especially after three to four years' service.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the contents of the report.

92. **ETHNIC MINORITY AND TRAVELLER ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE REPORT**

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) (see Item 7 in the Minute Book).

The committee received data on the number of referrals received by month since September 2019, showing the exceptionally high referral numbers for 2021/22 alongside an overview of the impact this has had on the service. This included staffing and capacity pressures due to the level of demand.

Members noted the continuing concerns regarding Traveller children's engagement and attainment in all key stages but that the EMTAS continued to work with the community to address this. Members heard that many groups who previously have had a pattern of under attainment are now showing more favourable outcomes.

In response to questions members heard that:

- Due to the war in Ukraine the team was experiencing an unprecedented number of young people with difficulties in relation to trauma, language and culture.
- The service has provided support for over 160 languages across Hampshire, and that where the language cannot be matched training is provided for staff.
- Online education is being provided at weekends to provide support for their citizens currently displaced.
- Some groups are reluctant to identify their ethnicity for several reasons and mask it under another or more general one.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the work of EMTAS in supporting Hampshire's ethnic minority children, young people and their families and the progress made in addressing both the priorities in the service plan and the long-term sustainability of the Service.

93. **HAMPSHIRE YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM (HYOT) REPORT**

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on Hampshire's Youth Offending Team (see Item 8 in the Minute Book).

The committee heard that the service had recently had a review and would be known as Hampshire's Youth Justice Service moving forwards and received an overview of the governance behind the service's statutory partnership.

Members noted that the service works with young people who are subject to Court Orders, Cautions, have been diverted away from becoming a 'First Time Entrant' or have been referred for Youth Crime Prevention. Members received an overview of the service's performance and quality, noting that the last inspection in May 2018 was Good and the next was due in 2014 under a new inspection programme.

Officers set out the requirements of the Annual Youth Justice Plan which set out the governance, leadership and funding for the work undertaken. This would be underpinned by the 'Child First' vision of the Youth Justice System.

In response to questions members heard that:

- There continued to be a focus on restorative justice, for which parents would be present for. It was noted that part of the initial assessment is in relation to parents.
- There are very few gang related incidents in Hampshire.
- Reparation is voluntary and no longer able to be ordered, so can be difficult to motivate individuals to engage with this.
- There are many activities available developed including sports and creative endeavours, including many provided by outside bodies.
- There continues to be a focus on staff education and identifying barriers to ensure that young people are not disproportionately impacted due to their race or ethnicity.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the positive work of Hampshire's Youth Offending Team during the last 10 months.

94. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Director of People and Organisation presented the Committee's work programme (see Item 9 in the Minute Book).

It was noted that the Work Programme was missing an upcoming meeting, and that an amended copy of the Work Programme would be circulated to members of the committee.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme, subject to any amendments made during the meeting, is agreed.

Chairman, Children and Young People
Select Committee

This page is intentionally left blank

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee	Children and Young People Select Committee
Date:	11 July 2023
Title:	School Transport Update
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Suzanne Smith, Assistant Director, Children's Services

Tel: 01962 846270

Email: Suzanne.smith2@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to:
2. Update the Children and Young People's Select Committee following the implementation of the changes to School Transport Policy made in 2022.
3. Summarise the current issues, service improvements and priorities for the School Transport Service.

Recommendation

4. That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the contents of the report.

Executive Summary

5. The following changes to the School Transport Entitlement Policy were introduced from September 2022, following a public consultation and decision at the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services Decision Day on 12 July 2022:
 - Increase the use of co-ordinated pick up and drop off points for SEND children.
 - Arrange journeys to more commonly serve multiple schools and colleges and age groups, including journeys that serve both mainstream and special schools and colleges.
6. The Transport Service have not implemented new transport arrangements based on this policy change. By September 2022, the majority of new transport arrangements for the 2022/23 academic year had been set up and it was determined that it would not be acceptable to families to make changes at a late stage. The Service will consider these arrangements on a case by case basis when commissioning transport for the 2023/24 academic year and

subsequent years.

7. Nationally, the external transport provider market is challenging as a result of driver shortages and some operators exiting the market post Brexit and post Covid. This has resulted in a lack of competition, in turn driving prices up, and transport operators handing back contracts, sometimes at extremely short notice.
8. Since 2012/13, there has been an increase of over 30% in SEND children requiring transport to school, but costs have more than trebled.
9. SEND children are more likely to require smaller (more costly) vehicles, experience longer journeys to school, and are more likely to require accompaniment from a Passenger Assistant.
10. To address the above pressures, this report also provides a summary of service improvements, issues and priorities for the School Transport Service.

Background Information

11. The School Transport Service employs 30 Full Time Employees (equivalent) and in the 2022/23 financial year, the Service spent £50.2m on School Transport Services, of which £1.56m relates to operating costs. The remainder is spent on the provision of transport and passenger assistants.
12. In 2022/23 the Service was overspent by £9.4m, almost entirely as a result of cost pressures relating to SEN (Special Educational Needs) transport. This rise is forecast to continue, linked to the increase in SEN children receiving transport from 2,200 to 3,000 (+36%). This period is from 2012/13 - 2022/23. The forecasts suggest that this could increase to as many as 4,000 by 2026/27. For SEN pupils, the comparable unit cost rose by 132% over the same period, from an average per child of £350 to £812 each month. The average unit cost is based on the total spend of the year divided by the average number of SEN pupils on transport.
13. These cost pressures mean that the Service is mainly limited to only those children that have a statutory entitlement to receive transport to school. Mainstream children of compulsory school age who attend their nearest or catchment school are entitled to transport assistance when they live more than the statutory walking distances from school or the route is unsafe based on the School Transport Policy.
14. For children with SEND, an individual assessment that considers specific needs is completed by the SEN Service. The Department for Education guidance makes provision for local authorities to use discretion to provide transport assistance for children who would not normally be eligible. In Hampshire, there are a few situations where the Service provides discretionary transport assistance.

15. School Transport is provided to around 13,500 school and college students each day, broken down as follows:

Category	Number of Pupils	Spend (22/23)
Primary - Mainstream	1,600	£2.6M
Secondary - Mainstream	8,000	£9.2M
SEN	3,000	£26.9M
Post-16 SEN	750	£3.7M
Alternative Provisions - Discretionary	200	£0.9M

Update on 2022 School Transport Policy Changes

16. Two changes to the School Transport Entitlement Policy were introduced from September 2022 following a public consultation and decision at the Executive Lead Member for Children’s Services Decision Day on 12 July 2022:

- Increase the use of co-ordinated pick up and drop off points for SEND children
- Arrange journeys to more commonly serve multiple schools and colleges and age groups, including journeys that serve both mainstream and special schools and colleges.

17. Children’s needs are taken into account when determining the suitability of this type of transport arrangement and each assessment is on a case by case basis.

18. Other mitigations to concerns raised during the consultation include:

- Pick up points will be chosen by applying local knowledge of the route, National Road Safety Guidelines and safety requirements when waiting and joining the vehicles.
- The wellbeing of children with SEND will continue to be ensured. All transport arrangements will be organised taking account of the individual needs of children and in accordance with the School Transport Entitlement policy.
- To support the wellbeing of travelling children, passenger assistants will continue to be deployed where required, supporting either individual children or the group of children on the vehicle.

19. Neither of the 2022 changes to the School Transport Policy were intended to lead to widescale changes for significant numbers of children.

20. Prior to the 2022 School Transport Policy change, there were a small number of transport arrangements in place using pick up points and route sharing between schools (four schools with 15 separate transport routes for 203 children).

21. Following the update to the School Transport Policy in 2022, no new transport arrangements that make use of shared pick up points or multiple schools

have been implemented. The Service will continue to look at optimising routes in line with our tendering and commissioning strategy whilst ensuring individual needs are considered on a case by case basis.

The School Transport Service

22. Between June to September each year, the School Transport Service receives an influx of school transport applications, resulting in requirements to commission transport arrangements for the new academic year. Last year, 60% mainstream applications (2,193 applications) 38% SEN applications (712 applications), and 61% Post 16 applications (380 applications) were received between 1 June 2022 and 31 August 2022 for the 2022/23 academic year. **A similar number of applications are projected for the same period for the 2023/24 academic year.**
23. Since last year, a number of improvements have been implemented in the School Transport Service. Three areas of focus were identified as a priority for improvement which directly relate to the quality of service for Parents/Carers:
 1. Eligibility assessment decisions
 2. Tendering and commissioning strategy
 3. Passenger Assistant recruitment
24. **Mainstream and Post 16 Eligibility assessment decisions** - All transport applications are assessed according to the School Transport Policy. The Service have implemented substantial improvements to ensure that applications are assessed as quickly as possible. The outcome is communicated to Parents/Carers in a timely manner through the Hampshire Education Online Portal to enable families to make appropriate arrangements.
25. **Review of tendering and commissioning strategy** - currently most transport is tendered and commissioned on a route-by-route basis, with each route (a vehicle with a number of children) going through a separate commissioning process. Through the implementation of a commissioning strategy to bundle routes, we hope to better tackle the shortages of vehicles, drivers and passenger assistants which results in cancellations at short notice, issues with transport and significant high costs. Officers have reviewed contracts by school to identify opportunities for optimising routes, so in turn, we provide a more reliable and consistent service that can be closely contract managed. The reduction in the number of transport providers serving each school also improves the collaboration and communication between the operators, schools and parents. In some cases, one operator covers all routes for schools. This is currently the case for 20% of the overall spend and the aim is to increase this year on year. The one operator per school enables consistency for the families with the contract being longer term in most cases to cover the length of the school years.
26. **Passenger Assistant Recruitment** – there is a national shortage of Passenger Assistants (PAs), and in Hampshire there are several

geographical areas where these shortages are greater than average (Rushmoor, Eastleigh, Basingstoke and Andover). Work has been undertaken with the Council's Insight and Engagement Team to identify the most appealing aspects of the role, the demographic profile of those the role might appeal to, resulting in a refreshed and targeted recruitment campaign: [Careers in home-to-school transport | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/careers-in-home-to-school-transport).

The banner features a teal background with a pattern of small white icons. On the left, a yellow circular sticker contains the text '£10.79 an hour'. In the center, a quote reads: 'You get to know the children by their personalities, not their disabilities, and I really love it. It's the best job I've ever had, it truly is' followed by '- Elaine, school passenger assistant'. On the right, a photograph shows an elderly woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a light-colored striped shirt, smiling as she reads a small book or card. At the bottom, a dark teal bar contains the text 'Make a difference. Be a passenger assistant' and 'Can you provide a warm welcome on board school transport?'. The top of the banner has a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Jobs, careers and volunteering > Careers with Hampshire County Council'.

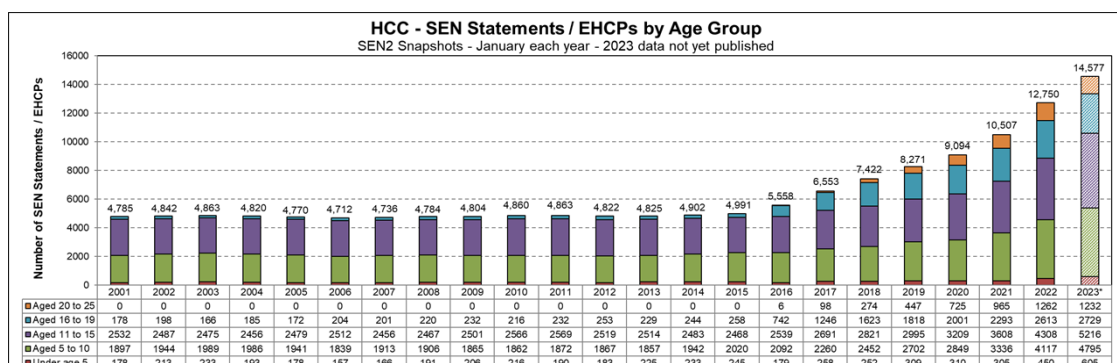
27. The campaign is having a positive impact, with the Service carrying out an increased number of interviews for prospective candidates and appointing more new starters.
28. The Service have also invested time to improve the retention of Passenger Assistants with an engagement plan which covers face to face training, inductions and beginning of term and end of term welcome sessions. These were all previously online. The Service has also introduced a Recognition Scheme to financially recognise those introducing a new starter to the team.
29. **Triage and Communication** - the Service have implemented a contact centre, triage function and new communication strategy to improve the interaction with Parents/Carers, Schools and Operators. The contact centre is manned from 7am – 5pm when the School Transport service is operational. At peak periods during from June to September, the Service receives approximately on average 750 calls and 1,500 emails per day. It is also possible to email the service, where we triage and prioritise each email.
30. The School Transport service have identified a number of changes to the website to provide up-to-date information and sufficient clarity regarding the school transport processes. These changes will be in place mid-July 2023.
31. The Service has also adopted a 'Phone First' approach to improve our communications and support the resolution of issues.
32. The communication channels used, and the frequency of communications have also been reviewed. A number of communications have already gone out through multiple channels such as Hantsnet, School Comms Portal and

Gov Notify. To date, this has had a positive impact and has resulted in an increase in the number of on time applications following our communications.

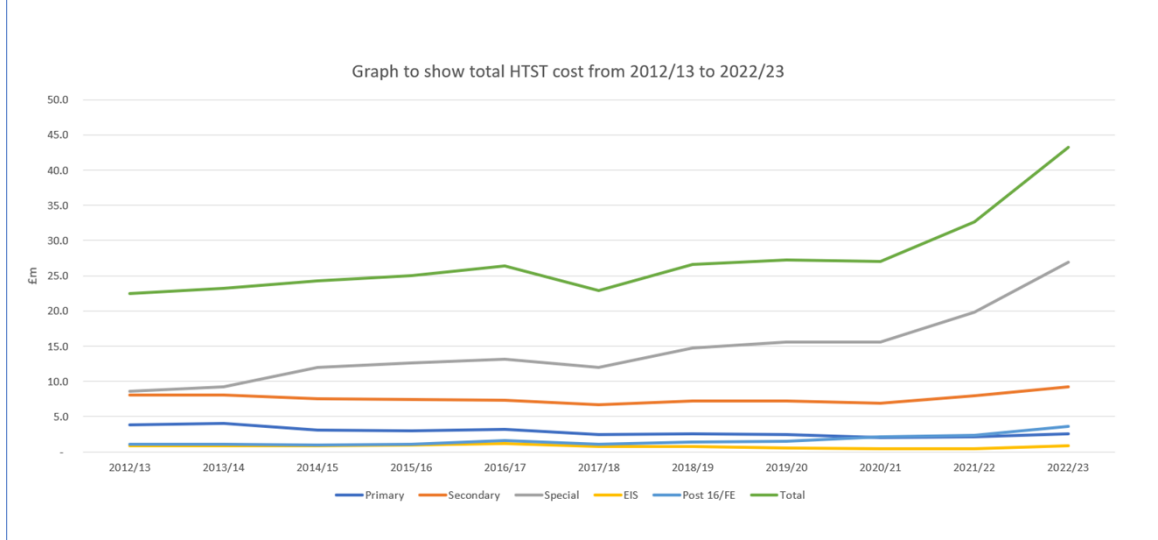
33. Communications regarding all transport arrangements for the new academic year will be sent out in July and August, including confirmation for Parents/ Carers where the transport arrangements remain the same.
34. The service is evaluating customer relationship management software (already adopted by several services within Hampshire County Council) with a view to implementing this in in 2024. This would further improve the customer experience.
35. Other improvements – in addition to the priorities outlined in paragraphs 22- 31 above, the Service has also:
 - Completed a review of business processes to ensure they are optimised, with the experience of families at the centre.
 - Introduced a new eligibility assessment process to allow bulk assessment of applications where it is appropriate to do so, resulting in faster decision making. Where possible, pulled forward transport route planning to reduce activity during August.
36. Despite these improvements, there is no doubt that the June to September period will be busy – this is unavoidable due to the start of the new academic year, the size and geography of Hampshire, and the need to optimise vehicle use whilst ensuring children arrive at school safe and ready to learn.
37. The 30 full time equivalent staff in the School Transport Service operate at high staffing levels from June through to the end of September to accommodate the peak demand. Annual leave is strictly limited in this period and the vast majority is approved outside of this period where the volume of transport applications and arrangements are lower.

Finance

38. The cost of providing School Transport is rising rapidly and has been doing so for a sustained period. The increases correlate with the 2014 SEN reforms and the associated increases in numbers of children with Education Health and Care Plans as shown in the graphs below:



Total School Transport Cost from 2012/13 to 2022/23



39. The increase in the number of SEN children receiving transport has increased from 2,200 to 3,000 (+36%) since 2012/13 and the forecasts suggest that this could increase to as many as 4,000 by 2026/27.
40. For SEN pupils, the comparable unit cost rose by 132% over the same period, from an average per child of £350 to £812 each month.
41. In essence, the key information that brings this problem to light is contained in the table below which shows the decline in mainstream school transport provision and the dramatic increase in SEND and Post 16 spend, exacerbated by significant cost increase across the market:

	Primary M'stream	Secondary M'stream	SEN	Post 16	Other	Total
2012/13 Student Numbers	2,459	9,114	2,220	500	331	14,624
2012/13 Unit Cost – Monthly	142	81	350	201	226	1,000
2012/13 Unit Cost - Annual	1,565	888	3,849	2,212	2,482	10,996
2012/13 Cost	£3.8m	£8.1m	£8.5m	£1.1m	£0.8m	£22.3m
2022/23 Student Numbers	1,605	8,023	3,023	390	193	13,234
2022/23 Unit Cost – Monthly	147	104	809	840	419	2,319
2022/23 Unit Cost - Annual	1,621	1,148	8,899	9,235	4,604	25,507
2022/23 Cost	£2.6m	£9.2m	£26.9m	£3.6m	£0.9m	£43.2m

2025/26 Student Numbers	1,588	7,830	3,600	535	173	13,726
2025/26 Unit Cost – Monthly	175	106	1,191	1,624	639	3,735
2025/26 Unit Cost - Annual	1,927	1,167	13,098	17,865	7,029	41,086
2025/26 Estimated Cost	£3.1m	£9.1m	£47.1m	£9.6m	£1.2m	£70.1m

Potential reasons for the rise in costs

42. There is a shortage of places at dedicated SEN schools. Since 2014, the number of special school places has risen by 34%. The number of children with an EHCP has risen by 155% over the same timescale. Not all children with an EHCP need to go to a special school, but the rise in numbers creates extra pressure on places. The result of this is when a school place is found for a child, it is likely to be further away and so transport is more expensive.
43. Market factors – there is a lack of capacity in the transport provider market, specifically there is a shortage of operators overall and a severe shortage of drivers. With under-supply in the market this drives up prices due to lack of competition.
44. Conversations with SEN Headteachers indicate that the level of children's needs are increasing. As medical techniques and outcomes improve children with higher levels of need are able to benefit from education. For School Transport, this means that children are more likely to require an adapted vehicle or a Passenger Assistant, both of which are in short supply, or to travel solo in a car. All of these factors increase the average cost of providing transport.
45. There is a popular focus on short term cost of living increases. These do create pressure on operators to increase driver pay but only account for a proportion of the sustained rise in prices that has been at a rate well above inflation for many years.
46. Over the same period, total SEN transport costs have more than trebled from £8.5m to £27m. In 2012/13 SEN transport accounted for 38% of the total transport spend, it is now 65%.
47. If current trends in the growth in numbers of SEN children continue, and the unit cost of transport for those children continue to rise, transport spend for this cohort could more than double again by 2026/27.

Conclusions

48. The School Transport Service commission and organise over five million journeys each year, for more than 13,500 children. The vast majority of

transport arrangements run smoothly each day.

49. An increasing number of children have significant needs and the transport provider market is struggling to meet demand. These factors are increasing the costs of transport, resulting in significant budget pressures which are forecast to increase over the forthcoming years.
50. There is a direct correlation between the increase in SEND school transport demand and the 2014 SEND reforms.
51. If central government were to delegate responsibility for setting school transport policy to local authorities, such policies could take account of local demography and infrastructure. This could facilitate:
 - Thorough means testing; asking those families who can afford to pay, to make a contribution to the cost of school transport. Learning from our current Post 16 provision, which is already means tested, is that parents do not understand the full cost of the service tThey believe that the 25-30% of the total cost that is passed on to them is actually the whole cost. There would be a significant overhead in administering means testing, which would need to be funded.
 - Amending eligibility and placing a greater emphasis on parents' responsibilities to get their children to school. For example, children would only become eligible if they live further than the statutory distance and where their parents can demonstrate that they are unable to get them to school.
 - Where essential, increase the acceptable journey times which would lower costs by reducing the number of solo vehicles required. This could result in more stress and anxiety for the children travelling to school.
 - References could be changed from "walking to school" to "walking or wheeling to school with parental accompaniment if necessary to ensure safety".
52. The summer period will always result in a peak in demand for new transport arrangements to be put in place for the new academic year. However, the Service is working hard to plan as early as possible and ensure clear communications with parents, carers, schools and transport operators.
53. The Service continue to continuously improve ways of working and have introduced a number of improvements in the last 12 months, with a range of planned improvements identified for the future.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes/no
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes/no
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes/no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes/no
OR	
<p>This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:</p> <p><i>NB: Only complete this section if you have not completed any of the Strategic Plan tick boxes above. Whichever section is not applicable, please delete.</i></p>	

NB: If the 'Other significant links' section below is not applicable, please delete it.

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> Decision Report for School Transport Policy Consultation Executive Lead Member for Children's Services: Decision Report School Transport Entitlement Policy Consultation	<u>Date</u> 12 July 2022
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u> Travel to school for children of compulsory school age - DfE Statutory guidance for Local Authorities Travel to school for children of compulsory school age (publishing.service.gov.uk)	<u>Date</u> June 2023

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Children & Young People's Select Committee
Date:	11 July 2023
Title:	Services supporting Children & Young People with Down Syndrome in Hampshire
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Suzanne Smith, Assistant Director, Children's Services

Tel: 01962 846270

Email: Suzanne.smith2@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. This report seeks to provide Members with an overview of the existing services for children and young people with Down Syndrome in Hampshire which Hampshire County Council contributes to and/or supports, alongside the wider children's partnership.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the contents of the report.

Executive Summary

3. Support to children and young people with Down Syndrome is provided through a range of universal and specialist services. This report seeks to summarise the services that provide support, and their offer.
4. Much of the provision children with Down Syndrome require should be made through high quality inclusive teaching and ordinarily available provision. If additional targeted intervention is indicated, then this should be delivered alongside and involve peers wherever possible. Children with Down Syndrome should have opportunities to work with a range of adults across the school day spending the majority of their time in their class, and it is important that they are taught by their class teacher alongside their peers during group work in class for example. Any additional adults involved with the child should ensure they fade in and out so that the child is able to practice new skills independently and build their independence and personal responsibility over time.
5. Some pupils with Down Syndrome may have more complex medical and other additional needs which require greater levels of adaptation and

adjustment. These and the more specialist interventions they may need will be described in their Education Health & Care Plan (EHCPs) and will change as children develop.

