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NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting	Corporate Parenting Board
Date and Time	Wednesday 15th June 2022 at 2.00pm
Place	Ashburton Hall, Ell Court, 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 THE 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. BOARD MEMBERS FEEDBACK - ENGAGEMENT AND RECENT ACTIVITIES

An opportunity for Board members to provide a verbal update on their recent engagement activities.

7. CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD PROGRESS UPDATE (Pages 11 - 20)

To receive a progress update from the Director of Children's Services on the Corporate Parenting Board.

8. CHILDREN IN CARE ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 21 - 32)

To receive the annual report from the Director of Children's Services on Children in Care.

9. PARTICIPATION STRATEGY (Pages 33 - 58)

To receive a progress update from the Director of Children's Services on the Participation Strategy.

10. SWANWICK LODGE SECURE CHILDREN'S HOME UPDATE (Pages 59 - 80)

To receive a progress update from the Director of Children's Services on Swanwick Lodge Secure Children's Home.

11. HAMPSHIRE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE, CHILDREN IN CARE PROVISION (Pages 81 - 104)

To receive an update from Hampshire's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service in relation to Children in Care.

12. VIRTUAL SCHOOL UPDATE (Pages 105 - 112)

To receive an update from the Director of Children's Services on the Virtual School.

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.

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Agenda Item 3

AT A MEETING of the Corporate Parenting Board of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY
COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Thursday 21st October 2021

Chairman:
p Councillor Ann Briggs

a Councillor Phil North
p Councillor Nick Adams-King
p Councillor Fran Carpenter
p Councillor Pal Hayre

p Councillor Wayne Irish
p Councillor Arun Mummalaneni
p Councillor Jacky Tustain
p Councillor Malcolm Wade

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr North.

2. **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.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. **DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman urged members of the Board to take all opportunities presented to engage with officers and individuals involved with the various elements of Corporate Parenting to develop their knowledge.

6. **BOARD MEMBERS FEEDBACK - ENGAGEMENT AND RECENT ACTIVITIES**

Cllr Wade shared a recent experience with the County's virtual school and noted how it supported children in care and the extra challenges associated with them.

Cllr Wade noted the importance of the designated teacher role, providing consistency for young people and that it was unfortunate there was not a similar role for colleges.

Cllr Wade shared that free school meal eligible looked after children underperformed compared to peers and the variability of Personal Education Plans was a big issue with this.

Cllr Carpenter mentioned the visits she had recently undertaken and the focus she had witnessed on reunification with children's families. Cllr Carpenter noted the positive feedback received from Foster Carers she had met in the New Forest who cited Hampshire's training as a specific benefit. Cllr Carpenter noted that they had wanted to see a priority for looked after children with CAMHS.

Cllr Adams-King also shared the positive experience of foster carers in the New Forest who cited having the same Social Worker for the last four years as a benefit. Cllr Adams-King encouraged all members to engage with similar future events.

7. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING SERVICE CARE PLAN AUDIT

The Board received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of Hampshire's Care Plan Audit for 2020/21.

The Board heard that the Independent Reviewing Service undertakes an annual audit of the quality of children's care plans in Hampshire. The findings from the audits are used to develop and enhance practice and the outcomes for children who are looked after. The audit focuses on the following areas; The Care Plan, The Personal Education Plan, The Health Assessment, Needs of the child, The Child Looked After Review and Equality and Diversity.

The Board noted that 272 children's plans were audited, and increase from 2019. The audit contained 68 questions, including direct answers from children, parents and carers. Questions are both qualitative and quantitative and desired to establish if the Hampshire Approach is having a positive impact on care planning.

The Board received an overview of the key findings of the audit, including;

- 98.5% of care plans reflect the needs of the child,
- 83.82% of children reported that their life had improved since becoming looked after,
- in 89.3% of cases the children's equality and diversity needs were being met,
- there continues to be a need to focus on including young people in the process and to improve the number of signed plans to reflect this,
- dental and optician results have been impacted by the lockdowns introduced during the pandemic which prevented routine appointments.

In response to questions members found that:

- The process and the questions are adapted for children with disabilities and autism to allow them to engage and have their needs met through the plan.