Contextual information

6. Down's Syndrome, also called Down Syndrome, is a genetic condition that usually caused by an extra chromosome in a person's cells. In the majority of cases, it can't be inherited, and occurs by chance at the time of conception.
7. A person with Down Syndrome will have some degree of learning disability, but the level of ability will be different for everyone.
8. A child with Down Syndrome might take longer than other children their age to reach certain milestones and to develop certain skills.
9. As with other conditions associated with learning disability, every person with Down Syndrome is an individual and, with the right support and opportunities, can lead a happy and fulfilling life.
10. There are some health problems associated with Down Syndrome, such as heart problems and difficulties with sight and hearing, but these will not affect everyone with the condition.¹
11. National data is reported by NHS Digital, the latest data reported in December 2022 for births occurring in 2020 suggests:
12. The prevalence of Down Syndrome was 26.5 (95% CI 25.2-27.9) per 10,000 total births or one in every 377 births, 7.4 (95% CI 6.7-8.1) per 10,000 total births in 2020.
13. The live birth prevalence in 2020 remains consistent with previous years' data, with 11.5 (95% CI 10.6-12.4) per 10,000 live births or one in 873 live births for Down Syndrome.²

Hampshire's Offer

Hampshire Libraries

14. Hampshire County Council's Library Service provides a range of universal offers designed to be inclusive, encourage a love of reading and create accessible safe spaces for all children and young people from a very early age.

¹ Source – Mencap.org.uk

² Source: 2.3 Prevalence of babies with Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome and Patau's syndrome - NDRS (digital.nhs.uk)

15. Universal Bookstart packs are gifted at birth registration or early years settings and our children's libraries provide an excellent inclusive and accessible range of books and resources.
16. Universal activities such as Storytime and Rhymetime provide opportunities for improved parental mental health and networking, speech, language and communication development, engagement in play, increased listening, understanding and ability to follow instruction, and development of pre-literacy skills. The Library Service have early years champions who have a wider understanding of speech and language development and how to signpost families for support, and '*When a book might help*' provides a list of story books on a range of topics including school readiness, disability and neurodiversity, families and homelife. A range of craft and play activities are also available, as well as regular favourites: Chatterbooks, Construction Club, Discovery time or Baby Play. All activities are designed to be inclusive and meet local need, and with feedback from customers and our links to the library sector, we continue to develop these.
17. The Library Service is developing and piloting *Interactive Storytimes* which will provide more a more inclusive offer to families and has started to provide wider training and awareness opportunities for staff regarding of speech and language support through events such as Rhymetime/Storytime etc.
18. Gosport Discovery Centre is a Makaton friendly library and can provide support to both adults and children with communication challenges and has a good online presence to provide wider support to families.
19. Farnborough Library houses the FAB café which is currently leased to [Oflac – Charity](#) who offer their trainees (adults 19+ with learning difficulties) the opportunity to experience working in a fully operational café, which works well in a library location and provides an affordable café offer to library customers an excellent support to the community – the service is seeking a similar partnership on a café facility in the north of the County.

Early Years

20. The Services for Young Children (SfYC) Inclusion team provides support for children with SEND via two main approaches:
 - Setting support (pre-schools, nurseries, childminders and schools) and;
 - Direct child/family support (predominantly in the home learning environment).
21. Portage is a home and early years educational service for pre-school children aged 0-5yrs with additional support needs and their families. Portage work with children who have a significant delay by approximately one third of the child's age in at least two different skill areas which must include cognition. An individual, flexible package of support is provided depending on the needs of the child and family. The Portage Inclusion Practitioner (PIP) works in partnership with families and professionals to plan appropriate targets to work

towards and will liaise with early year's settings and schools to ensure a smooth transition.

22. The Council's Portage Service has an open referral process and referrals can be made by health professionals, early years practitioners and parents. There are no specific types of disabilities that are not catered for; every referral is considered and discussed against the need outlined above. Whilst waiting for support, families are provided with a wealth of information, support and guidance on our parent platform. Providing strategies for supporting individual needs. Children with a diagnosis such as Down Syndrome do tend to be referred in early by health partners and this supports and enables early intervention work.
23. Children receiving Portage may be supported by other agencies and professionals within the fields of health, social and education. Therefore, effective consultation and collaboration is vital on a regular basis to ensure that needs are being met. Portage signpost to relevant services, charities and groups who may be able to support a family/ child's needs in their locality. PIPs will attend and chair meetings such as Team Around the Child (TAC) to ensure that all relevant information is shared to enable all needs of the family to be met effectively.
24. The Inclusion Setting Support Officer (ISSO) service offers advice and guidance to early years providers to support children in the private, voluntary or independent childcare sector who:
 - Have had a concern raised by an early years setting
 - Have an identified additional need or,
 - Will require additional support when transitioning into or out of their childcare setting.
25. Advice and guidance are provided to aid early identification and support early interventions for children of concern and is offered primarily to the setting Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo). This support includes support surgeries, the provision of termly SENCo support group meetings, a variety of training opportunities and guidance on outside agency support or referrals to other professionals if required. The ISSO Service can also give advice and guidance with ensuring smooth transitions such as, from setting to the receiving school. Early Years SENCos will also have access to the Council's Inclusion web pages for advice, support and guidance.
26. The Early Years teams have recently worked in partnership with a variety of agencies to create an early year's version of the schools SEN Support Guidance document. This document is designed to help early years providers (EYPs) identify, plan for, and meet the needs of children who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and require reasonable adjustments at the SEN Support stage, in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years, 2015. It highlights the vital importance of high-quality teaching and learning in the context of inclusive practice for all children, as the basis for meeting the range of needs within a mainstream

setting. It identifies the main categories of SEND and some typical characteristics of learners with SEND in those categories, alongside approaches and strategies to help address those needs in the classroom, at the level of SEN Support.

27. The SfYC Inclusion service provides a variety of SEND training to early years staff including Basic Portage Workshop, positive approaches to behaviour, Makaton, Play chat interact, language boxes, AET Autism training, stress free target setting and SENCO induction.
28. The ISSO Service facilitates termly SENCo support group meetings in order to ensure that good inclusive practice is maintained, to update on any revised statutory guidance and to share resources. During these meetings feedback is sought from settings about specific local requirements and needs and this informs future content planning. This feedback also helps the Inclusion Setting Support Officer Service to constantly review its services and methods of delivery in order to be responsive to county and local needs.
29. Where support is required in identifying or accessing childcare / school provision for a child with SEND, the Services for Young Children Inclusion Team provides brokerage, advice and guidance in relation to childcare up to statutory school age. The Team also supports early years setting staff and parents in navigating the EHCP process and signposting to where further advice and guidance can be sought, such as SENDIASS.
30. All Services for Young Children Inclusion staff are qualified and experienced to a high level. All PIP's have completed a recognised National Portage Association Basic Workshop and several members of staff have completed an advanced course to become accredited to support further training for practitioners. All team members will have a sound knowledge of child development and competencies in assessing, designing delivering and evaluating teaching skills. They receive ongoing CPD opportunities and have recently provided a training session around supporting children with Down Syndrome in early years at a whole service day.

Schools

31. Every child with Downs Syndrome (DS) is a unique individual with personal strengths, interests, and challenges. A thorough understanding of the child is the starting point for making effective provision as well as a school culture and positive attitude to meeting the needs of all children through high quality inclusive teaching.
32. There are some commonalities of approach that are proven to benefit and better support the learning and inclusion of children with Down Syndrome and a range of organisations and research studies to help guide the implementation of these.

33. The typical learning profile of a child with Down Syndrome can be summarised as:
- Strong visual awareness and visual learning skills.
 - Ability to learn and use sign, gesture, and visual support.
 - Ability to learn using the written word.
 - Strong desire and ability to learn from their peers, to imitate and take their cue from them.
 - Delayed motor skills, fine and gross – leading to clumsiness and manipulation difficulties.
 - Auditory and visual impairment – leading to hearing and sight differences
 - Speech and language delay. Problems with articulation, comprehension, and expression
 - Poor short term auditory memory leading to problems with consolidation and retention.
 - Difficulties with generalisations, thinking and reasoning
34. Much of the provision children with Down Syndrome require should be made through high quality inclusive teaching and ordinarily available provision. If additional targeted intervention is indicated, this should be delivered alongside and involve peers wherever possible. Children with Down Syndrome should have opportunities to work with a range of adults across the school day spending the majority of their time in their class, and it is important that they are taught by their class teacher alongside their peers during group work in class for example. Any additional adults involved with the child should ensure they fade in and out so that the child is able to practice new skills independently and build their independence and personal responsibility over time.
35. Some pupils with Down Syndrome may have more complex medical and other additional needs which require greater levels of adaptation and adjustment. These and the more specialist interventions they may need will be described in their EHCPs and will change as children develop.
36. Appendix 1 of this report summarises the key strategies which should be part of high-quality inclusive teaching and ordinarily available provision in any setting.
- There are a number of charities that have produced comprehensive information to support the education of children with have Down Syndrome, including:
- New Educational Guidelines for learners who have Down's Syndrome - Downs Syndrome Association (downs-syndrome.org.uk)
 - 21 Together Down's syndrome Charity
 - Learn and Thrive

Family Information and Services Hub (FISH) and the Local Offer

37. Hampshire's Family Information and Services Hub (FISH) contains a wealth of information for parent's children and young people. It is the one stop shop

for them to find advice/support and services on topics such as childcare, leisure activities and family support. It is also the home for Hampshire's Local Offer, which provides information on services for children and young people from birth to 25 with SEND.

- 38. The Local Offer is the main source of information about education (including early years provision, school support, and post-16 options), short breaks, and transition into adulthood for children and young people with SEND.
- 39. The current FISH platform is being upgraded in July 2023. This will enhance the look and feel of the directory, and ensure it is more accessible for users, including better mobile compatibility. The refreshed look and feel has been completed with input from parents and young people, and the webpages will continue to evolve in the coming months as we keep improving them in response to feedback. The updated directory will also have a new section solely focusing on emotional health and wellbeing for all families in Hampshire.

Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF)

- 40. The Department for Education (DfE) is providing funding to local authorities to coordinate a programme that provides healthy food and enriching activities to children and young people from lower income households during the Easter, Summer and Christmas Holidays from 2022-2025.
- 41. Hampshire County Council is delivering this through the connect4communities programme, and a wide network of community-based organisations deliver the HAF schemes, including existing holiday care providers, schools, childminders, sports coaching, creative and performing arts providers and many others.
- 42. Healthy meals must be provided at every session. All children in Hampshire who receive benefits related Free School Meals will be eligible to take part in the activities. Fifteen per cent of places were available to other vulnerable children, as defined by the Council, and includes for example, children in need, at risk or vulnerable as well as children with an EHCP. This will include children with Down Syndrome.
- 43. During 2022 there were 109,954 places commissioned and 92,782 places attended across Hampshire. This enabled 5,922 children at Easter to access hot food and activities, 11,652 in the Summer and 5,637 at Christmas.
- 44. The data for 2022 did not identify the number of children who have Down Syndrome though provided the number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The data for Hampshire in 2022 is set out below.

	Easter	Summer	Christmas
Eligible children attending HAF schemes	5,922	11,652	5,637
Children with SEND	623	1,425	695

Percentage	10.5%	12.2%	12.3%
------------	-------	-------	-------

45. In commissioning providers to deliver the HAF activities, there is an expectation that all HAF provision is inclusive. However, for children or young people requiring some extra support to enable them to attend and fully participate in a HAF scheme, there is the opportunity for HAF providers to apply for supplementary funding via the HAF SEND support fund to facilitate this.

Public Health

46. [Hampshire's Public Health Strategy 2023-2026](#) gives clear direction on how the Council will improve health and tackle health inequalities for all, shaping our work and partnerships. Development of the Strategy included engagement with a wide range of partners including those working with and representing CYP and their families (such as the Hampshire Parent Carer Network) and with the Hampshire [Personalisation Expert Panel](#).
47. Public Health lead the [Hampshire JSNA](#) which provides information on Hampshire's [population](#) demographics to support planning across the broader system. This includes population level data on learning disabilities and SEND.
48. Within the Public Health Strategy, underlying strategies provide more detail as to how the Council will support the most vulnerable groups. As an example, the [Mental Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2028](#) outlines one action to 'Improve pathways for people at greater risk of poorer mental health and wellbeing, starting with neurodiversity and self-harm' which includes working with children and young people with learning disabilities and another action to 'Develop place-based multi-disciplinary professional development and training focused on reducing health inequalities amongst those at greater risk of poorer mental health outcomes' with a focus on vulnerable populations as indicated by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Index³.
49. Public Health commission a range of services including universal services such as public health nursing and more specialist services such as sexual health services, domestic abuse services, drug and alcohol services, weight management services and stop smoking services. All services are required to comply with the Equality Act 2010. For example, the Domestic Abuse Victim and Perpetrator Services (delivered by Stop Domestic Abuse and the Hampton Trust respectively) 'support victims of domestic abuse aged 16 years or over, together with their dependant children aged 0-18 years, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or relationship status'.
50. Some of these services include elements that are offered to the whole population, including people with disabilities, such as the Public Health Nursing service (provided by Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust) which

³ [Mental health and wellbeing index | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

leads on the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme. This service ensures equitable access to all providing more targeted support where required through different levels of service; universal, universal plus (time-limited additional support for a specific issue) and universal partnership plus (more specialist, often multi-agency level support). In addition, they offer the Family Nurse Partnership, which is an intensive support programme for pregnant young people supporting their transition to parenthood for the first two years of their baby's life). Whilst every child is eligible for this service, some may choose to opt out of specific elements if they have complex needs and are already under the care of more specialist services (e.g., a paediatrician).

51. Public Health work in partnership with Children's Services to deliver Hampshire Health in Education (HHiE), a service that supports education settings to take a whole setting approach to health and wellbeing for the children and young people in their care (and their staff). Within this work, the HHiE school surveys are delivered every two years in the Autumn term and this year, there is an easy-read version and an additional survey tool for pupils with complex needs to ensure all CYP have the opportunity to contribute their voices to the datasets that then inform service planning across the system.
52. Public Health work in partnership with HCC Insight and Engagement Unit on a Community Researchers programme, this is a community participatory research programme which enables in-reach into less often heard communities and empowers individuals from these communities to undertake research to inform public health campaigns and interventions. This programme was initially focussed on black and other ethnic minority communities as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic but there is potential to work with children with learning difficulties and their families in the future.

Communication & Interaction (C&I) Service

53. This service has three Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs) who are specialists in Down Syndrome with post graduate training in supporting the Speech Language and Communications Needs (SLCN) of children and young people who have this syndrome.
54. An additional SaLT is being developed currently.
55. The service also has a Down Syndrome clinical support document and the whole team are trained in the learning profile and needs of those with Down Syndrome.
56. There are assessment procedures for the speech therapy and communication needs for those with Down Syndrome, and intervention guidance for clinicians to ensure consistent evidence-based therapy and support.
57. The team has representation on the working group and Clinical Excellence group for Down Syndrome support linked to the Portsmouth Down's

Syndrome Association.

58. The C & I Service are also developing:

- A care pathway for communication support and good practice guidance
- A Moodle page and information toolkit into learning profiles and support needs
- Training for Hampshire colleagues
- Training for schools as a sold service

Short Break Activities

59. Children's Services provide a range of inclusive services for children with a disability and their families. These are detailed in the County Council's Short Breaks Service Statement: [CWD Short Breaks Service Statement - 2022 Update.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

60. The County Council's Short Breaks are inclusive and as such , those with Down Syndrome are not specifically identified or recorded in our systems, rather a child or young person with Down Syndrome would be able to access Short Break activities in their local area once they had applied for a Gateway Card+: [Gateway Card and Gateway Card + | Children and Families | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

61. Hampshire's Short Breaks programme includes activities for children and young people at weekends and during school holidays, as well as for older young people via youth clubs.

62. The Community Buddy scheme is also part of the programme and offers children and young people one to one support in accessing the community. These can all be accessed by a child or young person with Down's Syndrome via the Gateway Card+ scheme. (A recent survey of the 25 funded Short Breaks providers resulted in 11 responses, of which nine support 21 children and young people with Down Syndrome across the different schemes.)

63. For families visiting to attractions such as Paulton's Park, Birdworld or the Sealife Centre, the Gateway Card evidences to these organisations that the child or young person may need additional support, equipment or a carer to join them for example. The list of where the Gateway Card is recognised can be found here: [Gateway Card | Family Information and Services Hub \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

Children and Families Social Care Services

64. Children with disabilities are offered support from either Early Help or where the threshold is met for a service from the Disabled Children's Team (DCT), via that specialist team.

65. Services are offered following a thorough assessment of need and against a set of eligibility criteria. Whilst the needs arising from a disability are key to

this, the type of disability is not. There is not a specific service or intervention for Down Syndrome for example.

66. Currently the assessed needs of children and young people with disabilities are met through a range of services:
67. Personal budgets can be used flexibly to purchase equipment or services to meet the needs identified in a child's care plan. This option has recently undergone a refresh whereby social workers are being encouraged and supported to be creative and innovative with how best to meet needs via this funding route. It gives families choice and control over their support and is a personalised approach.
68. Care Support is a commissioned service whereby an agreed number of hours of support are approved and Care Quality Commission registered providers are provided with referrals for a support worker to come to the family home or take the child or young person into the local community, either for shorter periods during the day or having a carer stay in the home overnight. This could be with or without the parents in the home.
69. Technology Enabled Care. Argenti is Hampshire's assistive technology partner. Working closely with the Disabled Children's Team social workers and families, Argenti will recommend and supply a technology-based intervention to support the child's care plan. These interventions can offer support in areas such as night-time routines, epilepsy monitors, flooding and fire detectors. Phone applications which can help reduce a child or young person's anxiety and improve their ability to be more independent can also be provided where appropriate. 147 have been referrals received since project start in 2015 and 99 CYP currently receiving TEC. There were 17 referrals received in 2021 and 16 of those are still actively receiving TEC.
70. Sleep Support Service - the service is in its 4th year of successful delivery and supports an increasing number of families year on year with specialist sleep advice and support. Additional spaces have been secured for year 5 (from September 2022) and will see a further 50 families receiving support.
71. Similar to Care Support, the option of a Direct Payment worker/PA in Care is another way of commissioning care and support hours. This option sees the family being the direct employer of the support worker; they are responsible for the recruitment and payment of the staff member. There is an additional service in place to support families with this option so they can fully understand their role and responsibilities; Direct Payment Support Service which is delivered to families in receipt of direct payments and is managed via a provider called Enham.
72. The Children & Families Occupational Therapy Team continues as they always have done to provide aids and adaptations to disabled children and their families to aid mobility and access around the home, and to better enable these children's care needs to be met at home. This can be seen as

an early intervention or preventative-type provision which can prevent escalation of needs.

73. Where the child and family have additional needs due to the impact of the child's disability or there are other needs in the family that require support, it may be that access to overnight respite might be necessary. This can take place in a children's home designed to offer such a service or by a foster carer. The number of nights allocated would be dependent on a detailed assessment of need and care plan.
74. In addition to the current provision listed in the section above, new ways of meeting respite needs are also being developed such as Activity Breaks where a child/young person accesses an activity centre for a day or overnight and enjoys a range of activities provided by trained instructors and supported by experienced care staff.
75. Home from Home care is a form of respite for families. Specialist respite carers are registered foster carers who are linked to a family to provide overnight respite for children. Home from Home respite carers, with the support of their supervising social worker from the Children's Services Fostering Team and the child's social worker, provide breaks which can be for a few hours at a time or can be overnight, depending on the needs of the family.
76. Family Breaks are another option that can be commissioned or funded via personal budgets; these can provide a break where the whole family can enjoy time away together in an accessible environment.

Health Services

77. Following the 2022 Health and Care Act the ICB has appointed an Executive Lead for Down Syndrome as per the guidance: [NHS England » Executive lead roles within integrated care boards](#)
78. This individual will lead on supporting the chief executive and the board to ensure the ICB performs its functions effectively in the interest of people with Down Syndrome.
79. The responsibilities of this role include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Supporting the ICB chief executive and the board to ensure the ICB meets the legal requirements of relevant legislation, including the [Down syndrome Act \(2022\)](#) and relevant legislation or statutory guidance. This shall include ensuring that statutory guidance is implemented and considered throughout the ICB's commissioning decisions and at the system and local level.
 - Championing and supporting improvements in outcomes for children, young people and adults who have Down syndrome in the ICB's area, including having oversight of how the needs of people with Down syndrome are being included in commissioning decisions and how those decisions

and commissioning plans are co-produced with people with lived experience of down syndrome.

- Working closely with people with Down syndrome and their families so that their experiences of care, good outcomes, and issues and challenges in accessing the support they need are considered during the design, implementation and commissioning of services.
- Ensuring feedback, concerns, comments and complaints from people with Down syndrome, as well as their families, community groups and organisations – including user-led and self-advocacy organisations – are acted upon in a timely manner at the local level. [Ask, Listen, Do resources](#) can help.”

80. Services from the NHS will depend on the severity of Down Syndrome and can range from a lifetime of cardiac support including surgery and regular health checks from the Community Care Nurse team to low level physical issues which would be managed through the child’s GP.

Hampshire Parent Carer Network

81. In terms of other support available Hampshire Parent Carer Network (HPCN) offers support to parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-25 with any additional needs, or disability including Mental Health (diagnosed or undiagnosed) They do this in several ways:

82. When a parent or carer joins as a member of HPCN, they can access sessions, events and training opportunities. HPCN send out a monthly newsletter full of information and ways to get involved.

83. Parent Reps and Steering Group - HPCN parent representatives attend several meetings and work streams with Hampshire County Council and other key stakeholders like health. Parent carers attend these meetings to give first hand experience and input to the decision makers- representing the views of parents across Hampshire. A steering group manages the strategic running of the forum and the future direction.

84. Social media - HPCN has a very active Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/HampshireParentCarerNetwork>. This page is updated regularly with lots of helpful info like consultations, session dates and more. They also have eight local pages across the districts in the county, where parents can offer peer support, share experiences and share local information. HPCN also has a twitter page : <https://twitter.com/HampshirePCN>

85. Get Togethers are for parent carers of children and young people (0-25 years old) with any additional needs (diagnosis not needed). They are intended to share experiences, discuss local issues and share experiences and seek support from other parents at non-judgemental, friendly, and relaxed sessions. They provide the opportunity to share views about the services that support children and young people. Get Togethers sessions run once a

month in the following areas - Hart & Rushmoor, Basingstoke, Winchester & Eastleigh, Alresford, Test Valley & New Forest, Fareham & Gosport, Havant & Waterlooville. There is also Under 5's Online, Daytime Online, Evening Online.

86. SENDIASS workshops - Hampshire Parent Carer Network and Hampshire SENDIASS (Impartial Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service) lead joint sessions which are facilitated by HPCN. These workshops will have a monthly Education topic and will be delivered by a SENDIASS support worker.
87. Parent Led Engagement - These take place once a month with HPCN, Hampshire SENDIASS and a SEN Manager from the County Council. They give parents the chance to ask a general education query (not specifically about their own case).
88. Meet the SEN Team - Each term, HPCN offer an opportunity to meet representatives from Education, Health and Social Care this will be online on zoom. Each rep will give a brief update, followed by an opportunity for parents/carers to any questions.

Consultation and Equalities

89. This report is for providing information only and therefore consultation and equalities assessment did not form part of this report.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

90. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
91. Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation. The carbon mitigation and climate change adaptation tools were not applicable because this report is to provide details of the contribution of Hampshire County Council to the delivery of youth services and does not recommend changes or require any decisions which would have any climate change considerations.
92. Carbon Mitigation. The carbon mitigation and climate change adaptation tools were not applicable because this report is to provide details of the contribution of Hampshire County Council to the delivery of youth services and does not recommend changes or require any decisions which would have any climate change considerations.