- Plans should include a 'plan b' in case of unexpected issues and emergencies.
- There is work being done to improve the numbers of children who attend, and engage, with their reviews This includes facilitating attendance through technological means.

Resolved: That the Corporate Parenting Board note the presentation on Hampshire's Care Plan Audit for 2020/21.

8. **BIG ACTIVITY WEEK**

The Board received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an outline of The Big Activity Week 2021.

The Board noted that the first Big Activity Week took place in 2019 but 2020 only had day events due to the pandemic. The Big Activity Week returned in 2021 with six residential centres including the Hampshire County Council run Mountain Centre in Wales. In total 105 young people aged between 8 and 14 attended between 2-6 August 2021.

The Board heard how The Big Activity Week was important as the benefits of outdoor and adventurous activities has been well documented to build resilience and confidence. It would also offer the opportunity for young people to make friendships with young people in similar circumstances. Feedback from previous events had also confirmed this.

The Board were informed that The Big Activity Week for 2022 was in the process of being arranged and a programme of activities was being considered for throughout the years but this would depend on funding.

In response to questions members found that:

- If individuals were unable to attend due to coronavirus, and there place was not able to be filled, the cost of that place was lost.
- There were adaptive sessions for children with challenging behaviour or who needed a 1:1. The Big Activity Week was available for all children.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Board, thanked all involved with delivering The Big Activity Week.

Resolved: That the Corporate Parenting Board note the report on The Big Activity Week 2021.

9. **ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL**

The Board received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing the annual report of Hampshire's Virtual School.

The Board noted that the Virtual School's role was to ensure the best possible schooling was provided for Hampshire's Looked After Children. A key part of this was the creation on a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which assessed each child's needs and planned how they would be met.

The Board heard how the Virtual School had played a key role in supporting social workers, carers, designated teachers and schools to ensure they meet the educational needs of young people throughout the pandemic. The disruption caused by the pandemic has meant many young people have had to rebuild their trust in key adults, regain a sense of belonging and readjust to school routines alongside addressing gaps in their learning and curriculum knowledge.

The Board received an overview of performance for the 2019/20 academic year and the outcomes for children in care, divided by Key Stage.

In response to questions members found that:

- If a Looked After Child was excluded there was support in place to ensure there was not an impact on the child's sense of belonging or security.
- There were efforts to prevent the PEP falling between the school and social worker and that there was an ownership of the document.
- Training and support was available for Foster Carers to assist them with ensuring young people completed homework.
- Reduced Timetables were a useful tool when a young people was at risk of exclusion, but they can have a long term impact on learning and sense of belonging. Where these were in place the Virtual School will challenge schools and try to ensure their appropriate use. When needed the Virtual School can direct schools to return to a full timetable.
- PEP now retain the child's full educational history in order to provide continuity.
- When Children are eligible for pupil premium the funding goes straight to the school.

Resolved: That the Corporate Parenting Board note the annual report of the Virtual School Head for 2021.

10. AN UPDATE ON HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

The Board received a report from the NHS Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) providing an update on the review Health Assessments backlog.

The Board noted that Ofsted's 2019 inspection of Children's Services identified timely completion of health assessments as an area requiring improvement. A multi-agency meeting was arranged and identified a series of improvements that could be made.

In order to safely manage risk within the backlog cohort, a prioritisation document has been developed by the CCG team. The first priority group included children and young people in care who are under 5 or over 17 years of age (totalling 62 young people). This tool also helped to inform in a face to face assessment was required, or if it could be done virtually or via the health assessment questionnaire.

The Board heard that the CCG team continued to explore options to support the backlog in medium and long term and ensure that a robust health offer exists for Hampshire's children in care.

In response to questions members found that:

- The high volume of churn within the cohort alongside the size of the geographical area led to significant issues.
- Virtual assessments were only undertaken if appropriate.
- There was a period without a designated Doctor for looked after children, which was not the reason for the backlog but has not helped the situation.

Resolved: That the Corporate Parenting Board continue to note the plans in place and joint working with Health and Social Care.

11. AN UPDATE ON THE MODERNISING PLACEMENTS PROGRAMME

The Board received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the Modernising Placements Programme.

The Board heard that the aim of the Modernising Placements Programme was to develop a care offer which provides the right accommodation and support at the right time for children in care in Hampshire.