Conclusions

93. Hampshire County Council and partners are committed to delivering services for young people in Hampshire, including those with additional needs such as Down Syndrome.
94. This report provides an overview of the rich tapestry of services and support offered to children with Down Syndrome and their families in Hampshire, which Hampshire County Council and/or partners are directly involved in facilitating, supporting and/or funding. As the reports evidences, across the partnership there is a diverse range of support services, activities and engagement programmes for young people in Hampshire to access

Appendix 1 Teaching Strategies for children with Down Syndrome

Key strategies which should be part of high-quality inclusive teaching and ordinarily available provision in any setting will include:

Hearing

- Make sure that the child is sitting near the front of the classroom.
- Ensure the child is wearing their hearing aids if needed.
- Give the child the benefit of the doubt if they appear not to be listening.
- Cue the child by name when giving an instruction or asking a question.
- Provide visual materials to support the spoken word, including visual timetables and pictures of the topic at hand.
- Use a buddy system, so that the child with DS is not left behind just because they missed an instruction.
- Pre-teach new material in a quiet setting, such as within a small group of peers.
- Alert the parent if there seems to be a change. Reduced hearing is more evident in a noisy classroom than at home.
- Take advice from visiting teachers for the hearing impaired, and use a radio aid or sound field system if recommended.

Speech and Language

- Accept that language is a significant difficulty and adjust your own language to compensate.
- Use short, simple sentences.
- Allow processing time: count to 10 before you say anything else!
- Use positive sentences. It is much easier to understand “we walk in the corridor” than “don’t run in the corridor”. In the first sentence the key word is WALK. In the second sentence, the key word is RUN.
- Think about word order. “We will go to the playground after you have finished your snack” will probably be understood as “playground, then snack” by a child who has difficulty processing language, leading to frustration all round!
- Don’t give multiple instructions in one sentence. The child with DS is likely to pick up on either the first or the last and be oblivious to the others. (For example: It’s time to finish your work, put your books in your bag, get in the line, we are going to the hall is actually 4 instructions)
- Use visual supports, visual timetables, lists, pictures, etc. to support understanding. (And make sure to include the written word along with any pictures, as repeated exposure to the written word will help develop sight word recognition)
- Pre-teach vocabulary, ideally ahead of classroom topics.
- Over time, language and literacy tend to develop in tandem. Children with DS need the best standard of literacy teaching. This is because the majority of children with DS have clearer speech when reading, and that written language is a flexible way of communicating. It requires minimum equipment (is low tech) and it is widely understood.

Working memory

- Present materials visually. If the class is doing oral language work, give the child a list with a small number of key points that are mentioned repeatedly to listen out for (in words or pictures)
- Use physical prompts or lists. If the child is going to fetch the paints, he is more likely to remember if he is carrying a paint brush.
- Children with good literacy skills could bring a note with the word “paints” on it. Practice! Working memory improves with practice.
- Play games where the children listen to 3 words and identify the odd one out. Help children to develop their own strategies. This is likely to be a long-term problem, so learning to write (and use) a reminder or a list will be essential.

Vision

- Use large print with good contrast (18-20pt font size, black on white).
- Use good, clear, colourful pictures. Bold, saturated colours are better than pastels.
- Remember this applies when the child is writing as well as reading. The child who is writing with pencil may not be able to see what they have written and the pale blue lines in exercise books are probably virtually invisible. A black marker pen on thick black lines may be needed.
- Be alert to changes in font size. For example, moving to more complex reading books often means smaller print. It’s easy to think the child has reached a plateau, when actually they are struggling to see the words.
- Consult a teacher for the visually impaired

Motor

- Use marker pens, roller balls and biros, rather than pencils, so that the child doesn’t have to maintain downward pressure (And move on to typing relatively early)
- Consult with an Occupational Therapist regarding seating etc. (If all your attention is focused on balancing on your chair, it’s hard to learn!)
- Take frequent movement breaks – taking something to the office, fetching something from the back of the room, helping someone to find something. These are all unobtrusive movement breaks. The balance between “sitting and working” and “moving around” changes as children move up through the classes, but because motor development is slower in children who have DS, they may struggle to concentrate if they don’t have regular breaks

Medical

- Be aware of possible exhaustion. Tackle new concepts early in the day, leaving easier activities for when the child is tiring.
- Have a few, favourite activities at hand for when the child is really not able to cope. In the early years, a quiet corner for a short nap might be helpful.

- Give well targeted and properly matched homework. If the child is already exhausted going home from school, they are unlikely to be able to complete lengthy homework.
- Be aware that if a child has a cold, hearing is likely to be impacted.
- Be observant and communicate any concerns promptly. Sometimes changes in energy, vision or hearing can be more evident in the classroom.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes/no
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes/no
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes/no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes/no
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because: <i>NB: Only complete this section if you have not completed any of the Strategic Plan tick boxes above. Whichever section is not applicable, please delete.</i>	

NB: If the 'Other significant links' section below is not applicable, please delete it.

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

This page is intentionally left blank

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Children & Young People Select Committee
Date:	11 July 2023
Title:	Annual Children in Care Report 2022-23
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Kavitha Maxy, Area Director

Tel: 0370 779 2296

Email: kavitha.maxy@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Select Committee with an overview of the achievements, progress and challenges of the services provided by Hampshire Children's Services to children in the care of Hampshire County Council.
2. This report will focus on the work of the statutory social work teams.

Recommendation(s)

3. The Children & Young People Select Committee support the priority areas for Children's Services, in relation to our children in care as being:
 - Strengthening the voice of the Looked After Child and impact on service delivery.
 - Promoting the effectiveness and efficiency of the CLA Health Assessment process and service so that it meets the physical and mental health needs of Children in Care (including dental and immunisations).
 - Improve the educational outcomes of Children in Care and effectiveness of the process and service, including the service provided by the Hampshire Virtual School.
 - Improve placement stability and increase placement choice for Children in Care.
 - Children in our care will be safeguarded from harm including, all aspects of exploitation.
 - Increase opportunities for Children in Care to safely live outside of the care system through Special Guardianship (SGO) assessments and reunification to family where appropriate.
 - Ensure the needs of all children seeking asylum in the UK are understood and met through new service delivery.
 - Improve the training for all social workers for Children in Care resulting in measurable impact.

Executive Summary

4. Children in the care of the local authority are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. It is vital that the care we provide to children in care is of

the highest standard and that everyone involved in supporting and providing that care is aspirational for all our children.

5. This report aims to assure the Children & Young People Select Committee that Hampshire's children in care are well supported, and the needs of our children are known, and plans are reflective of the need to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people.
6. The report will provide the Select Committee with the characteristics of Hampshire's children in care, the age and length of time in care, where children are currently living, the number of children in foster care, residential homes or other settings, the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and placement stability.
7. The report will also provide information about social worker caseloads to reassure the Select Committee that these are manageable and social workers are able to dedicate sufficient time to children, regardless of their level of need.
8. The report will provide information on children who go missing to evidence how we are safeguarding them from harm and risk of exploitation. It will also provide information on the population of UASC who are being looked after by Hampshire and how their needs are being met.
9. The report should be read alongside the Virtual School update report (Appendix 1) and the presentation, to update on the Children in Care Health Assessments in 2022 (Appendix 3). These set the context and outline the current focus to improve the timeliness of children's statutory health assessments and the transformation work to improve the quality and timeliness of the Personal Education Plans.
10. The report also needs to be read alongside the update on the Participation Action plan report presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in March 2023 (Appendix 2). It will detail how children and young people are able to express their views, wishes and feelings and how Children's Services consider this. It also includes the work to improve how we are planning to strengthen and show the impact of the voice of the child on service delivery through the Children in Care Councils and Care Experienced Adults Councils. This is an action from our recent Ofsted Focused Visit on children in care referenced in points 11-13 in this section.
11. The report also seeks to draw the attention of the Select Committee to the positive outcome of the recent Ofsted focused visit on children in care in January 2023. Following the 2 week long inspection, we received extremely strong feedback from the Inspection team. The outcome letter ([ofsted.gov.uk](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk)) made it clear that things have progressed in Hampshire despite facing the challenges that local authorities across the country have faced Ofsted acknowledged the post-pandemic environment which has included a significant increase in the volume of referrals and some increase in the numbers of looked after children. In Hampshire, we have worked hard to keep children safely at home and have seen a 1% increase in children in care (not including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) compared to increases of 4% in other local authorities.

12. The language Ofsted used to describe our practice was 'impressive' and 'really strong'. They did not raise any cases of concern and commended the strength of practice in respect of children in care, with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and those children in care who face missing/exploitation risks. They were similarly overwhelmingly positive about our social workers who presented as incredibly strong, professional, knowledgeable experts, who were entirely child focused in their practice.
13. There were 3 recommendations from the focused visit that we have already begun to work on:
 - The timeliness of initial and review health assessments for children.
 - Independent reviewing officer workloads.
 - The voice of the child in the corporate parenting committee.
14. The report will outline the key areas of focus over the next twelve months.

Who are our “Children in Care”?

15. Children in the care of the local authority is any child / young person between the age of 0 -18 years that has been in the care of the local authority for more than 24 hours. This generally means any child or young person that has been unable to remain living at home and there is a need to be looked after by foster carers, in residential homes or with other relatives, this sometimes includes children living with their parents.
16. Children can become looked after because of a voluntary agreement by their parents, or because of a Care Order made by a Court.
17. Young people between the ages of 16 – 18 years old can provide their own consent to come into care and do not require the agreement from those with parental responsibility.
18. A continued significant priority for Children’s Services to improve the quality of care that is provided, and crucially, that it is the right children, in care at the right time. This is reflective of the changing needs of children and their families and in recognition to the importance of family life and home being the preferred place for children and young people to grow up in, if it is safe.

Hampshire Demographic

19. Hampshire Public Health have published the Starting Well Summary, ([Starting well - Children and young people | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/starting-well-children-and-young-people)) 2019 – 2024 which looks at all children in Hampshire aged 0 -19 years and how well they do living in this area.
20. The summary highlights that there are just over 322,000 children and young people aged 0 to 19 years living in Hampshire. This makes up nearly a quarter of the County’s total population (23%) which is slightly less than in England as a whole (24%).

21. Overall, Hampshire children and young people have good health and good life chances, with low levels of infant and child mortality and good educational attainment. However, this masks some significant inequalities.
22. In Hampshire, our children are less likely to:
 - live in poverty (1 in 10 compared to 1 in 5 nationally).
 - be homeless (1 in 1,000 families compared to 1 in 500 families nationally).
 - be born with low or very low birth weight (1 in 16 compared to 1 in 13 nationally).
 - be born to teenage mothers (1 in 167 12-17 year olds compared to 1 in 110 nationally).
23. Our children are more likely to:
 - attend school regularly (lower persistent absenteeism and lower permanent exclusions: 1 in 3,300 compared to 1 in 1,500 nationally).
 - be in education, employment or training. Only 3% of 16-18 years olds in Hampshire are not in education, employment or training (compared to 4.2% nationally).
 - to be immunised against infectious diseases (most immunisations achieving 95% coverage).
24. In Hampshire, the level of educational attainment at all stages of development is good, with performance better than national comparators across all educational stages (January 2017). However, for different groups of pupils, variations in performance are evident. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged children and those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Given the right support, children with SEND and vulnerable children, including those with disabilities, can thrive and develop.
25. However:
 - 1 in 10 of our dependent children under 20 years old lives in relative poverty.
 - 1 in 10 of our children under 16 years old lives in a low-income family
 - 15% of 15 year olds have a long term illness, disability or medical condition.
 - One third of Children in Care are affected by poor emotional wellbeing.
 - Increasing numbers of children have complex health and social care needs.
 - Children in care are less likely to be up to date with their immunisations.
 - It is estimated that in Hampshire between 7,864 and 14,156 children experience some form of disability and that 1 in 3 disabled children lives in poverty.
26. The main causes for concern in Hampshire are:
 - Increasing obesity and overweight in 4–5-year-olds (22.8% up from 21.1% previous year (2014/15) and more than national figure of 22.1% nationally).
 - Emotional wellbeing of our children and young people - there are higher rates of hospital admissions for self-harm (10-24 year olds) in Hampshire than nationally (590.9 per 100,000 compared to England's rate of 430.5 per 100,000,2015/16).
 - Educational attainment in disadvantaged groups including SEND.
 - Small and decreasing proportion of young children achieving the daily physical activity levels.

27. All the above is relevant when we consider the care we provide children who are looked after in Hampshire, and this is also reflected in the priority areas for children in care.
28. The Health Assessment report presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in December 2022 outlines the significant work to improve the timeliness of Health assessments, which consider the children's general health as well as their emotional wellbeing. See point 13 in this report.
29. The Virtual School annual report presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in 2022 also gave an overview of how children in care are supported around their education and including those with SEND.
30. The emotional wellbeing of children and young people is of huge importance and has become increasingly prevalent after the COVID pandemic. One of the focused interventions Hampshire are developing, is to ensure that children in care's needs are fully understood and that children and young people have access to mental health and emotional well-being services when needed. Consultations with the CAMHS specialist workers from our Specialist Intensive Worker hubs will provide support and guidance to the child, carer and worker, and help to make referrals to core CAMHS in a timely way, where necessary.

Data for Children in Care

31. As of December 2022, Hampshire had 1822 of its children in care, this being 0.56% of Hampshire's population. The following table shows the gradual increase in numbers over the last 12 month period.

Date	CLA
04-Jan-22	1,709
07-Feb-22	1,712
07-Mar-22	1,714
04-Apr-22	1,729
02-May-22	1,736
06-Jun-22	1,742
04-Jul-22	1,742
01-Aug-22	1,751
05-Sep-22	1,746
03-Oct-22	1,793
07-Nov-22	1,799
05-Dec-22	1,822

32. The number of CLA has continued to increase over the last 12 months in spite of ongoing transformation programmes to keep more children safely at home and in the community, which have slowed the increase of children coming into care.
33. There has been a significant increase in UASC in Hampshire over the last 24 months, rising from 67 in 2020/1 to 106 in 2021/22 and as of 31st March 2023 now sits at 239.

34. We have only seen a 1% increase in our children in care population which is a nominal increase (excluding our children seeking asylum where we are unable to influence the outcome of coming into care due to their circumstances). As well as this, the work to reunify children home when safe and appropriate remains a constant focus to ensure that only the right children are in public care.

Table 1 - The age, gender, and type of placement for children in care

Sum of Clients													
Gender	Age Group	With parents	Family centre	Indep. Living (not B+B)	Foster (rel or friend)	Foster (HCC)	Foster (IFA)	Placed for Adopn.	Res home	Secure unit	YOI or prison	Other	Grand Total
Female	< 1	3	2	.	2	12	1	.	1	.	.	.	21
	1 - 4	7	.	.	21	26	8	11	.	.	.	.	73
	5 - 9	14	.	.	31	55	45	.	4	.	.	.	149
	10 - 15	22	.	.	52	131	70	.	42	1	.	.	318
	16 - 17	10	.	42	14	39	21	.	22	.	.	10	158
Female Total		56	2	42	120	263	145	11	69	1	.	10	719
Male	< 1	2	3	.	2	19	3	2	.	.	.	.	31
	1 - 4	16	3	.	19	31	15	18	.	.	.	.	102
	5 - 9	16	.	.	44	57	58	3	16	.	.	1	196
	10 - 15	21	.	1	56	116	158	.	82	.	.	3	437
	16 - 17	11	.	101	26	34	104	.	70	1	1	9	357
U/b	.	.	.	.	2	1	1	.	.	.	.	4	
Male Total		66	6	102	147	259	339	24	168	1	1	13	1,127
Grand Total		122	8	144	267	522	484	35	237	2	1	23	1,846

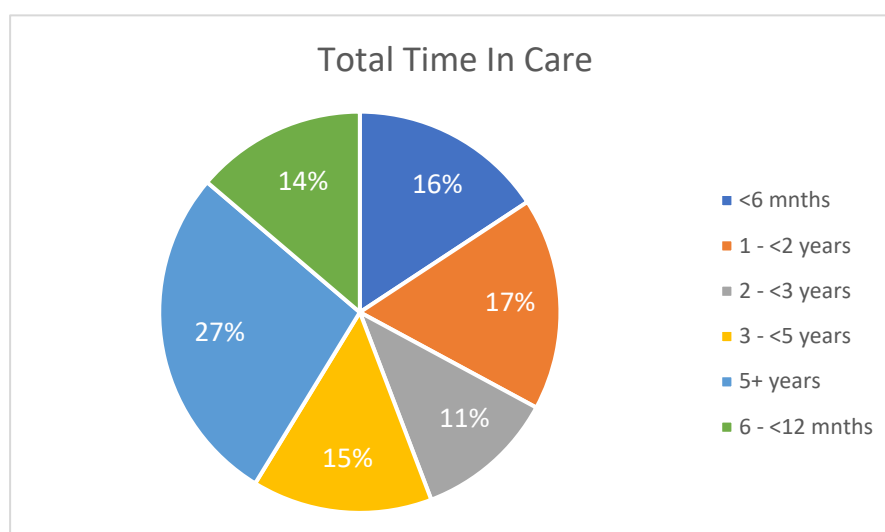
35. The above reflects where children and young people are currently placed and this shows our greatest proportion of children in care are between the ages of 10-15 years old, with significantly more males than females in care.
36. With regards to the main placement, it is positive to note that more children in care are placed with foster carers, and an increasing number being placed with Hampshire carers, currently 522, which is reflective of the work to increase the number of in house foster carers.
37. There is also an increase in the number of children who are 16 and 17 years old over the last 2 years that live in supported accommodation (rising from 88 to 144), which is reflective of the work to promote their independence and transition to adulthood.
38. What is also significant to note, is the number of children placed with parents, the data reflects 122 children which means they are children subject to a Court Order but in their parents' care. There is further information regarding this within the reunification section of this report.

39. It is also of interest to note that there is an increasing number of children, 267 who are placed with family members or friends who have been approved as Connected Carers. All of these children are identified by Children’s Services in our work to reduce this number of children in care but can continue to be supported under an alternative legal order such as a Special Guardianship Order.

How long are children in care?

Table 2 – Time in care

Time in care	Grand Total
<6 mnths	289
6 - <12 mnths	253
1 - <2 years	315
2 - <3 years	208
3 - <5 years	267
5+ years	505
Grand Total	1,837

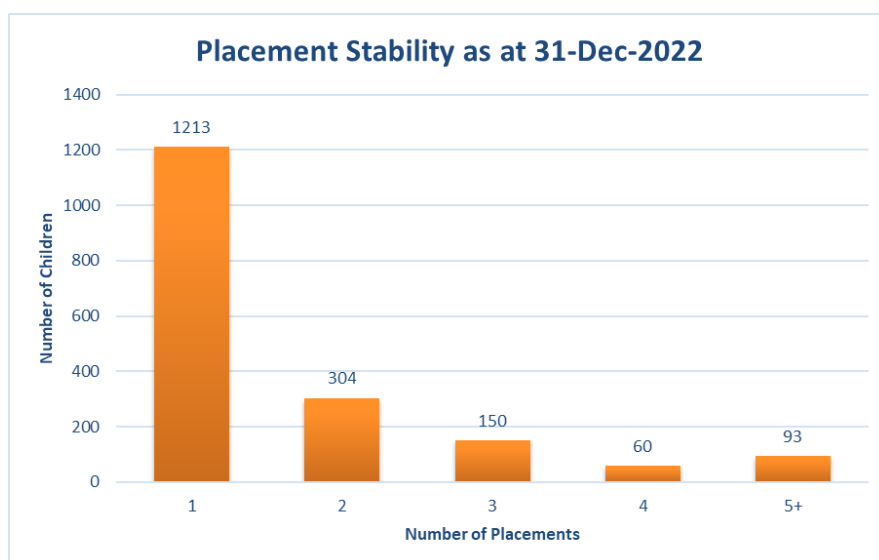


40. The data shows that most children are in care for over five years, with 27% of children being in this age bracket. The least number of children are in care are between 2-3 years at 11%. This data is similar to that of 2 years ago. However, there is a decrease from 20% to 15% (64 children) now in care between the ages 3-5 years; but an increase of 3% (107 children) now in care over 5 years.
41. This data cannot be taken in isolation, it serves to provide high level information and trends may change over time with the changes to practice meaning children are only in care for as long as needed. Within 12 months of being in care 30% of children exit the care system. This is to be expected as matters placed before the Court should be concluded within 26 weeks, by

which time a long-term plan will be identified which could be for return home, to wider family under alternative orders, or a plan for adoption.

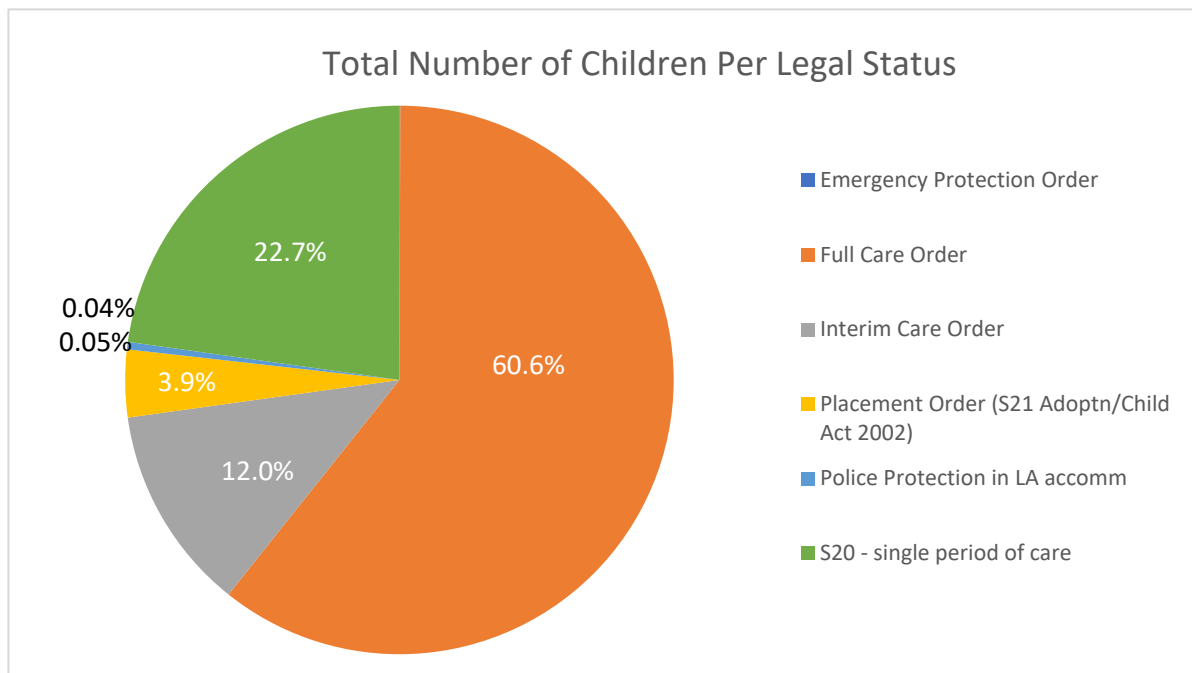
Placement Stability

42. The below chart reflects the stability of children in care over the last 12 months. Positively most children (1,213) children remain in the same placement, an additional 304 only having one move. A smaller number of children, 93 having had over 5 placement moves over the year.
43. Placement moves can be for positive reasons, that children are returned to family, that children are able to transition from residential care to foster care. Equally it can mean that children's needs are not being best met in the current placement and there is a need to move. The important factor is that we know the reasons for the move.
44. An example of a child's journey where changes of placements are for a positive outcome could be a 1-year-old placed in foster care, the matter is placed before the Court and the conclusion of Care Proceedings is that the child's needs will be best met via adoption. The child then moves to the adoptive placement but initially remains a child looked after. Another example is an 8 year old, initially being placed in a residential placement due to complex needs, but after a period of two years was moved to a foster placement and was able to live in a family environment safely. Both of these examples would mean that the child's care journey consisted of two placements.



Legal Status of Children in Care

45. The legal status of a child in care is important, it specifies who has legal parental responsibility for a child in care enabling decisions to be made. In respect of children who are in care under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989, the responsibility rests solely with the parent and when a Care Order exists, this responsibility is shared between parents and the local authority. All children who are in care, but living with a parent, will be subject to an interim or care order.



46. The children who are looked after under a full or interim Care Order make up the greatest number, which is to be expected. There is a decrease of 4.4% compared to 2 years ago. The number who are looked after under Section 20 agreement has increased by 5.7%, which is as a result of the increased number of children seeking asylum (UASC) now cared for by Hampshire.

Ethnicity of Children in Care – excluding UASC

47. This data has not altered significantly in the last 2 years with the majority of Hampshire's children in care being White British(87%).

Ethnicity	Total	Percentage
African	10	0.61%
Any other Asian background	8	0.49%
Any other Black background	8	0.49%
Any other ethnic group	22	1.35%
Any other Mixed background	17	1.05%
Any other White background	34	2.10%
Bangladeshi	2	0.12%
Caribbean	1	0.06%
Chinese	6	0.37%
Gypsy/Roma	4	0.24%
Indian	2	0.12%
Information not yet obtained	11	0.67%
Refused	4	0.24%
Traveller of Irish Heritage	3	0.18%
White and Asian	24	1.48%
White and Black African	20	1.23%
White and Black Caribbean	20	1.23%
White British	1422	87.80%

Total	1618
--------------	-------------

UASC – Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

48. Hampshire currently have 228 UASC under the age of 18 years and currently in care. There has been a significant increase in UASC in Hampshire over the last few years, rising from 67 in 2020/21 to 106 in 2021/22 and 228 as of 31 March 2023. They now make up 12% of Hampshire’s looked after population. UASC are supported in specialist foster placements or in supported accommodation.

49. The majority of these continue to be 16 – 17 years old and from Afghanistan.

Table 3 – Age of UASC

Age	Count of Client name	Percentage
11	2	0.87%
12	1	0.43%
13	5	2.19%
14	12	5.26%
15	32	14.03%
16	89	39.03%
17	87	38.15%
Grand Total	228	

Table 4 – Nationality of UASC:

Nationality	Count of Client name	Percentage
Afghan	94	41.22%
Albanian	13	5.70%
Burkinabe	1	0.43%
Egyptian	5	2.19%
Eritrean	10	4.38%
Iranian	13	5.70%
Iraqi	11	4.82%
Kuwaiti	1	0.43%
Nigerian	1	0.43%
Not Recorded	36	15.78%
Pakistani	2	0.87%
South Sudanese	1	0.43%
Sudanese	20	8.77%
Syrian	6	2.63%
Turkish	6	2.63%
Ukrainian	1	0.43%
Vietnamese	7	3.07%
Grand Total	228	

50. Hampshire have created a specialist Refugee team. Since the team went live at the beginning of March 2023, all UASCs that were open to the children in care teams have been transferred.
51. This figure is made up of children who have come through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) as well as children who have arrived spontaneously into the UK.
52. The number of UASCs has increased due to the mandatory quota moving from 0.07% to 0.1%. The Home Office is anticipating that there will be an increase in the number of people arriving in the UK via small boats and therefore the department has expanded the provision and recruitment to an additional team is being put in place in preparation.
53. There continues to be a good link with the NTS who have provided opportunities for workers to visit the Kent Intake unit to support with learning around the process.

Disabled Children:

54. There are currently 687 children open to the Disabled Children’s Team, of which 63 children are in care, 37 of these children are subject to Interim/Full Care Orders with the remaining 26 children in care under a voluntary arrangement.
55. Of the 63 children, 7 children are in in-house foster care, 16 children are in IFA foster care, 1 in family and friend arrangements, 5 are in independent living and 31 are in residential care. The residential care usually incorporates the education provision specifically to meet the child’s needs.

With parents	Indep. Living (not B+B)	Foster (rel or friend)	Foster (HCC)	Foster (IFA)	Res home (NCP) childn.	Res home other	School	Other	Grand Total
3	5	1	7	16	26	4	1	0	63

Children in Care Teams

56. Hampshire have 6 children in Care Teams, each having one Team Manager, one Assistant Team Manager and on average 8 social workers (slight variation reflective of case numbers). The average caseload for a CIC social worker is 20 children per full time social worker.
57. The Children in Care team used to have a stable workforce, but unfortunately several teams are now having to rely on Agency social workers. However, all those that work in the team are passionate and committed to children in care.

Outcome Based Placement Team

58. The Children in Care teams work closely with the Outcomes Based placements team, with the purpose of ensuring that children are in the right provision for their needs and that the provider is accountable for targeted support to meet the young person's needs. This ensures that focus is on promoting and meeting the needs of young people and encouraging their development. A specific Support Needs Assessment is used to ensure progression is made throughout the course of placement, identifying clear SMART goals to inform the wider objective of the long-term care plan.
59. Through the child's placement, outcome planning meetings are held with providers who are supported and monitored to remain on track with the local authority care plan, this enables children to move on at a time that is right for them.
60. The Outcomes Based Placements team also guide transitions which are required to enable children to move from residential placements back to family, connected carers or foster care. Linking closely with fostering teams and the independent fostering agencies. In 2022, the team have successfully supported 20 children to have their support reduced or move to residential provision with a reduced package of support. There have been 2 children that have stepped across to foster care and 3 to post 16 supported accommodation.

Reunification

61. Hampshire introduced the Hampshire Approach in 2018 as a method of social work intervention, this is a strengths-based approach focusing on building positive relationships with families, identifying strengths and using this to support change in other areas. For children in care, this has a significant impact around their plan, which aims to ensure that they are in care for as long as needed. Previously a permanence decision would be made for a child to be placed in care and it would be the plan until they reached the age of 18 years.
62. In recognition that family situations can change, there has been significant progress around working with children and their families to enable children to be safely reunified to the care of family over time. This is carefully considered and uses the adapted NSPCC Framework for Reunification to provide a robust assessment to progress plans.
63. Hampshire saw 277 children reunified to the care of their parents in 2022. All were previously in care: for 160 children previous placement was fostering and 66 previous placement was residential.

Special Guardianship Orders

64. It is recognised that children who remain placed within their family or with friends do better, they continue to remain within their family environment where their sense of belonging is maintained within the family.

65. There are currently 868 children living with their Special Guardians in Hampshire. In the period June 2022 to May 2023, 68 children who had been in care for 12 months or more, stopped being looked after as their carers became Special Guardians.
66. There are currently 271 children who are living with their wider family or friends, but due to various reasons, the carers are Connected Carers and the children remain looked after. The children in care teams continue to review these regularly to see how we can increase the number of connected carers offering this vital support as a Special Guardian, this meaning that the child would no longer be looked after and provide the carers with parental responsibility to enable them to make decisions for the child.
67. The post SGO support team was launched in January 2023, and this new team will provide advice and support to Special Guardians. Connected Carers have told us that if they move to become Special Guardians they are worried about not receiving practical support with some challenges e.g. family time, not receiving the same financial support and also not being able to access training. The Post SGO support team has worked closely with the national charity, Kinship Care, and are developing a service that will ensure Special Guardians are receiving the support and guidance that they require. It is anticipated that the number of Special Guardianship Orders being made will increase.

Children who go missing from care

68. It is vital that we know the whereabouts of all children in care, this is closely tracked as it is known that children who go missing from care are at increased risk of child exploitation.
69. Child exploitation includes:
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
 - Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
 - Modern Slavery
 - Trafficking
 - County Lines (drug running)
70. When a child is looked after and is missing, Children's Services will show the same concern as any good parent by taking the necessary steps to understand where children are going and why.
71. Over the past 12 months there have been 695 children being reported missing. There will be several and repeated instances for some children. We are aware in each district which children frequently go missing and there is close monitoring of these. A risk assessment/safety plan will inform what support services and actions are required to prevent children and young people from going missing, and to judge when it is appropriate to report them missing to the police. These are determined by individual needs and risks - for some high-risk young people, this would be immediately when out of visual sight of staff, for others this would be if they have failed to return home by 10pm.

Month	Missing Episodes	Missing Children
Jun-22	148	65
Jul-22	180	74
Aug-22	184	57
Sep-22	150	55
Oct-22	135	60
Nov-22	150	55
Dec-22	110	36
Jan-23	115	64
Feb-23	117	49
Mar-23	125	56
Apr-23	125	56
May-23	156	68
Grand Total	1695	695

72. There is a close working relationship with the Willow/MET teams who work with young people at risk of exploitation. This work is also supported by the 4LSCP (Local Safeguarding Children’s Partnership). There is a need for all agencies to work together to tackle exploitation to ensure that there is an effective response to the changing needs within the County.
73. For children who go missing from care they are offered a return from missing conversation and leaflets are provided to both children and their carers to provide further information which they read to increase their understanding of why we are worried when they are not where they are supposed to be.
74. There are a number of different strategies in place to ensure that children in care have effective plans and support with issues around exploitation, below is an indication of just some of the work in place:
- Training – There is access for staff to attend training to increase their understanding around current issues regarding child exploitation, the Willow Team are responsive and will deliver district sessions where the needs arise.
 - There is a separate HIPS (Hampshire, IOW, Portsmouth, Southampton) Missing training set, managed by the Willow Team.
 - There are two missing coordinators employed in Willow whose task is to work with children who go missing frequently, Willow also review the daily missing data as a duty task.
 - There is currently a targeted piece of work by police under Child Centred Policing work where there is a review of all the ‘safe and wells’ interviews as there is a difference between the work that the police do when meeting children once returned, to that of social workers but to equally consider how the two agencies can effectively work together to support vulnerable children.
 - The Missing People charity have just reviewed the HIOW Constabulary Safe and Well process and are embedded in the HIOWC training and we are able to use their services to report missing children.

- Op Salvus – is a Police project around High-Risk missing children who get an upgraded response from the police where MET issues are a concern.
- Op METs – Willow TM & Police Sergeants meet monthly to review high risk cases where missing and exploitation are issues and quality assure the risk level.
- There is a HIPS Strategic & Operational MET meeting process looking at best practice across the county.
- District Op MET – local multi-agency meeting to consider the high and medium risk young people, looking at emerging risk and disruption planning at a local level.
- CERAF (risk assessment tool used by professional to determine a risk level) – upgraded to review and score risk around all forms of exploitation including Missing.
- UASC Collaboration – A multi-agency pan Hampshire review of UASC children including long-term missing and trafficked children.
- NRM – (National Referral Mechanism) - Training has been set up and Hampshire is a pilot area for local NRM decisions.

Children's wishes and views:

75. Hampshire has a strong history of weaving the voice of children and young people into all that we do. As part of the Hampshire Approach the department now have all the recording in relation to children, including visits, assessments, plans are written to the child using strengths-based language that it appropriate to the understanding of the child. We moved away from standalone 'Participation Case Notes' and instead practitioners integrate the voice of children and young people across all recording including supervision notes. Strength based direct work tools like the 'what's working, what's not' ensures all voices are captured and inform the social worker analysis.
76. Children are involved in developing their My Life My Future plans, they do this directly with their social worker, their carer and some write it themselves. The child's perspective is embedded throughout the document and features age-appropriate scaling as both a direct work tool and also to demonstrate change over time. This has seen improved engagement from children around their care plan as they feel very much part of it.
77. Children are spoken to alone by their social worker on visits and their Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) also ensures their wishes are understood in meeting with them alone and as part of their 6 monthly reviews.
78. Review participation performance for the whole county remains above 90% throughout the last 12 months. This evidences that a high percentage of young people have their opportunity to participate in their reviews and decisions being made about their future. IROs have continued to seek children's views however following the Ofsted focused inspection, it was agreed for all children to be visited 3 weeks before their review to ensure that we capture their views independently on how they want their review to be undertaken and seek their views on what they want discussed within their meeting and what their expectations are.

79. In reference to point 13 in this report and in response to the area for improvement from the Ofsted focused visit on children in care, work has commenced to review the Independent Reviewing Service so that the work of IROs is strengthened in gaining the voice of the child and providing robust and independent scrutiny to care plans.

Findings from 2022 Bright Spots Survey

80. Bright Spots is a national survey run by the charity Coram Voice which collates the voice of the child and their experience in care. This is a biannual survey, which was again completed in 2022.
81. An initial review of the findings for the *Children In Care* survey has highlighted:
- Overwhelmingly **our young people have a high level of trust in their carers**, with 100% of respondents aged 4-11 responding positively and 95% of those aged 11-18.
 - **The level of trust in social workers was also high** ranging from 89 – 100% across the age ranges.
 - 54% of Hampshire's 11-18 year olds had the same social worker over the year which is **higher than other local authorities at 34%**.
 - Positively the vast majority of our young people responded that their lives are improving with 83 – 92% across the age range describing their lives as 'a bit better or much better'.
82. Areas from the review which identify potential areas for improvement include:
- Whilst there are a number of positive responses about contact with social works, 2 in 10 of 11-18 year olds had 3 or more social workers in the past year.
 - 1 in 10 11-18 year olds described 'hardly ever' having a chance to practice life skills.
 - 1 in 10 8-18 year olds hardly ever felt included in decisions about them.
83. We note that there was a relatively low response rate of 17%. This has been considered to identify learning and opportunities for improvement. The full analysis is still being completed and the findings will inform service planning, transformation and service improvement projects.

Participation

84. In recent years the responsibility for Participation has moved from a standalone role sat centrally, to every district and service. The rationale for this shift is the recognition that participation is everyone's responsibility and that we should incorporate it in business-as-usual activity.
85. Local teams have continued to deliver a broad and varied range of participation events and activities throughout 2022. Please refer to the 'Update on Participation report' submitted on 28 March 2023. This report aims to give a flavour of the breadth and impact of these events.
86. Hampshire Children and Young People's Plan, 2022 – 2025. Focus groups were carried out with 120 children and young people in Hampshire: • 77.5%

were aged 11-15 years old • 14% were from ethnic minority backgrounds • 16% were identified as having Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). In addition, feedback from 479 children and young people was collated by the Hampshire Members of Youth Parliament.

87. Big Activity Week - this ran from the 1 - 5 August 2022 where 77 Children in Care in school years 3-9 and in Hampshire County Council Local Authority Care, took part in 6 activity weeks. From the New Forest to the Brecon Beacons in Wales, these young people made lifelong memories and created friendships with young people in similar situations to themselves. The week was run by Hampshire Outdoors staff along with other staff within Children Services. The week was free for all young people with the cost partly funded by National Lottery Community Fund with most of the cost coming from Hampshire Outdoors, a part of Skills and Participation.

88. Care Leavers week

Care Leavers Week in Hampshire is going from strength to strength with the largest attendance across the week that we have ever had. Our teams across Hampshire arranged a series of events in collaboration with our care experienced adults.

- Open Mic Night Hosted by Step-by-Step - Aldershot.
- Wessex Dance Academy Day Event
- Money works course - Via teams.
- Meet the Southwest Care leaver Team – Totton
- Thinking of going to Uni? Support in higher education for Care experienced Young people via Teams.
- London Meet Up
- Winchester Uni tour – Winchester
- Crate Stack - Aldershot
- Halloween Spooktacular – Gosport

89. Developing Child Exploitation Resources for schools across Hampshire. In 2022 Hampshire County Council's Willow Team, a multi-agency team supporting children at risk of exploitation, launched a series of short films and accompanying teaching packs for schools across Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, and Southampton. The films highlight the dangers of criminal and sexual exploitation, with a particular focus on the grooming process.

90. The characters in the films were played by local young actors from The Young Creatives. The scripts were written in collaboration with young people being supported by the Willow Team to ensure their authenticity. The resources have been trialled with school groups by Willow and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

91. C&F Awards 2022 – A young people's judging panel shortlisted the final three for the 'Above and Beyond' award. This is a way for us to involve young people in decision making about activity in the branch (assigned but informed approach).

92. East Hants Youth Conference – The East Hants Family Support Service supported the annual Youth Conference which focused on young carers in 2022. The event provided activities and facilitated discussion for young people to understand their needs and what support should be offered.
93. Disabled Children’s Team (DCT) Audit tool for children
A SNAP audit tool has been developed for use by children, to capture the child’s voice. The tool includes video clip questions using Makaton with various options to return answers via video or boxes for use with switches.
94. Creating a multi-disciplinary residential home. Throughout 2022 we have been planning the opening of a new multi-agency health and social care residential home for young people with complex needs. The home has been renamed by young people as 'Hockley House' in honour of local artist John Hockley. Young People form part of the working group who can share their views and ideas, on everything from interior design to how residents will have their voices heard, as we work towards the opening of the home in Autumn 2023.
95. Family Fun Day – Havant Disabled Children’s Team had two family fun days in April and July 2022 in order to show support to their families, and to provide an opportunity for networking between families and professionals. The events were attended by over 40 children and their parents/carers and feedback confirmed the events were inclusive of their children’s needs.
96. Spring to spring – Test Valley, Family Support Service (FSS) held an event which included bulb planting, pictures, games, crafting, and teddy tombola. Positive feedback was received about the support offered to children and families by Family support workers.
97. Circus skills workshop – this took place over May/June 2022 half term; it a two-hour circus skills activity for children subject to Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) and their carers to attend. Carers felt it was good to meet other carers in their situation and it made them feel less alone. Staff signposted carers to community support available and encouraged attendance at the monthly SGO support group and parenting programmes where needed.
98. Theatre backstage experience at Chesil theatre, Winchester – this experience was offered to care experienced children to provide a backstage experience for 20 young people who reside in foster care or residential care locally. The activity was offered after young people had requested an activity that did not involve being onstage, singing or dancing. This evidences that staff had listened to the needs of the young people prior to providing the activity.
99. Art therapy pilot project age (8 - 12) - New Forest FSS co-delivered a 6-week art therapy programme with Hart art therapists. The activity had positive outcomes in that 70% of parents saw an improvement in their child’s overall emotional wellbeing. 85% of parents report feeling closer and more connected with their children. 85% of parents have seen an improvement in their child’s confidence and self-esteem.
100. The Big Conversation at Swanwick Lodge – The Youth Commission visited Swanwick Lodge to ensure these young people could contribute to the Big Conversation. Their report at the end of the visit fed back: “*Overall, the major*

points we will be taking forward centre around better training and changing attitudes to mental health and neurodivergence, as well as greater access to support. Before leaving, we were treated to a performance of a twenty-minute play that the children had been rehearsing for, which we enjoyed immensely”

101. Using Arts across the Youth Offending Service – YOT and YCP offer a range of creative interventions, with Easter and Summer focused activities taking place in 2022. These events provide an opportunity for young people to express themselves through poetry and photography and also gain an Arts Award.

Conclusions

102. 2022 was an extremely busy for the Children in Care teams, the work has been completed whilst coming out of unprecedented times with COVID. It is a credit to all social workers that they have continued to fully engage children and young people in a way that they can participate, in all visits and planning, to ensure that their voice is heard, they understand what is happening to them and a positive impact can be seen.
103. The department has continued to support children living with family and friends under alternative arrangements and without the need for them to be in care, where possible. For those children where care is necessary, the proactive modernising placements programme (MPP), continues to develop new and improved ways of working. We have seen the continued growth of the Hampshire Hives, Placement Stability workers, the development of The Great Behaviour Breakdown training to foster carers, alongside the continuation of the Hampshire Approach in all direct work. This strengths-based way of working aims to improve outcomes for children by developing a continuum of care which can provide the right accommodation and support at the right time for our children in care, and to ensure that children in care have the same life chances as every other child; and they supported to achieve their goals.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> <u>Date</u>	
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <http://intranet.hants.gov.uk/equality/equality-assessments.htm>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*

This page is intentionally left blank

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	07 December 2022
Title:	Hampshire Virtual School Headteacher Annual Report
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Michelle Nye

Tel: 01962 835227

Email: michelle.nye@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Virtual School's work and focus during the academic year 2020-2021, together with an analysis of educational outcomes, where published, for Hampshire's cohort of children in care. It sets out the priorities for securing improved individual and cohort progress, educational experiences, and outcomes for children in the care of Hampshire. In the academic year 2020 -2021, schools were subject to a partial lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic although they remained open for children in care and other vulnerable groups. Formal examinations at KS4 and KS5 and assessments at KS1 and KS2 were cancelled. Therefore, this report will not detail outcomes in some key stages due to the absence of available data.

Recommendation(s)

2. The content of the report is noted and it is noted the absence of formal assessment and use of other assessment methodologies in 2021 requires a qualitative approach to reporting.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to outline and analyse the end of key stage achievement of all children and young people from early years to 18 in care of Hampshire County Council (academic year 2020-21). It sets out the priorities for improving the effectiveness and impact of the Virtual School so that, together with schools, settings, and post-16 providers, we secure greater individual and cohort progress, better educational experiences, and better outcomes for Hampshire's children in care. The report celebrates the achievements of

children in our care and illustrates how their voice is beginning to shape the services provided.

Contextual information

4. The Virtual School sits within the Education and Inclusion Branch but works closely with the Children and Families branch of Hampshire Children's Services Department (CSD) and the Access, Resources and Business Development Branch, in relation to data, information, and admissions
5. The Executive Head Teacher is responsible for the Virtual Schools in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Close working relationships are nurtured with all other services, including SEND, Early Years Advisory Team, Hampshire Futures, and wider health services.
6. The Virtual School in Hampshire is small in relation to the size of cohort. Therefore, ensuring that all teams prioritise this group of children and building capacity across schools and the wider children's workforce is a key component in our strategy to improve educational outcomes.
7. Accurate information is maintained on how children in our care are progressing in their education. The Virtual School intervenes when a child or young person in Hampshire's care is not achieving as well as they can. We provide training and information for schools, foster carers, and social workers. Furthermore, the Virtual School ensures resources, including the pupil premium plus, are distributed effectively and monitors the impact on the educational experiences and achievements of children in care.
8. Since the last VSH annual report, services and processes have been further developed, so that children, schools, and other stakeholders experience the same high standards and consistent approaches from the Virtual School.

Finance

Pupil Premium Plus

9. In line with the DfE statutory guidance, the Virtual School published a policy document which makes clear the expectations and arrangements in place around pupil premium plus for children looked after. [Pupil Premium Plus and funding | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/pupil-premium-plus-and-funding)
10. For transparency, the Virtual School Head also reports specifically to Schools Forum on the use and impact of pupil premium plus. Arrangements for distributing the pupil premium plus grant are reviewed annually.