The Board noted the latest element of this programme, the 'Hampshire Hives'. The purpose of which was to;

- Facilitate regular support groups and social activities for Foster Carers,
- Provide flexible day care and sleepovers to children in placements with Foster Carers in the Hive,
- Offer needs led, one to one support and advice in a befriending/mentoring capacity to Foster Carers in the Hive,
- Work alongside a range of professionals in supporting children in placement with Foster Carers in the Hive.

There are currently six Hives across Hampshire, in Basingstoke, Andover, Waterlooville, Eastleigh, Southampton & Gosport. These support 80 children in care, 100 Foster Carers (56 fostering families) and 23 birth children.

The Board also noted the efforts undertaken to improve the timeliness of payments following 55% of respondents to the 2020 Foster Care survey raising it as an issue. A new online form has removed a number of steps in the process and the need for social workers to handle paper forms.

In response to questions members found that:

- More Hives were planned around the County and would be established based on need and resources.
- Care Leavers were benefiting from the 'Staying Put' programme, allowing them to stay in Foster Care into adulthood to provide further support alongside their Personal Advisors.

Resolved:

- i. That the Corporate Parenting Board note the progress of the programme.**
- ii. That the Corporate Parenting Board note the work proposed to expand the wider understanding of shared partnerships, companies,**

businesses and communities of children in care and the foster carer role, and considers the contribution that Councillors could make in this area.

- iii. That an update is provided to the Board in January 2022.**

Chairman, Corporate Parenting Board

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	15 June 2022
Title:	Corporate Parenting Board Progress Update
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Stuart Ashley, Deputy Director of Children's Services

Tel: 01962 846370

Email: stuart.ashley@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Children and Young People Select Committee on the progress made against the priority actions identified in the OFSTED inspection that took place in 2019, where we were judged to be Outstanding. The report also includes an update on the progress made to improve and develop the Personal Education Plan (PEP) process.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the contents of this report and the positive progress made in respect of the Ofsted recommendation.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to update the Committee on the progress made against the work that has been completed to further progress and improve the purpose and impact of the Corporate Parenting Board. This was identified as an area for development in the most recent full Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS), Ofsted inspection (2019).
4. The 2019 inspection judged the authority to be Outstanding across all domains, one of the first in the country. They found that "Children in care benefit from high quality support, which is making a real difference to their outcomes" (Ofsted April 2019). Only two areas were identified as areas needing to improve.
 - The proportion of children who are offered, and take up, a return home interview when they have been missing from home or care.
 - The Corporate Parenting Board's rigour in holding partners, including health providers and district councils, to account to ensure that they prioritise services for children and young people more effectively.

5. The department took immediate steps to reflect on the findings in the report, and the arrangements in place at that time for the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB). The CPB was sitting as a subgroup of the Children and Families Advisory Panel (CFAP). It had been established for two years, and it was acknowledged that there were opportunities to further develop and mature the CPB.
6. On 13 February 2020, the County Council agreed the new Terms of Reference and structure for the Corporate Parenting Board. The CPB became a full committee of the County Council which may advise the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services. This enhanced the CPB's standing and emphasised the importance of members oversight of Children in Care.
7. The reconstituted CPB has established itself as having a key role in holding the department and partner agencies to account and ensuring that Children in Care are offered a high-quality service. These changes and developments have helped the CPB to mature and to become more effective in meeting its purpose.
8. In addition to work completed at board meetings, CPB members have participated in engagement sessions which have ranged from visiting children in care at their placements, attending formal meetings with and about children in care, and attending training on the health needs of children in care. These activities have enhanced the CPB's overall understanding of the needs and experiences of children in care. The Chairman ensures that these activities are discussed at every board meeting and encourages members to prioritise attending as many as they can.
9. The 2019 Ofsted inspection made positive findings about Personal Education Plans (PEPs). The department has a strong ethos of continuous improvement and transformation. Notwithstanding these positive findings, the department noted opportunities to further review and make changes to the PEP process to improve the quality and the impact they have on the educational attainment for children in care.
10. The Transforming Social Care Programme undertook a full review of the PEP process in collaboration with the Virtual School and education partners. The recommendations of the review are still being considered. One of the key changes suggested by education partners is a move to an electronic PEP, which make the process more streamlined and easier to monitor. Work is underway to review the options for this.
11. Alongside this, the Virtual School has reviewed the training and support that is on offer to social workers and partner agencies. In addition, the management of the Virtual School Head has recently changed to be undertaken jointly by the Area Director in Children and Families with the

Strategic Lead for Children in Care, as well as the current line manager who is the County Manager for Inclusion within the Education and Inclusion Branch. This change is to ensure that there is cross branch working to ensure the needs of children in care and their education are paramount.