Performance

Summary of performance for the academic year 2020-21 Attainment and progress of cohorts by chronological age

11. The following analysis refers to children in care in the 'OC2' or 'published' cohort during 2020-21 academic year. That is children who have been in care for a year or more as of 31st March 2021.
12. Data is drawn from internal Virtual School data collections due to the cancellation of summer examinations and assessments across all key stages.
13. There may be some differences between the internal local authority and verified KS4 dataset, due to rounding and some unmatched data where not all children's results have been included. Where this is the case, it is clearly indicated on the datasets used
14. Please note that the analysis will rely on qualitative data to draw conclusions.

Outcome for Hampshire's children in care EYFS results

15. A 'good level of development' or GLD is defined as having achieved the age expected level in Communication and Language (CL), Personal Social Emotional Development (PSED), Physical Development (PD) Literacy and Mathematics. In 2019, there was an improvement in outcomes across all measures. In the early years, 51.5% of children achieved a good level of development (GLD) compared with 48% nationally as indicated by NEXUS data.
16. There were no formal assessments in 2019-20 for EYFS due to COVID-19 and therefore we are unable to include formal results in this report.
17. The Virtual School agreed a service level agreement with Services for Young Children (SfYC) to ensure expertise and support is provided to this cohort. A dedicated Education Adviser for Early Years leads our strategy and approach and works with a group of specialist advisory teachers to provide termly meetings and support work, including visits to schools and settings, moderation of PEPs and transition work.
18. There has been an increased focus on close working with the Admissions, Inclusion and Advisory Teams to ensure that information is shared on applications in a timely way and that good schools are identified. Support provided in schools was reviewed so that priority focus could be given to specific PVI settings.

Key stage 1 and key stage 2 performance

19. There are not DfE national published outcomes available for children in care at key stage 1 and 2 as a result of the cancellation of tests and assessments.
20. As identified in the previous VSH annual report, one impact of the current curriculum and assessment methods in place is that there are parts of the curriculum that many children in care, due to the turbulence in their lives, have simply not had time to learn securely by the end of the key stage. This implies that their final scores may reflect the lack of time they have had to learn the content rather than their capabilities.
21. This needs to be very carefully considered this year, considering the Covid-19 impact, and given that formal assessment did not take place in 2020 - 2021. The Virtual School, alongside its national association, is working with OFQUAL to raise awareness of the likely impacts on this cohort of children and will ensure that any findings or recommendations are shared with our schools and colleagues across the Education and Inclusion branch.

Key stage 4 performance

22. Education outcomes for children in care improved continuously in Hampshire from 2015 to 2018, rising from 16.7% achieving a grade 4 or above in English and maths in 2016 to 19% in 2017 and 21.6% in 2018. The results disappointingly dipped in 2019 (falling to 13.7%) but rose significantly in 2020 to 28.1%.
23. In 2021, the improvement seen in 2020 has been sustained in GCSE results for our cohort of children in care. Of the 128 children who had been looked after continually for at least 12 months, 13 children (10.2%) achieved English and maths at grades 9-5 compared to 18 children (15.8%) in 2020 and 3.2% in 2019. In the 'basics' measure, grade 9-4 in English and maths, 33 (25.8%) achieved this compared to 32 children (28.1%) in 2020 following the significant rise from 13.7% in 2019.
24. We had an increased number of pupils achieving the EBACC at 9-4 (four pupils, 3.1%) and at 9-5 (1.6%) and more pupils who sat any exam (97 pupils, 75.8%) up from 73.7% in 2020.
25. There were 128 in the OC2 cohort for Year 11 in 2021, 14 more than the previous year. There were an additional 46 whose results will not be published as they entered care after the end of March 2021.

26. Of these 128 pupils, 63 had been in care for five years or more. This is higher than the previous cohort where 46 had been in care for five years or more in 2020. Length of time in care is a known factor which impacts on educational outcomes (University of Oxford 2013).
27. The remaining 65 pupils entered the care system during their secondary school years and 25 of the 65 entered care in Key Stage 4. The time preceding this is likely to have been chaotic and unstable, with significant risk of gaps in learning.
28. In terms of special educational needs, there were 18 children placed in maintained special schools which is higher than 2020 and nine in non-maintained special settings which is significantly lower than 2020. Four pupils were in a Pupil Referral Unit or Alternative Provision.
29. In the overall cohort in Year 11, there were 47 with EHCPs and an additional two at the assessment stage in May. Of the 47, eight were in other local authority areas. In the OC2 cohort, 39 had an EHCP.

In the OC2 Year 11 cohort, the designations were as follows:

ASD	HI	MLD	PD	PMLD	SEMH	BESD	SLCN	SLD	N/K
2	1	17	1	2	10	2	1	1	2

30. In the OC2 Year 11 cohort, the SEN settings were as follows:

Education Centre	EOTAS (LA)	Other independent	Secondary School	Special School	No school
1	1	4	4	25	4

31. As would be expected, the Virtual School were actively involved in intensive casework with 24 of the children in the Year 11 cohort either in view of their complexity or as a result of them experiencing delay in terms of securing admissions or the required packages of assessment, intervention and support.
32. The 'Strength and Difficulties' questionnaire (SDQ) is used with every looked after child as an indicator of need, with an 'abnormal' score indicating a significant level of need. Forty of the 128 children had 'abnormal' scores, six more than the previous year. Five of these children did achieve the 'basics' measure. Twenty nine of the 40 did sit an exam.

33. In terms of care placement stability, 40 of the 128 children experienced a change of care placement at some point during Year 11. This is significantly fewer than in 2020 which is a positive trend. It is notable that seven of these still achieved the 'basics' measure (grades 9-4).
34. In terms of school placement stability, 26 children experienced a change of school during Year 11, a slightly higher number than the previous year although improved care placement stability suggests school changes were more planned and supported. Four of these children achieved the 'basics' measure. The reduction in school changes in key stage four remains a priority for the Virtual School and our local authority partners.
35. Those children placed in schools rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted achieved the best outcomes. There were nine children placed in schools requiring improvement and one achieved the 'basics' measure.
36. There were six UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children) in the 2021 cohort. No child in this cohort achieved the 'basics' measure although five sat an exam and one child achieved maths GCSE (9-4).

Attendance

37. The DfE published data 'Outcomes for CIN (including CLA) for the 2021 reporting year, sets out the published data for children in care for 12 months as at 31st March 2021, the OC2 cohort.
38. For Hampshire's children in care, the overall absence rate was 8.8% whilst the equivalent national figure was 9.1%. The persistent absence rate for Hampshire's children in care was 30.1% with the equivalent national figure at 30.4%.
39. The impact of Covid on attendance of our children and on the reliability and accuracy of data and recording to provide a narrative is significant. For the previous year with data available (2019), the cohort was 759 and the overall absence rate was 5.6% and persistent absence was 13.2%.
40. The Virtual School will continue to monitor and track attendance carefully to ensure that we target children and young people who are at risk of persistence absence. This is especially important in the context of supporting our most vulnerable students to transition back into school following the pandemic

Exclusion

41. No Hampshire child in care was permanently excluded in 2020–21 whilst in care. In relation to exclusions, the DfE's 'Outcomes for CIN (including CLA) sets out published data for CLA 12 months as at 31 March 2020.
42. For Hampshire's children, there were 827 in the cohort and there were 93 fixed term exclusions which is 11.25%. The equivalent national figure was 9.38% indicating we have a concerning increase in the number of fixed term exclusions for our cohort of children.
43. For the previous year with data available (2019), the cohort was 803, there were a low number of permanent exclusions, and the fixed term exclusion rate was 12.58%.
44. The reduction in fixed term exclusions will remain a key priority for the Virtual School in this academic year.

Consultation and Equalities

45. Consultation, not applicable.
46. The work of the Virtual School impacts positively on Hampshire's children in care.

Our aspirations for children and young people looked after

47. The Virtual School and Virtual School Head have a lead role in promoting the educational achievement of children in its care. However, to meet our aspirational targets, we require all schools, the local authority and partner agencies to share the responsibility and to prioritise their needs as corporate parents.
48. Education that encourages high aspirations and individual achievements, with minimum disruption and maximum stability, is central to improving short and long-term outcomes for children in our care. This is strongly reflected in our joint work across schools and services and in our current service plan.
49. In line with DfE statutory guidance for local authorities, our aspiration is that all children and young people attend a good or outstanding school which meets their individual needs and have good school attendance.
50. We want every child in care to:

- Enjoy their education and become positive and resilient learners who know their own strengths and talents.
- Benefit from the protective factor of being in care and make improved progress and achieve better educational outcomes once they feel stable and secure.
- Be prioritised by schools and services in line with the collective corporate parent duty
- Receive the same support from their foster carers as they would from any good parent.
- Have a voice that positively impacts on the services they receive.
- Have stability in their care and education placements.
- Receive good advice and guidance to ensure they can progress into further education, employment, and training and, when appropriate, university.
- Know that their achievement and successes will be celebrated.

Reporting arrangements and accountability

51. The Virtual School self-evaluates against the overarching Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). It is expected that key priorities are also identified by Hampshire Corporate Parenting Board which scrutinises the work of the Virtual School and holds it to account. The Virtual School Head reports annually to departmental management teams across both Education and Inclusion and Children and Families branches, with regular updates and reports through the year, including within the Inclusion Management Team.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

52. The Virtual School uses an internal (non-commercial) Personal Education Plan (PEP) template which has been developed over time. The process is managed by the Virtual School team in collaboration with social care and school-based colleagues. The current PEP format is set up to draw relevant data into Virtual School datasets so we can fulfil our duty to monitor the attainment and progress of our children in care. It is a requirement for this data to be presented to Ofsted during an inspection of Children's Services.

53. In the last two years, the Virtual School has driven forward joint work with designated teachers and social workers to improve the percentage of PEPs completed and submitted to the Virtual School. This focus has led to an improved annual return rate in 2020-2021.

54. As a Virtual School, we recognise the priority need to improve the compliance and quality of the PEP process, as it is a key tool to drive forward progress for our children and young people.

55. The VSH presented a report setting out key concerns and challenges to CFMT and EIBMT in April 2021. This led to a PEP review project being initiated with Children's Services Transformation Practice (TSC) in June 2021. The project included a rapid stakeholder engagement exercise, interviews with 15 designated teachers across all settings, focus groups with colleagues from social care, education, DAIT, HIEPs and foster carers and a survey with 279 responses, including over 160 school and 65 foster carer responses. This helped to identify the key areas of improvement and the short- and long-term actions required across the multi-agency partnership, including by the Virtual School.
56. The findings of the PEP review project concluded there needed to be clarification on purpose and role in relation to PEPs, given that it is a multi-agency activity, dependent on shared accountability and ownership between social workers, schools, Virtual School and the IROs (Independent Reviewing Officers). The Virtual School is in the process of re-evaluating the more substantive training offer to both foster carers and social workers in preparation for roll out in the next academic year.
57. The Virtual School does not have the capacity to routinely attend or contribute directly to all PEP meetings of statutory school age children. The quality assurance and audit process is therefore key to fulfilling our duty to raise standards and is delivered dynamically through 'Corporate Parent' visits and by regular themed audits. In this financial year, the VSH has strengthened the relationship with HIAS and commissioned more dedicated time to enable more PEP auditing and feedback to schools to be undertaken as part of 'Corporate Parent' visits.
58. The Virtual School uses a PEP audit tool developed in line with expectations from statutory guidance and best practice from other local authorities. In relation to school age children, the Virtual School currently undertakes a retrospective termly audit of around 10% of PEPs returned. The Virtual School identify a specific focus for the PEP audit drawing on themes and concerns that may arise from data analysis, training and operational casework.
59. The focus for the spring and summer term 2021 audit in Hampshire was the transition of pupils in reception classes, year 1 and year 7. The audit found evidence of some high-quality work to promote the education and well-being of children, particularly in the Early Years cohort. In most plans, there was evidence of a good knowledge of the child's care needs and educational progress. The most prominent finding of the PEP audit was that the quality of target setting and action planning was not consistent. The evidence of the child's and carer's voice and the impact of the outcome from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) also needed strengthening in a significant number of PEPs.

60. The key findings and themes in the PEP audits are used by the Virtual School to inform our practice, planning and priorities in a number of ways. We use it to inform the content and focus of our training programme for designated teachers, social workers and foster carers.

Previously looked after children (PLAC)

61. Previously looked after children are those who are no longer looked after by a local authority in England because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship (SGO) or child arrangement (CAO) order.

62. DfE statutory guidance requires Virtual Schools to promote the educational achievement of this group of children by providing advice and guidance to those with parental responsibility as well as to schools and services as part of their statutory duty. The DfE provides a time limited grant to support this work and our activities have focused on building capacity and developing an information and resource base which will be sustainable once the funding has ceased.

63. In Hampshire, the grant has been used to fund a specialist Education Officer focusing on providing advice, guidance and support to previously looked after children. The post holder has built a wide network of local and regional partners, including Adopt South and Hampshire's Fostering and Adoption Team, and has successfully developed the offer to schools and parents jointly across the region.

64. Whilst there is no requirement, or capacity, to provide direct casework, inevitably this has been part of the work, with the post holder supporting a range of queries from parents expressing concerns around individual children, and has proactively signposted them to appropriate services, such as SEN, school transport and the Inclusion Support Service. These queries have also helped shape the resources and information that are being offered centrally to parents via the Virtual School website and Moodle. This has contributed to a constant flow of information and helped to reduce frustration whilst parents seek the help they need for their children.

Post-16 The Virtual College

65. The Virtual College is the post-16 arm of the Virtual School and supports our care experienced young people on their post-16 journeys. Introduced in 2018, the Virtual College ensures that looked-after young people have access to high quality, post 16 education, employment and training. Specialist post 16 advisers deliver advice, guidance and face-to-face support for young people as they transition from Year 11 onwards, raising their aspirations and attainment, creating new opportunities and enabling progression into 'good jobs'

66. As part of the Children's Services post 16 Careers and Participation team, the Virtual College is fully integrated into the wider RPA (Raising Participation Age) statutory functions supporting all young people to participate successfully in formal education and training in year 12 and 13.
67. All young people in England are required to participate in formal education or training until their 18th birthday, under Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) legislation. Hampshire County Council has a statutory duty to support young people aged 16 and 17 (and up to 25 for those with Special Educational Needs).
68. The Council is held to account by the Department for Education (DfE) for its performance against this duty, including the proportion of young people in education, employment and training (EET) or not (NEET); and the proportion of young people whose activity is unknown.
69. As part of the Council's corporate parent role, there are additional duties for the Virtual School to support the participation and educational achievement of looked-after children and young people from pre-school up to age 18. Support for post 16 (AY12-13) is delivered through the Virtual College managed by Hampshire Futures.
70. The Virtual College model uses a robust and wide-ranging dataset to target resources effectively and provides a dedicated 'Education Participation Adviser' to each young person in Hampshire, to support and enable effective transition from year 11, monitor and track their progress and to ensure they sustain their post 16 placement. An update on educational achievement of looked-after young people, post 16, participating in formal education and training programmes in academic year 2020-21 is provided below.
71. The participation rate in post 16 education and training for looked-after young people has increased since the introduction of the Virtual College support through specialist advisers, prioritised at key stages of the academic year.
72. Intended Destinations in year 11 are identified earlier and college applications are submitted ahead of the overall cohort (by the end of February each year). The September Guarantee (statutory duty on LAs to ensure a guaranteed place in education Year 12-13) is also secured earlier for young people being supported by the Virtual College team. Table 1 below shows Hampshire September Guarantee performance in 2021, comparing Virtual College with overall cohorts.
73. In Hampshire, the percentage of looked-after young people securing a place in post 16 education is higher (97.9%) than the overall cohort (97%).

Table 1: Virtual College RPA compliant offers in comparison to wider cohort (Source: November MI CCIS Submission to DfE)			
HCC	Yr 11	Yr 12	Combined
Virtual College Cohort	108	85	193
Positive Offer	107	82	97.9%
Negative/No offer	1	3	2.1%
Hampshire Cohort	14,115	14,516	28,631
Positive Offer	13,825	13,944	97.0%
Negative Offer	290	572	3.0%

74. September Guarantee performance for the overall cohort in Hampshire is significantly above national and regional averages, which are 94.3% and 90.9% respectively.
75. Table 2 below shows the Hampshire participation in education, employment and training for the Virtual College cohort at the end of AY2020-21, including three-year trend and comparison with national and regional averages.

Table 2: Looked-after participation in education, employment and training (Source: NCCIS June 2021 LA Tables)						
	HCC					
Destination	June 19	June 20	June 21		England	
EET Total	84.0%	83.4%	84.4%		74.6%	
NEET	12.0%	15.0%	14.4%		22.4%	
Not Known	3.6%	1.6%	1.2%		3.0%	
Combined NEET and Unknown	15.6%	16.6%	15.6%		25.4%	

76. Participation of looked-after young people in post 16 education and training is increasing in Hampshire. All measures are above national averages and NEET/Unknown is comparatively low.
77. Post 16 options were affected by the pandemic during 2020-21 (and continue to be). Progression into an apprenticeship, or employment with training, often the preferred choice for young people in this cohort, have reduced significantly.

78. Virtual College advisers are supporting access to alternative options, for example 21 young people from priority cohorts (Looked-after, SEND and BAME) have started six month paid work placements on the HCC Kickstart scheme, and new placements are currently being agreed with the Cabinet Office at ONS Titchfield as part of the government's Care Leaver Covenant.
79. In August 2021 the Virtual College cohorts (Yr12/13 resident cohort) were 184 young people in Hampshire
80. Table 3 below shows FE data for AY2020-21 for the Hampshire Virtual College cohort. Information has been provided by schools and colleges from Hampshire and neighbouring local authorities.

Table 3: Hampshire Virtual College FE achievement data AY2020-21			
Virtual College	2019-20	2020-21	Change %
Cohort	186	184	
FE	111	114	+2.27%
Completed/Passed	70	71	+3.11%
Withdrawn	15	12	-3.19%
On programme	26	31	+3.77%

81. There were 114 young people from the Virtual College cohort who attended college courses in AY2020-21. This represents a 2.27% increase compared to AY2019-20.
82. There were 71 young people who completed courses and 12 young people who withdrew. This represents a 3.11% increase in the number of successful completions and a 3.19% decrease in the proportion of young people who withdrew from courses.
83. Across all levels, 31 young people remain on their programme of study and are expected to complete courses in AY2021-22, including 21 young people on 2-year courses. Table 4 below shows the breakdown of qualification levels.

Table 4: Hampshire Virtual College breakdown of qualifications AY2020/21

Qualification	Complete/ Pass	Withdrawn/ Not Passed	Total	Ongoing
Entry Level	11	2	13	5
Level 1	14	2	16	0
Level 2	25	5	30	3
Level 3 Vocational	14	2	16	9
Level 3 Academic	4	1	5	12
GCSE	1	0	1	2
ESOL	2	0	2	0
TOTAL	71	12	83	31
	<i>85.54%</i>	<i>14.46%</i>	<i>100%</i>	

84. The overall qualification achievement rate 85.5% is a 3.2% increase compared with the previous year. The proportion of students who completed Level 2 courses increased by 11%, 25 compared to 16 in AY2019-20. Level 3 courses dropped by 4%, 18 compared to 22 in AY2019-20. Vocational/technical options were more popular than academic, broadly 75/25 split.
85. Five young people have successfully progressed to Higher Education in AY2021-22, with an additional two deferred places for AY2022-23. University destinations are:
- Business & Marketing at Bournemouth University
 - Philosophy, Politics & Economics at Kings College (UoL)
 - Criminology at Loughborough University
 - Engineering at University of Portsmouth
 - Paramedic Science at St Georges (UoL)
86. There has been a significant reduction in apprenticeship opportunities, only one young person in the Virtual College completing in 2020-21 compared with nine in the previous year. This is indicative of the wider impact of the pandemic on work-based opportunities. There has been an increase in the number of young people supported by re-engagement provision through the ESF STEP programme.
87. Hampshire County Council has a strong Virtual College post 16 programme which is having a tangible impact supporting young people to participate, achieve and progress in formal education and training. Participation across Hampshire is above national and regional averages, and educational achievement showing improvement.

88. The Virtual College has enhanced the level of resource for looked-after children and young people, utilising Virtual School funding and external grants such as the European Social Fund to enable an increased level of support. The Council is well placed to access new funding opportunities in 2022 through the UKSPF (Shared Prosperity Fund) and DfE/DWP.
89. More can be done to increase the reach of the Virtual College, through the Virtual School and local college partnerships to further improve Year 11 transition and post 16 PEP support (including the extended responsibility to children with a social worker). Expanding employer networks through Hampshire Futures Employment and Skills Hub will provide more high-quality progression opportunities.
90. The Virtual School collects an update from Hampshire and neighbouring local authority colleges annually around their specific offer for children in care, so this is visible to young people and their carers as they make their post 16 choices. The 2022 edition of 'What's Next' is now available online <http://documents.hants.gov.uk/cic-virtual-college/cic-virtual-college-what-next.pdf>

The Virtual School's approach to improving educational outcomes

91. There are several factors which impact on the educational outcomes of children in care. A study by the Rees Centre (Research in Fostering and Education, University of Oxford) noted that, controlling for all factors, there are several which consistently contribute to low educational outcomes of young people in care in secondary schools. These include the length of time children are in care, the number of changes in placement (with each additional change in placement after age 11 associated with one third of a grade less at GCSE) and the number of school changes (with young people who change school in key stage 4 scoring over five grades less than those who did not). School absence and exclusion are also significant factors as are placement and school type with young people in residential settings, special schools or pupil referral units scoring lower than those with similar characteristics in mainstream schools.
92. The Virtual School ensures that these factors inform the practice and priorities of their work as outlined in this report. We place significant focus on ensuring, through training, that designated teachers and schools have a better understanding of children's social, emotional and mental health needs to ensure they can be supported to remain in the best mainstream schools wherever possible.
93. We monitor attendance and exclusion data for all our children in care to identify young people at risk of non-engagement and to ensure appropriate

assessment, intervention and support packages are in place in a timely way where needed.

94. The Virtual School also works closely with social work colleagues to ensure that, where placement moves are essential, school moves are avoided especially in the final years of schooling.
95. We also ensure that our children and young people are prioritised to attend schools judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding'. We ensure that the network around children focus on progress over time in recognition that many children take longer to make significant progress.
96. The progress of children in care does, of course, show much variation, which suggests that interventions do need to be tailored to the characteristics and experience of individual children and should be reflected in the needs analysis and actions plans in their PEPS. It is important to remember that children in care will also experience multiple factors simultaneously and will feel the impact of these vulnerabilities in individual ways. It is evident that a number of children enter care during their secondary school years, so important that our schools can identify and address gaps in a timely way.
97. During 2021-22 and beyond, the Hampshire Virtual School and College will consolidate its approach as an 'all through' integrated service with a view to ensuring consistency of approach and promoting collaborative working to improve educational experiences and outcomes. Priorities are summarised below but captured in more detail within the service plan:
98. Raising awareness of corporate parent duty: The Virtual School will continue to work with a range of teams and services to explore what good corporate parenting looks like in different contexts, raising awareness, developing the evidence base of good practice, and developing increased accountability around the statutory duty, so children in care are consistently prioritised.
99. High quality training and development in relation to designated teachers for children in care: The quality of bespoke training and support for designated teachers in their statutory role has contributed significantly to the capacity and expertise that exists in our schools in meeting the needs of care experienced children. This core element of the Virtual School's work has featured strongly in recent inspections. An ambitious attachment and trauma aware schools programme commenced in April 2019, led by the Virtual School following co-construction with schools and local authority services. The Hampshire programme is part of the Alex Timpson national programme of attachment aware schools and is being externally evaluation by the Rees Centre at the University of Oxford. There are 78 schools currently on the ATAS Programme and a further cohort will begin during this academic year. Our plan is to

involve social workers as participants alongside designated teachers. The Virtual School is continuing to provide support through termly network meetings and bespoke school support where appropriate. The Virtual School has also responded to training needs identified by schools and has for example facilitated sensory integration training (delivered by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Educational Psychology Service) as well as an introduction to attachment for higher level teaching assistants (HLTA). The emphasis going forward is on designated teachers disseminating their knowledge and expertise widely within their school community through training, development, and peer support. It is expected that approaches, such as emotional coaching will be shared with key members of staff to promote a whole school ethos. As a result, designated teachers can influence what happens in the classroom in real time, supporting colleagues to co-regulate with children who struggle with their emotions, which may de-escalate situations which could result in sanctions, such as a fixed-term exclusion. We will continue to develop our virtual offer to designated teachers and increase those accessing the Virtual School Moodle

100. Training and support for all social worker and carers: The Virtual School is collaborating with colleagues across Hampshire to develop our online training offer for social workers, foster carers and residential workers.
101. Early Years: The partnership with the Advisory Teacher Team within the Early Years Advisory Team (EYAT) has been strengthened, as a result of our specialist Education Adviser in the Virtual school working in partnership to drive a joint approach, targeting intervention at those children most vulnerable at point of transition into year R. We hope this will continue to build professional knowledge across settings and schools, around the impact of attachment and trauma on our youngest children and how to best meet their development needs.
102. Maintaining school stability: The Virtual School continues to work closely with social workers and their managers on maintaining school stability. Wherever possible and appropriate, children have continued at their school whilst care placement changes have taken place. This work is underpinned by the Virtual School's protocol around school provision.
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/virtual-school/guidance>

Conclusion

The Virtual School remains committed to removing the inequality in educational outcomes between children in care and the wider population of children. This means working in partnership with the whole system for children across schools, education and inclusion and social care, returning constantly to the question for us as corporate parents – *'Would this be good enough for my child?'*

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

This page is intentionally left blank

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

For information

Board:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	28 March 2023
Title:	Update on Participation Action Plan for 2023
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Sarah Plummer, Service Improvement Lead

Email: Sarah.plummer@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Participation since the last update to Corporate Parenting Board in the summer of 2022. It also provides an update on the progress made against the Participation Strategy and plans for further developments in 2023.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board:

Notes the contents of this report.

Continues to endorse the priorities for participation in 2023.

Executive Summary

3. HCC has a well-established business as usual approach to hearing and responding to the voices of the children, young people, and families we work with. We are strong at ensuring that everyone we work with is able to influence their own individual plans and the service they receive. Participation measures are also included in service plans, the QUIP (Quality and Improvement Plan) and transformation activity.
4. However, we want to do more to ensure that these voices also influence at a strategic level. 2022 saw the review and update of our Participation Strategy, which was informed by consultation with children and young people led by our Independent Reviewing Service. The updated Participation Strategy for 2022-2025 is now in place and a key focus of the Strategy is to provide more routes

for this strategic influence.

5. As part of the strategy review, we also made the decision to evolve our Care Ambassador model into two independently facilitated Councils. This is because we wanted to ensure a wider range of voices are heard and can more robustly shape our service. In addition, we found that our group of Ambassadors were 'growing out' of the service and together with the impact of Covid, 2021 provided an ideal opportunity to reconsider our model.
6. Introducing two new independent Councils for Children in Care and Care Experienced Adults is a critical part of our action plan and has been informed by a survey of our care experienced HCC staff. These Councils will both provide representative groups of young people in Hampshire, to contribute their views on a strategic level to the Corporate Parenting Board and to senior leaders. They will be supported and empowered by giving them the skills to provide a voice to children and other care experienced young people to make changes that matter at a local level.
7. In addition to the Councils, we will be building on our participation offer in a range of ways. For example, we are creating a Participation Network to share learning, resources and better demonstrate our impact. In addition, we will work across the service to review the processes by which we collate family and child feedback, to ensure the wealth of information collected locally, is more systematically used to inform transformation and service improvements. This will include an analysis of providers in this area (e.g., Bright Spots, Mind of My Own) as well as our emerging in-house capability through Mosaic and portals.
8. The remainder of the report provides an overview of the Participation activity and events that have taken place in 2022.

Contextual Information

9. Hampshire has a strong history of participation and weaving the voice of children and young people into all that we do. All assessment and planning documents place a strong emphasis on child and family voice. For example, embedding strength based direct work tools like the 'what's working, what's not' into the C&F Assessment ensures all voices are captured and inform the social worker analysis.
10. Another example is the My Life My Future Care and Pathway Plan (which was named by children in care) which has evolved over the past four years to increasingly highlight the child's voice. The child's perspective is embedded throughout the document and features age-appropriate scaling as both a direct work tool and also to demonstrate change over time.
11. In recent years the responsibility for Participation has moved from a standalone role sat centrally, to every district and service. The rationale for this shift is the recognition that participation is everyone's responsibility and that

we should incorporate it in business-as-usual activity.

12. Local teams have continued to deliver a broad and varied range of participation events and activities throughout 2022. The section 'Participation throughout 2022' provides further details of these events and their impact.
13. The voice of children and young people is also embedded within our case recording. We have moved away from standalone 'Participation Case Notes' and instead practitioners integrate the voice of children and young people across all recording including supervision notes.

Participation Strategy 2022 – 2025

14. The beginning of 2022 saw the review and update of our Participation Strategy, which was informed by consultation with children and young people led by our IRO Service. The updated Participation Strategy was signed off in the summer of 2022 and describes:
 - a. That Participation is everyone's business and is managed as 'Business as Usual (BAU).
 - b. A priority for 2023 is to commission a Children in Care Council and a Care Experienced Adult Council – these will be a more formal vehicle for children and young people to shape and influence services
15. The Lead for Participation moved from the Principle Social Worker to the Service Improvement Lead in September 2022. A discussion was taken to Strategic CFMT in November 2022 to agree the action plan which would drive forward the Participation Strategy in 2023 and beyond.
16. The remainder of this report details the work undertaken since September to commission the new Councils and deliver the action plan.

Commissioning of Children in Care (CIC) and Care Experienced Adult Council (CEA)

17. In December 2022 we began the tender for the implementation and management of two new CIC and CEA Councils. The contract has now been awarded to Motiv8, an organisation with a wealth of experience supporting and empowering children and young people in Hampshire. We are currently in the pre-go-live mobilisation phase and planning the logistics of how the Councils will operate and link into operations, senior management and the Corporate Parenting Board.
18. Both Councils aim to:

Facilitate a representative voice for the full range of children in care and care experienced adults in Hampshire.

Which can then influence and hold to account Hampshire County Council as the Corporate Parent and the members of the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure they deliver the best experience for children in care, and adults previously in care.

And together improve outcomes for all children in care and care experienced adults.

19. In practice, both Councils will play a crucial role in
- a. Influencing the Corporate Parenting that young people receive
 - b. Providing a voice for children in care and care experienced adults
 - c. Working in partnership with Corporate Parenting partners and HCC to shape strategy and improve the care system and the wider services young people are entitled to
 - d. Shaping their own work plan as the service is mobilised and developed.
20. As a new service, we will be working collaboratively with Motiv8 and the Councils to develop and shape this offer and the way the Councils work alongside other children, young people, staff, and the Corporate Parenting Board.

Milestones

Activity	Milestone	Status
Strategy signed-off	July 2022	Complete
Tender specification signed-off	November 2022	Complete
Tender out to providers	December 2022	Complete
Response deadline	End January 2023	Complete
Award contract	End February 2023	Complete
Pre-contract mobilisation	March 2023	In progress
Go live	1 April 2023	
Mobilising Councils	April – June 2023	
Councils fully operational	August 2023	

Action Plan for 2023: the next iteration of our participation journey

21. Whilst the commissioning and mobilisation of the Councils is a key priority for the year, there are additional improvements we are in the process of making to build on our existing good practice. The following areas build on the 'business as usual' actions assigned to District and Service Managers to embed Participation within their area of work. Those tasks are captured within the QUIP and reviewed regularly.

Co-ordinate

- a. Set-up Participation Network across Hampshire and Isle of Wight with current participation leads. The Network will provide an opportunity to
 - i. Meet quarterly to share learning and inform strategy
 - ii. Have early sight of event/participation planning
 - iii. Use a dedicated Sharepoint site to share resources and ideas
- b. Support teams and services to promote and celebrate their participation activity

STATUS: In progress – first meeting booked April 2023

Collate and analyse

- c. Continue to update the Participation and Insight log to place even more emphasis on outcomes and impact
- d. Add section to Service Plans 'how has participation of CYP contributed to service plan' and collate this centrally as well
- e. Undertake an options analysis to assess the most effective way to collect feedback
- f. Continue to collate family feedback from audits
- g. Analyse responses from the above into regular thematic reporting along with other strands of insight

Opportunities to inform and be informed

- h. Use Participation and Insight Network to share information back to teams, families, and children about changes we're making because of their insight
- i. Mobilisation and embedding of CIC and CEA Councils will provide main route to gather insight and share information back to these cohorts
- j. Develop plan with the Councils and Participation and Insight Network to create more opportunities (including for families and children not in care) for 2024

Opportunities to contribute

- k. Mobilisation and embedding of CIC and CEA Councils will provide main route to engage YP in service improvements
- l. Develop plan with the Councils and Participation and Insight Network to create more opportunities (including for families and children not in care) for 2024
- m. Plans to support/enable/facilitate national participation

Evolving our methods to collect child and family feedback

22. We currently use a range of methods to understand children/young people's views of the service they receive and how it could be improved. These methods include:
- a. Feedback forms
 - b. Feedback gathered/embedded within participation events
 - c. Bright Spots survey
23. The Action Plan includes undertaking an options analysis to review our methods of collecting feedback. This is in recognition that technology has developed, and children/young people want to interact with our service in different ways.
24. The Options Analysis will be led by a Working Group and will involve young people who will consider Bright Spots, Mind of My Own as well as our evolving in-house capability through Mosaic and service-user portals.

Participation throughout 2022

25. There a significant number of examples of participation across our services and districts in 2022. This report aims to give a flavour of the breadth and impact of these events.

Hampshire Children and Young People's Plan, 2022 – 2025. Focus groups were carried out with 120 children and young people in Hampshire: • 77.5% were aged 11-15 years old • 14% were from ethnic minority backgrounds • 16% were identified as having Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). In addition, feedback from 479 children and young people was collated by the Hampshire Members of Youth Parliament.

Big Activity Week - this ran from the 1 - 5 August 2022 where 77 looked after children in school years 3-9 and in Hampshire County Council Local Authority Care, took part in 6 activity weeks. From the New Forest to the Brecon Beacons in Wales, these young people made lifelong memories and created friendships with young people in similar situations to themselves. The week was run by Hampshire Outdoors staff along with other staff within Children Services. The week was free for all young people with the cost partly funded by National Lottery Community Fund with most of the cost coming from Hampshire Outdoors, a part of Skills and Participation.

Care Leavers week

Care Leavers Week in Hampshire is going from strength to strength with the largest attendance across the week that we've ever had. Our teams across Hampshire arranged a series of events in collaboration with our care experienced adults.

- Open Mic Night Hosted by Step-by-Step - Aldershot.
- Wessex Dance Academy Day Event
- Money works course - Via teams.
- Meet the Southwest Care leaver Team – Totton
- Thinking of going to Uni? Support in higher education for Care experienced Young people via Teams.
- London Meet Up
- Winchester Uni tour – Winchester
- Crate Stack - Aldershot
- Halloween Spooktacular – Gosport

Developing Child Exploitation Resources for schools across Hampshire. In 2022 Hampshire County Council's Willow Team, a multi-agency team supporting children at risk of exploitation, launched a series of short films and accompanying teaching packs for schools across Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, and Southampton. The films highlight the dangers of criminal and sexual exploitation, with a particular focus on the grooming process.

The characters in the films were played by local young actors from The Young Creatives. The scripts were written in collaboration with young people being supported by the Willow Team to ensure their authenticity. The resources have been trialled with school groups by Willow and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

C&F Awards 2022 – A young people's judging panel shortlisted the final three for the 'above and beyond' award. This is a way for us to involve young people in decision making about activity in the branch (assigned but informed approach).

East Hants Youth Conference – The East Hants Family Support Service supported the annual Youth Conference which focused on young carers in 2022. The event provided activities and facilitated discussion for young people to understand their needs and what support should be offered.

Disabled Children's Team (DCT) Audit tool for children

A SNAP audit tool has been developed for use by children, to capture the child's voice. The tool includes video clip questions using Makaton with various options to return answers via video or boxes for use with switches.

Creating a multi-disciplinary residential home. Throughout 2022 we have been planning the opening of a new multi-agency health and social care residential home for young people with complex needs. The home has been **renamed** by young people as 'Hockley House' in honour of local artist John Hockley. Young People form part of the working group who can **share their views and ideas, on everything from interior design to how residents will have their voices heard, as we work towards** the opening of the home in Autumn 2023.

Family Fun Day – Havant Disabled Children’s Team had two family fun days in April and July 2022 in order to show support to their families, and to provide an opportunity for networking between families and professionals. The events were attended by over 40 children and their parents/carers and feedback confirmed the events were inclusive of their children’s needs.

Spring to spring – Test Valley, Family Support Service (FSS) held an event which included bulb planting, pictures, games, crafting, and teddy tombola. Positive feedback was received about the support offered to children and families by Family support workers.

Circus skills workshop – this took place over May/June 2022 half term; it a two-hour circus skills activity for children subject to Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) and their carers to attend. Carers felt it was good to meet other carers in their situation and it made them feel less alone. Staff signposted carers to community support available and encouraged attendance at the monthly SGO support group and parenting programmes where needed.

Theatre backstage experience at Chesil theatre, Winchester – this experience was offered to care experienced children to provide a backstage experience for 20 young people who reside in foster care or residential care locally. The activity was offered after young people had requested an activity that did not involve being onstage, singing or dancing. This evidences that staff had listened to the needs of the young people prior to providing the activity.

Art therapy pilot project age (8 - 12) - New Forest FSS co-delivered a 6-week art therapy programme with Hart art therapists. The activity had positive outcomes in that 70% of parents saw an improvement in their child’s overall emotional wellbeing. 85% of parents report feeling closer and more connected with their children. 85% of parents have seen an improvement in their child’s confidence and self-esteem.

The Big Conversation at Swanwick Lodge – The Youth Commission visited Swanwick Lodge to ensure these young people could contribute to the Big Conversation. Their report at the end of the visit fed back: *“Overall, the major points we will be taking forward centre around better training and changing attitudes to mental health and neurodivergence, as well as greater access to support. Before leaving, we were treated to a performance of a twenty-minute play that the children had been rehearsing for, which we enjoyed immensely”*

Using Arts across the Youth Offending Service – YOT and YCP offer a range of creative interventions, with Easter and Summer focused activities taking place in 2022. These events provide an opportunity for young people to express themselves through poetry and photography and also gain an Arts Award.

Findings from 2022 Bright Spots Survey

26. At the time of writing this report we have only just received the findings from the Bright Spots survey and are awaiting a full dissemination meeting with the organisers.
27. An initial review of the findings for the *Children In Care* survey has highlighted:
- Overwhelmingly **our young people have a high level of trust in their carers**, with 100% of respondents aged 4-11 responding positively and 95% of those aged 11-18.
 - The level of trust in social workers was also high** ranging from 89 – 100% across the age ranges.
 - 54% of Hampshire's 11-18 year olds had the same social worker over the year which is **higher than other local authorities at 34%**.
 - Positively the vast majority of our young people responded that their lives are improving with 83 – 92% across the age range describing their lives as 'a bit better or much better'.
28. Areas from the review which identify potential areas for improvement include
- Whilst there are a number of positive responses about contact with social works, 2 in 10 of 11-18 year olds had 3 or more social workers in the past year
 - 1 in 10 11-18 year olds described 'hardly ever' having a chance to practice life skills
 - 1 in 10 8-18 year olds hardly ever felt included in decisions about them.
29. We note that there was a relatively low response rate of 17%. We will discuss this with Bright Spots during our dissemination meeting to identify learning and opportunities for improvement. This will also inform our options analysis and decision whether to continue with Bright Spots and/or collate children's feedback via other methods.
30. A full analysis of the findings will inform service planning, transformation and service improvement projects.

Corporate Parenting Board (CPB)

31. The role and responsibilities of the CPB continues to evolve since it was introduced in 2017. In January 2020 Hampshire County Council Cabinet approved the Corporate Parenting Board becoming a Board in its own right, with the specific function to ensure that Children in Care and Care Leavers are provided with the best standard of care.
32. In fulfilling its function, the CPB must also hold partners to account to ensure Children in Care and Care Leavers are accessing all that they are entitled to. For this reason, Hampshire's Designated Nurses, CAMHS and Police all report regularly to the Board.

33. The involvement of the CPB in hearing the voices of children and young people and gaining an insight into the work of the service was recently reviewed with the Chair of the Board. As a result of this, CPB members are now provided with a timetable of branch activity (including the core statutory work carried out) in their local area and members request to visit an office or observe a meeting. This model is working well, and members report their activity to the Board to ensure this opportunity is well utilised.
34. The report from the recent Ofsted Focused Visit on 31 January and 1 February is being presented to Full Cabinet on 18 April. Following this, the report will be shared with the Corporate Parenting Board. Any recommendations in the Ofsted report in relation to the Corporate Parenting Board will be taken forward by officers and Board members over the coming months.
35. With the introduction of two independently facilitated Councils for children in care and care experienced adults, it is a good time to review how the Corporate Parenting Board can hear the voice of children and young people in order to enhance the impact it has on their lives and experiences.

Finance

36. There are no finance implications for this report.

Performance

37. There are no performance implications for this report.

Consultation and Equalities

38. Any consultation and consideration to equality impact is part of the business as usual approach for participation.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

39. There are no climate change implications to this report.

Conclusions

40. Participation is business as usual in the Children and Families branch. We make it a priority to hear the voices of children and families and this informs our planning for children.
41. We have started seeking the views and opinions of children and families in service improvement and have several examples of good practice in this area. We are clear that we now need to clearly articulate the impact of hearing the voice of children on their lives and their outcomes, so that we can measure the distance travelled, both for children and for us as a service.

CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

A EIA will produced with the new provider as part of the Mobilisation phase

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

*Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:*

- (a) why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- (b) will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*

Page 95

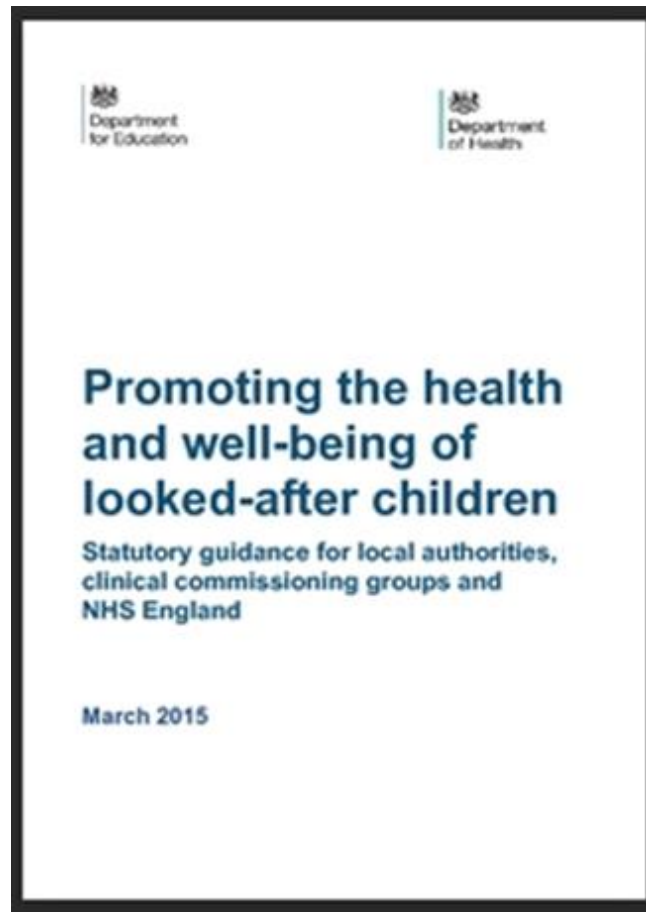
Looked After Children Health Assessments- Update

5th October 2022

Siobhan Avery and Vicky Fraser- Senior Designated Nurses for Looked After Children



Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Looked After Children



What is a looked after children's health assessment?

The statutory health assessment should address the areas specified in section 1 of Schedule 1 of the care planning regulations. These areas are:

- the child's state of health, including physical, emotional and mental health
- the child's health history including, as far as practicable, his or her family's health history
- the effect of the child's health history on his or her development
- existing arrangements for the child's health and dental care appropriate to their needs, which must include
 - routine checks of the child's general state of health, including dental health
 - treatment and monitoring for identified health (including physical, emotional and mental health) or dental care needs
 - preventive measures such as vaccination and immunisation
 - screening for defects of vision or hearing
 - advice and guidance on promoting health and effective personal care
 - any planned changes to the arrangements
 - the role of the appropriate person, such as a foster carer, residential social worker, school nurse or teacher, and of any other person who cares for the child in promoting his or her health.



The principles of a good health assessment and planning

Health assessments should:

- not be an isolated event but, rather, be part of the dynamic and continuous cycle of care planning (assessment, planning, intervention and review) and build on information already known from health professionals, parents and previous carers, and the child himself or herself.
- That includes routine health checks received through the universal healthy child programme 0-5 years and 5-19 focus on emotional and mental well-being as well as physical health.
- inform other aspects of care planning, such as the impact of a child's physical, emotional and mental health on his or her education.
- be undertaken with the child's informed consent, if he or she is 'competent' to give it.
- be child-centred and age-appropriate and carried out with sensitivity to the child's wishes and feelings and fears, so that the child feels comfortable.
- Health assessments, including reviews, should also be carried out as far as possible at a time and venue convenient to the child, their carers and parents.
- They should take account of any particular needs, including attention to issues of disability, race, culture and gender and if they are unaccompanied asylum seekers.
- give the child clear expectations about any further consultations, support or treatment needed. Explanations should include the reasons for this and the choices available, and the appropriateness of plans kept under review as necessary.
- pay particular attention to health conditions that may be more prevalent in looked-after children (such as foetal alcohol syndrome or attachment difficulties) and which may otherwise have been misdiagnosed.



Context

- A rapid improvement event took place in **October 2020** between Health/the Integrated Care Board (ICB, formerly the CCG) and Hampshire Local Authority (LA). This took place during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic and therefore progress had been impacted by the demands on the NHS.
- The ICB has established an improvement plan to demonstrate awareness of areas that require development and identify appropriate mitigations.
- Bi-weekly meetings are taking place with the LA Peripatetic Lead for looked after children and are now “business as usual”. This is an excellent opportunity to address issues when they are live in a collaborative way. Examples of this include working together to make changes to referral paperwork and the development of a monthly tracker, maintained by health administrators and shared with local authority colleagues to identify outstanding paperwork.
- Historic risks and issues are logged on ICB system/Hampshire place-based health risk registers.
- The rapid improvement event identified a backlog of review health assessments. Work was undertaken by the LA to ascertain further details as to the scale of the backlog and this identified an additional unknown cohort of children requiring initial health assessments. That initial data was shared with health in **January 2022** and further updated in **June 2022**.