Contextual information

12. In April 2019 Ofsted undertook an inspection of HCC Childrens Services and judged the service to be Outstanding across all domains. There were only two recommendations for improvement, one of which was with regards to the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) -

“The Corporate Parenting Board’s rigour in holding partners, including health providers and district councils, to account to ensure that they prioritise services for children and young people more effectively.”

13. This is further expanded in the body of the report as follows –

“The corporate parenting board effectively seeks to build a well-informed understanding of the experiences, concerns and achievements of children in care. The board is energetic in taking steps to ensure that all children receive good services. The board’s ongoing engagement with children is an essential, primary focus of its work and is gained through a wide variety of sources, including the involvement of an expanding number of children in care, engaged as care ambassadors.

The board has not extended its membership to include partner agencies due to concerns about the impact this might have on the engagement of children in care and care leavers. While the board effectively scrutinises all the important areas of services for children in care, it does not have a systematic way of ensuring consistent collaboration with key partners, such as health services, district councils or foster carers. This dilutes its ability to ensure a joined-up response to areas for development, such as ensuring timely health assessments and delivering a more consistent approach to council tax exemption for care leavers.”

14. The Children and Families Advisory Panel was invited to consider recommending to Full Council making the CPB a committee in its own right. This revised structure emphasised the importance of children in care and care leavers within Hampshire and would give the CPB more authority to hold partners to account.
15. In reaching this decision the County Council increased membership from three elected members to nine. Care Ambassadors (former children in care) were no longer co-opted members, but they and other care experienced young people would be invited to attend as necessary.

16. Terms of Reference and membership of the new board were agreed, in line with the proposed changes outlined above, at a full County Council meeting on 13 February 2020.
17. The terms of reference of the board allows the CPB to ensure that all the services provided to Children in Care and Care Leavers are of a high standard, and ensure that Children in Care and Care Leavers are well supported in all aspects of their life, including
 - Support and encouragement to achieve in school.
 - Support to maintain good mental health and wellbeing.
 - Having opportunities for positive social integration; and
 - Enabling the most vulnerable children and young people in society to flourish into the successful adults they can become.
18. To reflect the greater emphasis on multi-agency engagement and holding partner agencies to account, the agenda now includes items from key partner agencies who provide services to support these outcomes. Those partners are required to provide a full written report and attend the Board to be held to account for the content of those reports and respond to questions and challenge where appropriate.
19. The CPB has used its position to influence policy beyond the County Council, for the benefit of Children in Care and Care Leavers. The CPB has supported the decision of districts to offer significant discounts or a full waiver in Council Tax for Care Leavers. Eight districts offer specific discounts for Care Leavers. The remaining three districts offer discounts that can be accessed by Care Leavers alongside other eligible people.
20. A summary of agenda items considered by the current board is as follows –

October 2020

Children's social care – response to Covid and the impact going forward
Big Activity Week 2020 (these are residential trips for Children in Care in school years 4-9, focusing on fun and physical activities)
Virtual School Update

January 2021

Modernising Placement Programme
Annual Care Leavers report
Annual Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) report
Annual fostering report

June 2021

Protocol on the working arrangements between the Hampshire Corporate Parenting Board and the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
Annual report for Children in Care
Annual report from Health
Annual report from Police

October 2021

Independent Reviewing Service Care Plan Audit

Big Activity Week 2021

Annual Report from the Virtual School

Update on Health Assessments

Update on Modernising Placements Programme

21. Members of the CPB have participated in regular engagement sessions to support them in gaining insight into the needs of Children in Care. These engagement sessions have included –
 - Attending the Big Activity Week. These are residential trips for Children in Care in school years 4-9, focusing on fun and physical activities.
 - Attending Care Ambassadors meetings. Care Ambassadors was a forum of primarily Care Leavers who represented the views of Children in Care and Care Leavers.
 - Attending foster care support groups.
 - Sitting on the judging panel for We've Got Talent in 2020 and 2021. This was a virtual event, run during the pandemic, where children in care and care leavers were invited to submit entries to a talent contest.
 - Participating in the tender process for post 16 accommodation.
 - Joining inspection teams for post-16 accommodation.
 - Meeting with children and families at their foster placements, and at their family homes. This has included children in long term placements and families working towards their children returning to their care.
 - Meeting with Independent Reviewing Officers.
 - Visiting Hampshire's residential homes and Swanwick Lodge (Secure unit).
 - A Children in Care health training session, run by Children in Care health colleagues.

22. CPB members provide written feedback following engagement sessions which is considered and acted on where appropriate. The feedback received indicates that CPB members find these visits to be helpful and informative to their role. These activities help CPB members to have a broader understanding of the needs and experiences of Children in Care, and the quality of the services provided to them.

23. Some of this feedback includes suggestions for further service developments. For example, suggestions have included improvements that could be made to the Virtual College, to bring the support more in line with that offered to children by the Virtual School. Advisors from the Virtual College now attend Year 11 PEPs to support transitions.

24. At this current time, children's voices are present at the CPB through inclusion in reports presented by agencies, and through the findings of the Bright Spots survey (this is a survey run by Coram Voice, in which all Children in Care in Hampshire are invited to give their views on their experiences of being in care, the findings of which are used to inform service delivery). The department has recently written the participation strategy for the Department;

this includes work to form a Children in Care Council which will be able to have greater input into the CPB. This work is in progress and further updates will be provided where appropriate. It is anticipated that the Council will be ready to launch in autumn 2022. Children in care bring invaluable perspectives to discussions about the services and issues that will affect them, and we look forward to their enhanced input at CPB meetings.

25. CPB members are expected to use their knowledge and position to ensure that the Council upholds its responsibilities as corporate parents in all their roles and functions as elected members. The department receives a consistent level of queries from elected members usually relating to individual case queries, raised by members of the public. These are addressed and resolved using communication processes in place to manage these, and, to date, there have been no occasions where elected members have considered it necessary to escalate these matters further, or where concerns relate to systemic concerns about the department. This reflects a healthy level of challenge by CPB members and, by extension, wider elected members.
26. In October 2021, the Chairman advised the CPB that she had been contacted by Middlesbrough Council, seeking advice about developing the Corporate Parenting approach in Middlesbrough. This suggests that the CPB in Hampshire has a positive reputation and provides an example of good practice that other authorities can benefit from.
27. CPB provides scrutiny of key programmes within the department. For example, the CPB has asked for additional reports in relation to the Modernising Placements Programme at regular intervals, to monitor progress and impact.

PEPs

28. The delivery of a high-quality personal education plan (PEP) is a key tool for promoting the educational outcomes of children in care. The PEP should cover the full range of education and development needs, outline the appropriate provision and set out the support in place for each child including the out of school hours learning. The PEP should clearly identify short- and long-term targets, actions and timescales which will drive forward educational improvement and should set out how the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) will be used to support children's educational attainment and progress.
29. The Virtual School has a quality assurance role in relation to PEPs and must ensure they are effective, high quality and that the local authority has in place systems and arrangements to ensure they are delivered and reviewed within statutory timeframes. The Virtual School reports to the CPB on progress and developments accordingly.
30. In June 2021 The VSH was involved in a PEP review project as a joint initiative between Children and Families and Education and Inclusion branches which was delivered by Children's Services Transformation Practice

(TSC). 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.

31. As a result of the project the Virtual School increased our offer of statutory training to designated teachers to twice termly and has introduced a follow up session specifically on writing an effective PEP to ensure we continue to strengthen practice in this area. In addition, we have planned to deliver 'lite bite' training sessions across all social work districts and will be included in the induction e-learning programme for new social work staff. The VSH has commissioned more dedicated time for the school improvement service to enable more PEP auditing and feedback to schools to be undertaken as part of our 'Corporate Parent' visits to schools.

Finance

32. There are no finance implications or considerations.

Performance

33. There are no performance implications or consideration.

Consultation and Equalities

34. No consultation has been required.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

35. 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.

36. Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation.

The carbon mitigation tool and climate change adaptation tool were not applicable because this report is a progress report, it is strategic in nature and the tools are neither required nor appropriate.

37. Carbon Mitigation

The carbon mitigation tool and climate change adaptation tool were not applicable because this report is a progress report, it is strategic in nature and the tools are neither required nor appropriate.

Other Key Issues

38. No other key issues identified.

Any other headings (if required)

39. No other headings required.

Conclusions

40. The department will always strive to work with partners to be strong corporate parents. The CPB is a key part of the structure that facilitates this.
41. Restructuring the CPB and expanding the membership has served to provide a more robust forum for mutual challenge and accountability. The CPB agenda has had oversight of a range of issues, including reports from multi agency partners who have a key role in making sure that Children in Care are happy, healthy, and provided with opportunities achieve their potential. Board members use the meeting to challenge the progress made by multi agency partners to better support Children in Care to meet their potential. There is tangible evidence of positive change to service delivery directly attributable to the interventions of Board members, which has been outlined in more detail in this report.
42. Moving forward, a key priority will be to provide more opportunities for children's voices to be present and for them to have input into decision-making within the CPB. As well as the existing opportunities for this to happen through reports that are brought to the board by agencies, the creation of the Children in Care Council will facilitate more direct involvement, including attendance at CPB meetings.
43. Work to improve the PEP process began from a position of strength, and it is anticipated that the plan of work in place will further develop this into an even more effective process that will continue to improve the education outcomes for children in care. The CPB will be updated about the progress of this work as it develops.

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
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

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 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:

- 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*

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	15 June 2022
Title:	Children in Care Annual Report
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Hannah Leat, District Manager

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Corporate Parenting Board 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. This report will focus on the work of the statutory social work teams.
2. This report will not duplicate information already shared within reports presented to the Corporate Parenting Board this year but will refer to such reports/presentations.

Recommendation(s)

3. The Corporate Parenting Board supports the priority areas for Children's Services, Children in Care Teams as being:
 - Improving the timeliness of all Health Assessments
 - Increasing the number of children who can safely be reunified to the care of family
 - Increasing the number of children who are cared for by family and friends via Special Guardianship Orders
 - Having a greater understanding of the emotional and wellbeing needs of children in care and ensuring timely access to support

Executive Summary

4. Children in the care of the local authority are a key priority group, and in Hampshire we believe that it is everybody's responsibility to ensure that the care and support that they receive is of the highest quality. The Children in Care service holds itself to a high standard and seeks to work with partners to achieve the same.

5. This report provides the Corporate Parenting Board with assurance that the needs of children in our care are known and are being met with the services provided. The report outlines the department's priorities, and the work that is being undertaken to progress these.
6. The report provides an update against key performance measures that are used to ensure that the needs of children in our care are being met, and that services are working effectively. It considers the pressures that are on services, including those caused by national and other factors (such as placement availability and the residual pressures from the pandemic), and how the department is responding to these.
7. The report considers caseloads, and the capacity of frontline services to work effectively with children care and considers the wider strategic framework and objectives of the service.
8. The Board receives updates and reports on services offered by partner agencies, and also separate reports for key issues such as Modernising Placement programme, Virtual School, and the Participation strategy. This report does not seek to incorporate or replicate these updates but refers to them where required.

Who are children in care?

9. Children in the care of the local authority is any child/young person between the age of 0-18 years that have 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
10. Children can become looked after because of a voluntary agreement with their parents, or because of a Care Order made by a Court.
11. 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.
12. A significant change in practice has meant that children are in care only for as long as needed, as opposed to previous practice which saw a plan being made for long term care until they reached the age of 18 years. This is reflective of the changing needs of children and their families and in recognition to the importance of family life and living at home being the right place for children and young people, if it is safe and appropriate to do so.
13. As of 17 May 2022, there are 1728 Children in Care. This compares to 1649 on 31st March 2021. Of those children 1013 (59%) are boys, and 706

(41%) are girls, meaning that boys comprise a larger proportion of most children in the care of the authority.