Backlog Data

- Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) - 386- this includes refusals
- Of these, 206 are placed out of area and the current process is that Hampshire local authority will request the IHA directly with the out of area health team
- Review Health Assessments (currently overdue only) - 323
- Of these, 163 are placed out of area. The current process is that Hampshire local authority will submit the RHA request to the Hampshire RHA provider, who will forward the requests onto the out of area health team.
- This equates to 41% of looked after children for whom a health assessment is outstanding (from a total of 1727 Hampshire looked after children- as of data available on 24th June 2022).



Health Assessment Backlog- Action Plan

IHAs

- All IHA requests for children placed within Hampshire should be submitted to the usual team in the usual way (either the GP hub or Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust- HHFT).
- Capacity has increased within the IHA GP Hub model - 5 additional GP recruits have been trained by our Designated Doctor for Looked After Children Dr Melissa Phillips ready to start in Autumn 2022.
- External agency support has been procured for use as required.



Health Assessment Backlog- Action Plan

RHAs

- Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (HHFT) are hosting an Nurse Specialist post for 1 year in order to focus on the RHA backlog (Hampshire-wide).
- This service will be for over 5's only as guidance stipulates that under 5's should be assessed by a Paediatrician. Under 5's will therefore need to be referred in the usual way.
- HHFT have developed a referral pathway for the over 5's backlog cohort and a data monitoring process (monthly data to be shared with the Hampshire Designate Nurses for sharing with the LA).
- The referral pathway has been shared with LA colleagues to ensure that the backlog cohort are referred to the correct service. This includes a single point of contact in both agencies and a dedicated email inbox within health.
- If assessed as clinically appropriate to receive a virtual assessment, this service will offer RHA's to Hampshire children who are placed out of area.

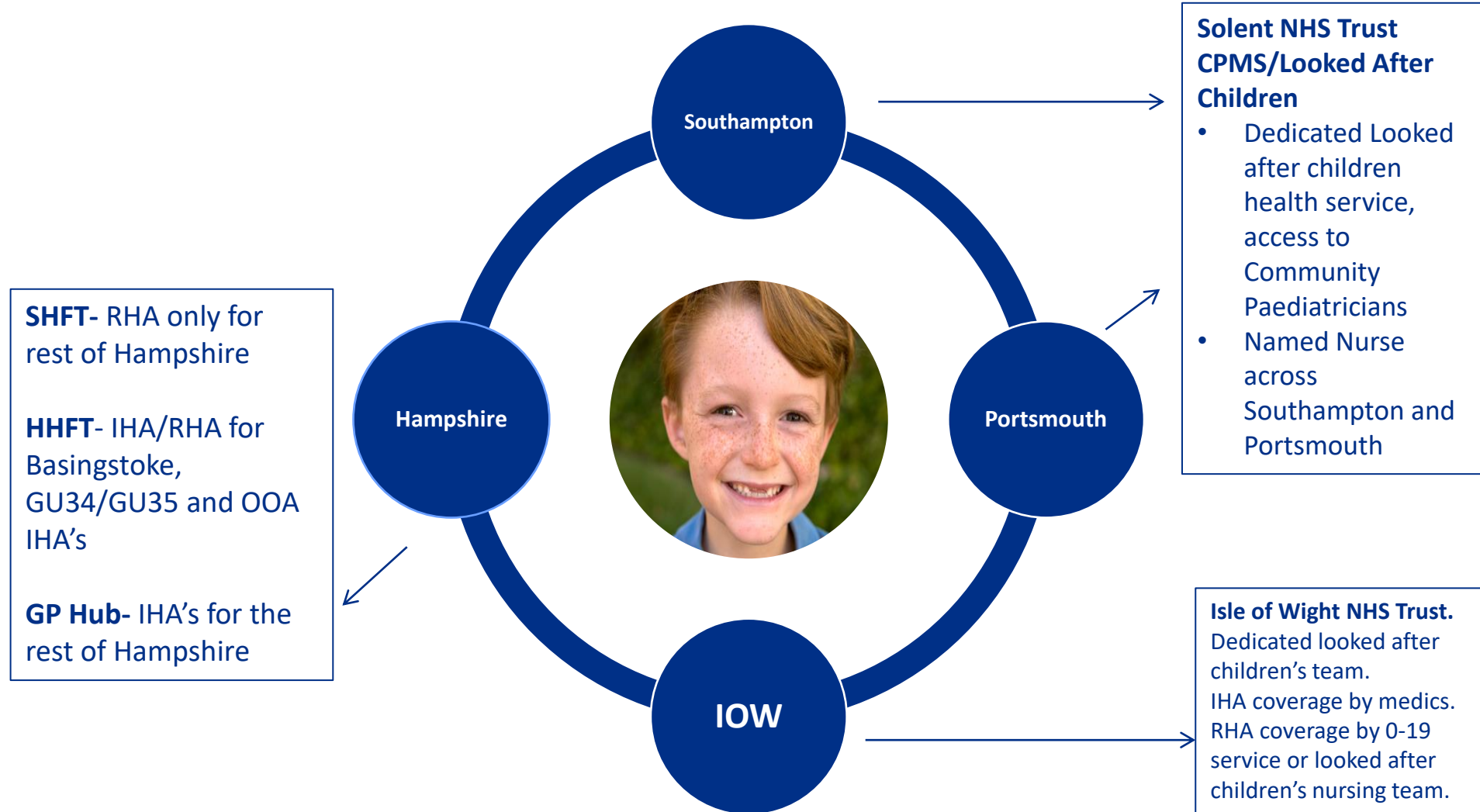


Review of Looked After Children's Health Services - Hampshire and IOW

- A joint review of the Hampshire and Isle Of Wight Looked After Children service offers was undertaken due to the ongoing challenges regarding capacity and in order to understand historic arrangements and explore the statutory responsibilities and legislative requirements of an ICB.
- The need to enable a adequate and equitable service for vulnerable children and young people is a priority for the ICB. The risk of harm to children who are not receiving even the minimum health offer is unknown, with the potential for lifelong impacts.
- We know that:
 - children who have experienced four or more adverse childhood experiences (ACE's) are twice as likely to develop depression and three times more likely to develop anxiety disorders
 - children who have experienced 4 or more ACEs are six times more likely to have an unplanned teenage pregnancy, three times more likely to be a smoker, eleven times more likely to use illicit drugs and eleven times more likely to be imprisoned
 - risks of developing cancer, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD) and stroke increase



Looked After Children- The Health Offer Across the Integrated Care System (ICS)



Review Headline Findings:

- Unwarranted variation exists in looked after child health offer across ICB, including workforce model; funding; missing the voice of children and young people
 - Named Nurse and Named Doctor roles for looked after children are statutory roles for providers of looked after children services and are currently not in place in Hampshire providers – HHFT are to fund an interim Named Nurse role for 1 year from September 2022
 - No consistent model for working with looked after children aged 0-5 across the ICB
- No coordinated or dedicated work with care leavers even though this is a statutory requirement ([Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Looked After Children 2015](#) and Children and Social Work Act 2017) and detailed in the NHS long term plan
- Children with disabilities are not all receiving support from looked after children’s teams. There is no consistent offer for this cohort of children across Hampshire and the Isle of the Wight - in Hampshire a temporary mitigation has been put in place, but this is not a viable option to continue with long term
 - Portsmouth have access to the trauma informed model of care (TIMOC) which could be accessed to “level up” knowledge and approaches across the ICB



Review Headline Findings: Commissioning and Quality

- The Hampshire looked after children Designates have been supported, ad-hoc, by the Hampshire children's commissioning leads for Special Educational Needs, Mental Health and Continuing Health Care. However due to the existing structure, there is no focused commissioning support aligned to the looked after children's health offer in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight
- Southampton and Portsmouth have dedicated support from integrated health and social care children's commissioning teams
- Looked after children contracts within Hampshire have historically sat within wider block contracts with no formal review of the looked after children health offers in Hampshire – financially complex
- There has been a lack of data and performance reporting in line with a service specification and also with the safeguarding and looked after children standard NHS reporting schedule within Hampshire



Next Steps and Future Model

Recommendations and Next Steps

- Support collaboration and investment across health and social care to transform and strengthen Hampshire and Isle Of Wight looked after children services offer
- Remodelling of the service to ensure that the health offer meets the complex needs of children and that it meets minimum statutory responsibilities and national guidance
- Increase clinical leadership and reflect national minimum guidance across the ICB – Designate and Named professionals
- Explore service opportunities to support unaccompanied asylum seeking children and a new care leavers health offer, up to the age of 25
- Build expertise about trauma and support for children with more complex needs across the children's strategy for the ICB and ICS
- Seek additional, dedicated commissioning support for the looked after children and safeguarding transformation workstreams
- Consider possible alignment opportunities with CAMHS and other partners.



Training Available and Contact Details

E learning for Health- free training (hyperlinks)

In these sessions, you will explore the evidence for the statement that looked after children 'have a higher level of health, mental health and health promotion needs than others of the same age' and look at how the Healthy Child Programme can meet these needs.

[Looked After Children Part 1 Challenges and Principles](#)

[Looked After Children Part 2: Influencing Factors and Outcomes of Care Journeys](#)

Designated Professionals Training Offer



Contact Us

Siobhan Avery Senior Designated Nurse for Looked After Children-
Siobhan.avery@nhs.net

Vicky Fraser Senior Designated Nurse for Looked After Children-
Vicky.fraser@nhs.net

Page 109

Generic team email - hiowicb-hsi.hampshirelookedafterchildren@nhs.net



This page is intentionally left blank

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Children & Young People Select Committee
Date:	11 July 2023
Title:	Annual Care Leavers Report 2022
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Sam Phippard, Service Development Lead

Tel: 07562 168500 **Email:** Samantha.phippard@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Hampshire County Council's Children & Young People Select Committee with an annual report on the activity of the Care Leavers Service from January 2022 to December 2022 inclusive. This will ensure that the Committee has an overview of the achievements, progress, and challenges in meeting the needs of Hampshire's Care Leavers in 2022.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Children & Young People Select Committee notes the good outcomes that are being achieved by Hampshire's Care Leavers and the plans of the Care Leaver Service to continue to improve those outcomes further in 2023.

Executive Summary

3. Protecting and looking after children and young people is one of the most important jobs that councils do when a child and/or young person, for whatever reason, cannot safely stay at home or with relatives or friends. Being a corporate parent means doing everything that can be done for every care experienced young person to give them the opportunities that other children and young people get.
4. Sadly, despite the ongoing focus within legislation and policy, children and young people who are care experienced have poorer outcomes compared to their peers. For example, Care Leavers are less likely to be in employment, education, or training post 18 and four times more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system and four times more likely to have a mental health condition. It is the Local Authority's responsibility to do everything it can to change these statistics for the better.

5. This report will seek to outline the work of Hampshire's Care Leaver service during 2022.

Who are our 'Care Leavers'?

6. Care Leavers are young people aged 18 years to 25 years of age who have been in care as a child. There are four different categories, and each category has an associated entitlement status:
 - Eligible child - 16 or 17 years old in care and have been in care for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, will meet the criteria as an 'eligible child'.
 - Relevant child - 16 or 17 years old, have left care, but were in care on or after their 16th birthday and have been in care for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14. This applies if they have been part of the youth justice system or hospitalised on or after their 16th birthday.
 - Former relevant child - 18 to 21 years old and if they were previously either an eligible or relevant child.
 - Qualifying child - 16 to 21 years old and have been in care or, if disabled, have been privately fostered after reaching 16, but do not qualify as eligible, relevant, or former relevant (have spent less than 13 weeks in care). May also qualify if subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and were looked after immediately before the SGO was made, or, if previously an eligible child, but returned to live with someone with parental responsibility (PR) for more than six months before your 18th birthday.
 - From April 2018 the Children & Social Work Act 2017 introduced a new duty on local authorities, to provide Personal Advisor (PA) support to all Care Leavers up to age 25, if they want this support. Under previous legislation, local authorities were required to only provide Care Leaver with support from a PA until they reach age 21, with that support continuing up to age 25 only if a Care Leaver was engaged in education or training.

Hampshire Demographic

7. There are currently **786** Care Leavers (18+) open to Hampshire Children's Services.

Age and Gender

484 Males

299 Females

3 Other¹

Ethnic background

White 538

Mixed 19

Asian or Asian British 34

Black or Black British 115

¹ These are young people recorded as gender indeterminate on the record.

Other Ethnic group 80²

Eligibility Category

Relevant: 8

Former Relevant: 750

Qualifying: 28

Corporate Parenting and Statutory Responsibilities to Care Leavers

8. Hampshire County Council (HCC) believes that it is everyone's responsibility to help those who have been in care to overcome the difficulties that they experienced in their childhoods so that they can lead successful adult lives. However, as a council we have statutory responsibilities set out in the Children Act 1989, the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to Care Leavers that we are legally required to meet.
9. HCC has developed a 'Pledge to Care Leavers'. The Pledge is our promise to all our young people leaving care based on what we recognise are the additional challenges faced by care experienced people. Our pledge can be accessed here: [Appendix A - Pledge to Care Leavers.pdf \(hants.gov.uk\)](#) and can be accessed by Care Leavers via an internet search. The Care Leaver Service are in the process of updating of the branding and design of the Pledge based on the feedback of our Care Leavers.
10. As a Local Authority we have also consulted with Care Leavers and stakeholders and developed a 'local Offer' which provides detailed information about the service and support available to Care Leavers, including information about both their statutory entitlements as well as any discretionary support we provide. This is provided to young people leaving care at age 16 and can be accessed via the internet. [Appendix B - Local offer for Care Leavers.pdf \(hants.gov.uk\)](#). The Care Leaver Service are in the process of updating the Local Offer and this will be presented to the Board in due course.
11. The HCC local offer is centred on the below principles:
 - My Life My Future Plan to independence and a successful future
 - My health and wellbeing
 - My relationships
 - My education and training
 - My employment, including my money
 - My accommodation (experiencing stability and feeling safe and secure)
 - My participation in society, including getting my voice heard

² Other ethnic group is made of any groups that do not come under the first 4 categories for e.g. Arab, Gypsy/Romany, Persian etc.

Means of Delivery

12. Hampshire Care Leavers benefit from a stable, committed, and creative staff team who have offered consistency over a long period of time. We have four Care Leavers Teams in the county, one in each area North West (Test Valley, Basingstoke and Deane), North East (Hart, Rushmoor and East Hants), South East (Havant, Fareham and Gosport) and South West (Eastleigh, Winchester, Totton and New Forest). Each team consists of an experienced Team Manager, Senior Practitioner, Personal Advisors (PA) and Admin staff.
13. Care Leavers are supported by the team closest to where they lived upon entering care. They are allocated a PA at age 15 years 9 months whose role is to work alongside the young person and the allocated 'children in care' social worker until the young person reaches the age of 18. Strong communication loops exist across the Care Leaver Teams, Children in Care and Child, Assessment and Safeguarding Teams. This results in, overall, well planned transitions across these services. The early input of the Care Leaver Service encourages a greater focus on the adults the young people will become. The role of senior practitioners has been particularly effective for more complex cases whereby the young people are receiving extremely high levels of support within residential accommodation and High support needs placements prior to 18 and ensuring a smooth transition to the care leaver service. Positive transition planning is aided through PAs attending all 'My life my future' planning meetings and CLA reviews, with Team Managers or Senior Practitioners attending and chairing final meetings.
14. The PA, once allocated, contacts the Children in Care social worker and they will plan a joint visit to the young person. PA visits to the young person are then conducted every 8 weeks and more frequently if required if there is a significant event. Visiting and communication with the young person typically increases as they progress to 18 years of age ready for the transition to leaving Care.

Role of Care Leaver teams and PAs

15. The role in Hampshire is as follows:
 - Complete timely pathway plans, co-produced with young people and reviewed every 6 months or more frequently depending on need. HCC has adopted a strength-based methodology (the Hampshire Approach) and as part of this has reviewed and rewritten the pathway plan which is now called 'My Life My Future plan'. This aspect of service development means that children and young people have one plan that will see them through their journey in and through into adulthood.
 - Keep in touch with our care leaving young people.
 - Support our Care Leavers to access relevant services e.g. Health Services
 - Support Care Leavers in preparing for adulthood and independent living.
 - Support Care Leavers to access suitable housing.

- Support Care Leavers in accessing Education, Employment or Training
 - Support Care Leavers in budget planning finances where appropriate.
 - HCC promotes its offer of extended support for Care Leavers up to the age of 25 by writing to all young people who are closed to make them aware that they can request further support, advice, and guidance until their 25th birthday.
16. Care Leavers continue to provide very positive feedback regarding the support provided by PAs which is obtained via audit feedback and from participation events i.e National Care Leavers week October 2022.

Proportion of Care Leavers aged 19-21 who were 'In Touch'

Year	Quarter	Hampshire	South East
2021-22	Q2	85.0%	92.1%
2021-22	Q3	85.1%	90.5%
2021-22	Q4	83.9%	92.2%
2022-23	Q1	84.1%	92.2%
2022-23	Q2	84.0%	91.2%
2022-23	Q3	84.2%	Not yet published

Accommodation stability / suitability

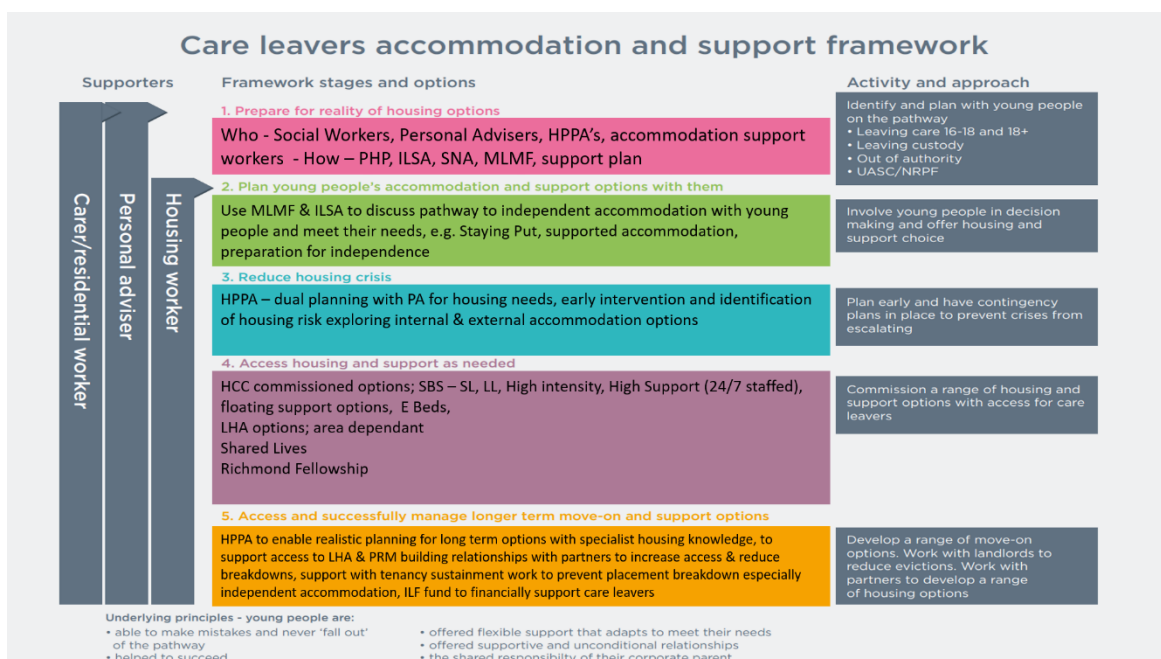
17. Young people leaving care need somewhere safe, stable, and suitable to live to help them make a positive transition into adulthood.
18. Hampshire also have a robust framework for supported accommodation and commission significant levels of accommodation to meet the needs of our young people who are not ready to live independently. This is reflected in our data relating to suitable accommodation for 18 year olds which has improved from 2021 by 23% in 2022. Accommodation suitability has been maintained for 19 year olds for the last three years however there has been a reduction in performance in this area for 20 and 21 year olds. This may be explained by the fact that we commission a lower number of accommodations providers for this age group and there is a greater expectation for them to access social housing, which can prove to be more challenging to manage for young people.

HCC Suitable Accommodation Data - relates to the birthday window - 3 months before and one month after the young person's birthday.

Age	Suitable accommodation				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
18	61%	63%	64%	50%	73%
19	79%	72%	78%	79%	79%
20	66%	73%	74%	88%	79%
21	71%	57%	74%	75%	71%

19. It is hoped that the development of a joint housing protocol for Care Leavers setting out our corporate parenting commitment and how these will be delivered in practice, including our district housing partners, will strengthen our accommodation support to young people. It is anticipated that the new protocol will launch in June 2023. To compliment the protocol, we have also developed a new accommodation/ housing information pack for young people.

Post 16 framework



Staying Put

20. Staying Put arrangements are where a Former Relevant child, after ceasing to be Looked After, remains living in the former foster home where they were placed immediately before they ceased to be Looked After. The intention of Staying Put arrangements is to ensure that young people can remain with their former foster carers until they are prepared for adulthood and can experience a transition akin to their peers. Staying put is heavily promoted by the Care Leaver Teams however this is not a straightforward option for young people and their foster carers for multiple reasons. HCC staying put arrangements were set to be reviewed as part of the Modernising Placements Agenda at the beginning of 2021 however this work has been delayed and will be undertaken in 2023.
21. As at December 2022, 81 young people in staying put arrangements (66 in December 2017, 84 in November 2018, 62 in December 2019, 91 in December 2020, 77 in December 2021) which is a small increase from the previous year.

Homelessness Prevention Personal Advisor

22. As a direct result of a government initiative and funding (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government), HCC created four new specialist posts in 2019, focused on promoting accommodation stability for young people – Homelessness Prevention Personal Advisors (HPPA). HPPAs play a vital part in the transition from adulthood and assist with housing options as they approach 18 years of age. The HPPAs, since being in post, have worked to develop stronger partnerships with partners in particular District and Borough Housing Departments and Post 16 accommodation providers to enable early intervention with Care Leavers, to and identify any potential risks of homelessness. The HPPAs have also developed tools (Independent Living Skills Assessment – ILSA) to assess young peoples' skills, to inform appropriate and successful move on and enhance placement stability overall and prevent homelessness through targeted tenancy sustainment work. HPPA support is accessible by request of the children in care social workers and PAs. The PAs also take the lead on supporting young people to submit an application to the local housing register and provide supporting documents.

Journey to independence

23. The Care Leaver service have a number of project streams which aid transition including housing, independence, Education, Employment, Training (EET) and mental health and wellbeing. All activity is open to children in care/care experienced aged 16 and over.

Independence workstream:

24. Personal Advisors work with the foster carer / post 16 provider / residential provider and the young person to identify independent skills to focus on and improve. The foster carer / support provider will work 'with' the young person so that they can practice these skills and learn from any mistakes whilst still in a very supportive environment.
25. Partnerships have been built with organisations who provide education and training to enhance young people's knowledge and skills in relation to money and finance. Several online courses have been successfully delivered during 2022, with the most recent taking place during National Care Leavers Week (24th to 28th of October 2022).
26. The Care Leaver Service has identified Personal Advisors to act as link workers to the Hampshire Fostering Hives to strengthen working relationships between the Care Leaver Service and the Fostering Service focusing on Standard 12 - promoting independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care.
27. HCC Children's Services has continually encouraged District Councils in light of their new corporate parenting responsibilities, to consider using

their discretionary powers as the billing authority to apply Council Tax exemptions for all Care Leavers living within Hampshire, as part of the local offer. Several District Councils have implemented Council Tax exemption/discounted rates specific to Care Leavers these include:

District	Discount
Basingstoke	18-21 years old (100% discount) 22 years old (75% discount) 23 years old (50% discount) 24 years old (25% discount) 25 years old (no discount)
East Hampshire	18-25 years old (100% discount)
Test Valley	18-25 years old (100% discount)
Eastleigh	18-21 years old (100% discount) 21-25 years old (50% discount)
Hart	Hart have an exemption as of Feb 2023
Winchester	18-25 years old (100% discount)
New Forest	18-25 years old (100% discount)
Gosport	No designated offer to Care Leavers
Havant	18-25 years old (100% discount)
Rushmoor	No designated offer to Care Leavers

Education, Employment and Training workstream

28. HCC is committed to helping Care Leavers realise their potential. Central to this is Care Leavers ability to engage and succeed within education, employment, and training. Sadly, despite continued focus within government policy for over 20 years Care Leavers continue to experience poorer outcomes in these areas compared to their non-care experienced peers. This can be for a number of reasons, including poorer academic success within school due to disrupted education prior to becoming looked after, self-esteem and mental health needs, a lack of skills or experience to find and maintain employment.
29. The table below shows Care Leavers NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) during their birthday window by age band as at December 2018 to October 2022.

Age	NEET				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
18	19%	13%	18%	11%	18%
19	29%	21%	28%	17%	26%
20	28%	31%	27%	31%	27%
21	37%	26%	32%	30%	21%

HCC Virtual College and Hampshire Futures

30. The Care Leaver teams continue to work closely with HCC Virtual College, Hampshire Futures (careers service) with there being an allocated carers advisor allocated to each District CL team.
31. The Virtual College, Hampshire Futures (Careers Service) aims to provide consistent, high quality support to young people in care and Care Leavers including early intervention when young people are at risk of becoming NEET. There is a continuing focus on increasing the collective ambition & aspiration. There has been a high level of promotion of the support available from the Virtual College during 2022 around the cohort of YP, challenging low expectations and underachievement. There continues to be a joint focus on seeking to increase the number of CLA and Care Leavers who progress into traineeships, apprenticeship, and Higher Education (HE).

HCC Higher Education (University) Offer

32. The Care Leaver Service has committed to increasing university attendance within their 2022/2023 Service Plan. As of October 2022, there are 79 young people anticipated to commence/continue their study at university while this has reduced by 3 from the previous year this continues to be significantly high number which we attribute in part to the positive financial offer in place for HE. Since the offer was increased, we have had on average 30 more young people a year on roll. The ethos behind the policy is to reduce the levels of student debt acquired during study meaning Care Leavers no longer being dependent on a maintenance loan to meet weekly living costs. The university offer is actively promoted within the My Life My Future planning process (pathway plan), advertised on the Virtual College website, as well as firm links having been established with local universities, who provide taster days to promote university life.

Department of Work and Pension (DWP) joint working

33. The Care Leaver service continues to work closely with the DWP who recognise that Care Leavers have additional support needs when transitioning into adulthood. The Service continue to meet regularly with the DWP Employer and Partnership Manager and a training session was offered by the DWP to the Care Leaver Service to increase staff awareness of the support available for young people to aid them in gaining employment and practical help regarding applications for Universal Credit.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Fund Access

34. Hampshire are actively promoting applications to the following funds:
35. **Mace funds:** up to £400 for 18-25 year olds formerly in the care of HCC to pursue further education, with an emphasis on courses covering drama or

poetry (but not exclusively). Applications to facilitate further education, higher education, internships, apprenticeships, employment and some extracurricular activities can be considered. More information and application form here: <https://www.hiwcf.org.uk/grant/maceeducationaltrust/>

36. **HOIRST Funds:** up to £500 for 18-25 year olds formerly in the care of HCC to facilitate access to further education (eg Further Education at A Level and above, BTEC Extended Diploma Level 3, NVQ 3, Higher Education - Degree Level and above, HNC, HND, T-Levels, Internships, Apprenticeships, employment and associated extracurricular activities. Funds can be for equipment, travel or driving lessons to enable participation/progression. More information and application form here: <https://www.hiwcf.org.uk/grant/hampshire-old-industrial-reformatory-schools-fund-hoirst/>.

Health and Wellbeing workstream

37. The Care Leaver Service continue to seek to promote young people's awareness of key support services in terms of mental health and wellbeing. Staff have attended information sessions with key agencies such as CAMHS, KOOTH, MIND, ITALK to ensure they remain up to date in terms of the support available to young people. The workstream will be an area of focus in 2023 given feedback from young people last year regarding their emotional health and wellbeing with 29% of those who responded to the survey reporting low life satisfaction as opposed to 3% of the general population (as captured within the Bright Spots Survey -see paragraph 50).

Health Histories

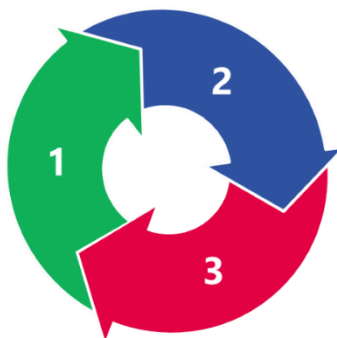
39. Health and Social Care teams have a responsibility to provide Care Leavers with information about their health, and to support them to manage their health independently. To fulfil this responsibility and in collaboration with young people in care, Care Leavers, carers, our health partners and workers from our children in care and Care Leavers team the health history pack was developed. The care leaver health history pack is a set of documents shared with young people in care as they turn 18 years old and become Care Leavers. The aim of the health history pack is to ensure young people can understand their health history and manage their health independently after their time in care:

1. A record

Summarising key info about the care leaver's:

1. Past, current & future health needs;
2. Physical, mental & emotional health.

NOT a duplication of detailed NHS records.



2. A conversation starter

Between the young person and Health professionals, with support from their:

1. Social Worker
2. Personal Advisor
3. Carer

To promote wellbeing and explore the relevance of past health to the future.

3. A guide

Outlining next steps for care leavers to learn more about:

1. Their health history;
2. Their birth family's health history;
3. What this means for them;
4. How to improve their health.

40. The care leaver teams are ensuring the health history pack offer is made to all open cases with the children in care teams ensuring the offer is made to all young people prior to turning 18.
41. Of Hampshire's 780 Care Leavers reflected in the Data for December 2022:
 - 155 (19.9%) have received a health passport (full or lite)
 - 387 (49.6%) have declined the offer of a health passport
 - 73 (9.4%) have accepted the offer
 - 137 (17.6%) of Care Leavers records do not show if they have received, accepted or declined the offer of a health passport
 - 26 (3.3%) young people have no offer recorded

Participation and engagement with Care Leavers

42. **Care Leavers week 2022** - National Care Leavers Week provides an opportunity to raise awareness but importantly celebrate our amazing young people and further promote their opportunities. In 2022, the Care Leaver Teams collaborated with the Virtual College and the University of Winchester as well as post 16 accommodation providers to offer a bumper week of activities / workshops and events for our Care Leavers:
43. **Online interactive learning** - Including learning how to manage your money, understanding how to access housing, and finding out what support can be available to Care Leavers who choose to go to university.
44. **Face to Face fun and connections** - Opportunities to meet with other Care Leavers is important and for that reason we arranged a number of events including team building activities at an activity centre in Farnborough, a chilled-out coffee-morning in Winchester, an Open Night

Mike night and an opportunity for London based young people to connect and meet up and attend a London attraction.

Crate building!



Feedback on the events held:

45. Care Leaver PA: We had 10 young people attend, whereby they were able to try out some instruments; piano, guitar and do some karaoke! It was clear that all attendees enjoyed spending time together, evidenced by the smiles and laughter from all the young people. The takeaway pizza was also a HIT!
46. Care Leavers:
 - "A fun night was nice to be normal and spend time with other people that has experience being in care"
 - "I loved the singing; Pizza was nice too"
 - "I haven't used a guitar for some time was nice to play some music again, and show off my skills, I enjoyed meeting new people"
47. Care Leaver PA: We met on Wednesday 26th October at Totton and Eling Community Centre. The aim was to gather a few of our Care Leavers together to relax, meet each other, meet the team. In addition to this we also had 2 staff from Safe New Futures come and talk to us all about their CBT programme that they run, as part of our Health and Wellbeing agenda. We had seven of our Care Leavers come and join us, along with a foster carer, two dogs and a baby!
48. Care Leavers:
 - "Was amazing time, very knowledgeable. Defo recommended, I VOTE WE SHOULD DO THIS AGAIN!!"

- 'I loved seeing Mandi she's brilliant! Meeting amazing people, especially how much foster carers have done for children in the New Forest!'



49. **Gillian Keegan Secretary of Education met with Hampshire Care Leavers** - Four experienced young people had the opportunity to meet with the Secretary of Education, this was a news reported event and empowered the young people to voice their views and ask questions.

Bright Spots Survey:

50. HCC commissioned an independent survey called the Bright Spots Programme in 2022 to seek the view of Care Leavers about the support they are offered from the Local Authority but also on the wider issues affecting them. The Bright Spots Programme is a partnership between Coram Voice and the University of Oxford and is commissioned by a number of local authorities enabling themes to be identified nationally but a means for LAs to benchmark and compare their support offered to Care Leavers. The survey was operational between April 2022 and July 2022. 171 young people responded fully to the survey from a care leaver population of 713 this is a response rate of 24%. This is an improvement from the previous survey undertaken in 2019/20 which achieved a response rate of 21%.

Christmas

51. Hampshire Children's Services provide all Care Leavers with a Christmas gift in the form of a gift voucher to the value of £25.00 every year. Additionally, through the generous donations of Hampshire colleagues and local charities and businesses, Care Leavers receive a wrapped and personally chosen gift based on their interests and likes as well as a selection of tasty food treats. Care Leavers who are living semi independently and likely to be in most need, also received a personal contact over the Christmas period and in person visiting.

Vicky Gregory, Anouska Thomas, and Paula Hall (NECLT Team) are just 3 of our HCC Xmas elves! <https://www.instagram.com/reel/Ci3v4Tsolqb/>



Conclusions

52. As a Care Leaver service there remains a focus on our statutory duties to Hampshire Care Leavers. The performance data and survey data contained within this report demonstrates that the service performs well in terms of key indicators including keeping in touch data, EET and suitable accommodation. Notwithstanding this, it is important to recognise that there remains work to do to achieve the levelling up nationally we need to achieve.
53. The Care Leaver Service are keen to be as creative and aspirational as possible for our Care Leavers however within this we are challenged by the pressures faced by all Local Authorities in terms of increasing care populations and funding allocation.
54. Within the workstreams of the Care Leaver Service as outlined within this report, there remains scope for further development and strengthening of the offer making full utilisation of district council resources, charities and local business. The Care Leaver Service seek the support of the Board in this respect.
55. Overall, we consider the strengths of the service to be as follows:
 - Strong performance with regard to Personal Advisor contacts with young people being achieved within timescales

- Good performance in terms of ensuring young people have opportunities to maintain them in education, employment, and training.
 - Placement stability for young people and progression of accommodation plans despite the challenges in the accommodation market.
 - Homeless Prevention Personal Advisor role has proven successful in improving relationships with local housing departments and successes of accommodating Care Leavers within housing.
56. Our next steps for 2023 are as follows:
- Further improving the numbers of young people in education, employment and or training.
 - Increased numbers of young people living in accommodation deemed suitable in line with the DFE's criteria around this.
 - The take up and engagement of care experienced young people remains an issue in terms of the opportunities identified and developed. In recognition of this we are seeking to encourage post 16 accommodation and support providers to have a larger role within this and act as key stakeholders within all the project streams.

Consultation and Equalities

57. The implications of this are covered in the main body of the report.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy, and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because: <i>NB: Only complete this section if you have not completed any of the Strategic Plan tick boxes above. Whichever section is not applicable, please delete.</i>	

NB: If the 'Other significant links' section below is not applicable, please delete it.

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation).
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <http://intranet.hants.gov.uk/equality/equality-assessments.htm>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*

This page is intentionally left blank

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Children and Young People Select Committee
Date:	11 July 2023
Title:	Update on Autism Services Commissioning for Children and Young People in Hampshire
Report From:	Mental Health and Learning Disabilities / Autism Delivery Directorate, Southampton and Isle of Wight ICB

Contact name: Catherine Barnard: Transformation Lead: Adult Mental Health, Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB

Tel: 07584 203782

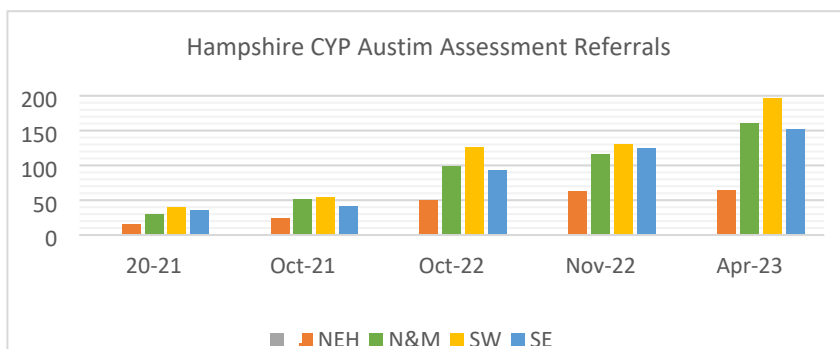
Email: catherine.barnard@nhs.net

1 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the current status of action that is underway by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board to tackle the ongoing challenges in relation to ensuring access to autism assessments in Hampshire.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 For the Children and Young People Select Committee to note the issues outlined in the following update report and in particular:
- The HIOW ICB has successfully achieved the increases in Autism Assessment activity that it set out to achieve, moving from an average of 600-700 assessments per year before 2020 to approximately 1,500 per year from 2021 onwards.
 - Increased waiting lists times continue to put pressure on Hampshire services since October 2021 when the contract first commenced.



- Autism assessment capacity in Hampshire is not sufficient to achieve the objective of 3 month (12 week) wait by March 2024. The current average wait in Hampshire is now 18 months.
- Continued partnership with HCC SEND services and other education colleagues will be necessary to help understand, address and potentially reduce (if appropriate) current levels of referrals.

2.2 Given the length of time this report has been routinely submitted to the Select Committee with little change, that the next report is provided to committee in November 2023 via face to face attendance to enable the ICB to focus on service transformation – see section 4.5.

3 Executive Summary

3.1 This report updates the Select committee as to the current state of progress in relation to achieving timely access in relation to ASC (Autism Spectrum Condition) assessments and related support and services, outstanding and new issues to address, and next steps.

3.2 Whilst the NHS has implemented significant financial investment to expand Autism Assessment activity across Hampshire, referrals have continued to increase which has resulted in a growing assessment waiting list. To address this, the ICB:

- Has established a new all-age commissioning framework which supports more agile arrangements for procuring additional Autism assessment activity.
- Is working with system partners to develop longer term capacity to meet ongoing needs for Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Is reviewing aspects outside of the assessment pathway, such as mental health inequalities, age based thresholds, transition, mental health comorbidities, needs led support and workforce training.
- Has worked with Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Autism Partnership Board to develop a new Local Authority Autism Strategy.
- Has worked with Public Health to highlight mental health inequalities for those with Autism within the Hampshire County Council Mental Health Wellbeing Strategy.

4 Contextual information

4.1 Nationally, regionally and locally, Autism Spectrum Condition (Autism) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) assessment services are facing significant capacity issues due to large waiting lists and an unprecedented surge in demand. Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, long waiting times for both ADHD and Autism assessments were widely reported and acknowledged by the NHS Long Term Plan and the national strategy for autistic children, young people, and adults.

4.2 In 2018 a decision was made by the then five Hampshire CCGs to transfer a large cohort of children and young people waiting for an autism assessment from Hampshire CAMHS to an interim service, in order to clear the backlog. In early 2021, a revised and improved service specification for a new assessment service (across Hampshire the Isle of Wight) was jointly designed with families, clinical experts and relevant professionals across multiple agencies and disciplines. Following a competitive tender process Psicon Ltd was awarded the contract (see above table). The current service contract expires on the 31st March 2023.

4.3 Key improvements and changes that were introduced in the Psicon assessment service that started in October 2021 included:

- Expanded age range down to 3 years old (originally 5 years) to 18 years (and up to 19 years for those with a mild to moderate learning disability)
- Provide an accessible and flexible NICE Compliant service which supports patient choice, family life and offers a range of assessment formats including face to face, online and hybrid models and includes post assessment follow up sessions.
- Provide a local service, with established local links which ensures joint working with other agencies and services, including clear specific and meaningful signposting to the child and family.
- Ensure that children and their parent/carers are involved in each step of the pathway.
- Continue to work with Hampshire and Isle of Wight commissioners to develop services for Autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions.
- Expansion of referral sources to support referrals from any health education or social care professional.

4.4 The ICB is working with partners to deliver system wide transformation of all services related to Autism and ADHD Scope as follows:

Workstream 1: Transformed Service Model – Diagnostic Service

- Design a service that fully meets current and projected demand and offers a response which is proportionate to need.
- Meet the 12 week national waiting times target by maximising capacity and minimising waste.
- Facilitate the smooth delivery of triage, assessment, diagnosis, and prescribing services as well as signposting/referrals onto other services.
- Ensure reassuring and safe transition/discharge.
- Provide the infrastructure required to maintain safe and equitable shared care.
- Manage patient expectations and reduce inequalities.

Workstream 2: Transformed Service Model

- Secure funding for short term capacity to clear or reduce current waiting lists for BAU Commissioners
- Map entire pathway, to include early intervention to crisis – identify gaps, areas of good practice and areas of risk.

- Collate and maintain data sets to build a true, dynamic understanding of demand across the ICS.
- Assess the harm and costs of waiting to individuals and the system, using resulting data to anchor change.
- Implement sustainable shared care arrangements which match national policy and are locally agreed with Primary Care
- Codesign support services which meet need and offer evidence based NHS intervention at the right time – non diagnosis reliant.

Workstream 3

- Understand and implement change alongside those people with lived Experience as Subject Matter Experts.
- Enable access to innovative models of needs led and accessible support/alternative pathways for individuals across every stage of need, including evidence-based psycho-social interventions.
- Identify and mitigate interdependencies between agencies which are historically reliant on diagnosis to access support.
- Develop collaborative partnerships (example strategies) for action on local systemic change, to ensure consistency across the ICS.

Timeline

	2022/23				2023/24				2024/25			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
All Age ASC& ADHD Service Review												
Independent review	■	■										
service requirements review			■									
Engagement and Coproduction				■	■	■	■	■				
Business Case Submission					■							
Pilot transformation initiatives					■	■	■	■				
Service mobilisation							■	■				
Waiting List Initiatives								■	■	■	■	■
Service GO Live									■	■	■	■

5 Consultation and Equalities

- 5.4 Children and young people impacted by autism and neurodiversity are recognised by HIOW ICB as having vulnerability to poor outcomes under the Equality Act in relation to disabilities (learning disabilities) and age (children and young people).

6 Next Steps

- The main focus of the ICB's strategy is to address the wider challenge of developing sufficient capacity to meet the needs of children and young people in Hampshire communities for Autism Assessment.
- Commissioners are maintaining robust monitoring of the assessment service, with the key focus on assessment levels, maximising flow within existing resources and (where possible) using the new all age ASC / ADHD framework to commission additional activity whilst wider work to build a NHS capacity to meet current levels of need is developed. Monthly contract review meetings are conducted to monitor activity and performance, with quarterly quality focused meetings.
- Commissioners continue to work with Portsmouth colleagues and commissioners to understand their "Neurodiversity (ND) Pathway" to ensure that there is equity across the Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICS area.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	No
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Children and Families Act [Part 3 SEND] 2014 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted	September 2014
Statutory Guidance: SEND Code of Practice 0-25 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf	January 2015
Local area SEND inspection framework (Ofsted and CQC) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-sendinspection-framework	April 2016

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- (a) *why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- (b) *will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*

This page is intentionally left blank

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Children and Young People Select Committee
Date of meeting:	6 March 2023
Report Title:	Work Programme
Report From:	Director of People and Organisation

Contact name: Members Services

Tel: 0370 7791243

Email: members.services@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. To consider the Children and Young People Select Committee's forthcoming work programme.

Recommendation

2. That the Children and Young People Select Committee consider and approve the work programme.

WORK PROGRAMME – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE – Changes since last meeting.

Topic	Issue	Reason for inclusion	11 July 2023	22 September 2023	14 November 2023	19 January 2024
Pre-scrutiny	Consideration of Revenue and Capital Budgets	To pre-scrutinise prior to consideration by the Executive Lead Member for Children’s Services.				X
Pre-scrutiny	Safeguarding Report – Children’s Services	To pre-scrutinise the annual safeguarding report prior to consideration by Cabinet.			X	
Pre-scrutiny	Consultation on Proposed Changes to School Transport Policy	To pre-scrutinise a proposal to consult on changes to the School Transport Policy.		X		
Overview	Home to School Transport Policy	To receive an update on the implementation of updates to the Home to School Transport Policy introduced in July 2022. <i>Last update - July 2023</i>	X			
Overview	Downs Syndrome Services	To provide an overview on existing services for children and young people with Downs Syndrome in Hampshire. <i>Requested by Cllr Porter</i>	X			
Overview	Children in Care and Care Leavers	To receive an annual report on Children in Care and Care Leavers.	X			
Overview	Religious Education Provision	To provide an overview of the provision of Religious Education within Hampshire considering its unique status as not part of the national curriculum. <i>Requested by Cllr Henderson</i>		X		
Overview	Library Service	To receive an overview of the full scope of the libraries offer for Hampshire’s residents.		X		
Overview	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	To receive a regular update on CAMHS in Hampshire, to include progress made to reduce waiting times for access to CAMHS treatment. <i>Last update - November 2022</i>			X	

Topic	Issue	Reason for inclusion	11 July 2023	22 September 2023	14 November 2023	19 January 2024
Overview	School Attainment	To receive an annual update on attainment of children and young people in Hampshire schools.				X
Overview	Youth Justice Service	To receive an update on the Youth Justice Service. <i>Last update – March 2023</i>				
Overview	Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND)	To receive a regular update on SEND. <i>Last update – October 2022</i>				
Overview	Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS)	To receive a biennial update on the Hampshire EMTAS. <i>Last update - March 2023</i>				
Overview	Autism Assessment Services	To receive a regular update on progress towards improving Autism services for children and young people in Hampshire. <i>Regular written updates were requested by the Committee in September 2020, alongside an annual presentation.</i>	X	X	X Pres.	X

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	No
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

This is a scrutiny review document setting out the work programme of the Committee. It does not therefore make any proposals which will impact on groups with protected characteristics.

This page is intentionally left blank