CIC teams

14. Hampshire have 6 children in Care Teams, each having one Team Manager, one Assistant Team Manager and on average 9 social workers (slight variation reflective of case numbers). The average caseload for a CIC social worker is 20 children per full time social worker. The Children in Care team has a stable workforce, those that work in the team are passionate and committed to children in care.
15. 46 children in care are in Disabled Childrens Teams (DCT), and 437 are held within Children's Assessment and Safeguarding Teams. These will be children who are accommodated due to their disabilities, and children who do not have a plan for long term care.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

16. Hampshire currently has 115 UASC in care, 111 male and 4 female. This compares to 56 in 2020-2021 (52 male and 5 female). Hampshire mostly receives UASC children via the national dispersal scheme, with a small number arriving spontaneously into Hampshire. Numbers also increased by 20 in November 2021, when a group of young people were found to have been incorrectly accommodated as adults in a Home Office run hotel in Basingstoke.
17. Asylum seeking young people are supported in semi-independent accommodation or in specialist foster placements.
18. These numbers reflect a significant increase in demand on the Children in Care Service and consideration is being given to establishing a dedicated UASC team. As noted above, the total number of Children in Care is 1728, up by 79 (from 1649) on the previous year. 55 of that 79 are UASCs, and Hampshire has no control over these admissions to care.

Connected Carers and reunification

19. Connected carers and reunification are an area of priority in supporting our approach to ensuring that children do not remain looked after for any longer than required. In the last 12 months, the connected carers service been renamed Family Connections and has moved from the Fostering & Adoption service and is now embedded in the Havant district management structure, bringing it more in line with the Children in Care service. The priority for the service has been to further establish its relationship with CAST (Children's Assessment and Safeguarding Teams) to ensure that options within the family are progressed at the earliest opportunity. The service is now moving to focus on the support offered to Special Guardianship carers. Improving this offer should serve to encourage more

connected carers to consider Special Guardianship Orders and may also encourage existing foster carers to consider applying for a Special Guardianship Order.

20. Reunification has been an area of focus for several years and is now well embedded in practice. Reunification work draws on the strengths-based methods of the Hampshire Approach (our social work practice framework), to reassess children's needs, and to work with birth families to assess the progress that they have made in addressing the reasons why they were previously unable to care for their children. The NSPCC Framework for Reunification is used to provide a robust assessment framework.
21. Hampshire saw 279 children reunified in 2021/2022.
22. During previous discussions about reunification, some foster carers (including connected carers) had identified a lack of guaranteed ongoing financial support as a barrier to applying for a Special Guardianship Order. A scoping activity is currently underway to identify how many carers would wish to progress an application, should financial support be available. Early indications suggest that there could be as many as 70 carers.

Placement stability

23. Hampshire's approach to placement stability has positively evolved along with our approach to long term planning and reunification. Whereas previously, care planning has focussed on securing a long-term arrangement for the child, we now recognise that for many children their experience of being in the care of the local authority may better be described as a journey, with increasing numbers ending this back in the care of their families. That does not mean we do not have an unrelenting focus on permanence, rather the focus is on permanence in all its forms.
24. Children do need stability and moves need to be responsive to their needs, rather than other factors, wherever possible. Placement stability is measured using two indicators – minimising the number of moves in a 12-month period and determining whether these moves are "positive" or "negative". A positive move reflects a change of placement that moves the child towards a longer-term outcome such as independent living, returning to their local area, or moving to a connected carer.
25. For example, a child in care proceedings may move from a foster placement to a relative who has been assessed as a foster carer (and potential Special Guardianship carer) – this would be a positive move. Another child may move from a residential unit to a foster placement or may move to a semi-independent living placement as part of their transition to adulthood. These would also be positive moves.
26. There is some further work required to ensure that the criteria which determines whether a move is positive or negative is applied consistently.

In April 2022, 30.4% of moves were determined to be positive moves. 4.9% were recorded as negative, and the remainder were “indetermined”.

27. In 2021, 13% (222 children) children had had two or more placement moves. This compares with the South East benchmark of 11% however to reiterate, 30% of Hampshire’s moves were positive moves that progressed children’s care plans towards outcomes that meet their needs.

28. Placement availability is a national issue, and it is likely that this number could be reduced if more placement choice was available, hence our modernising placements programme, below. Nonetheless, we continue to work relentlessly to ensure that placement stability is supported and encouraged, using placement stability meetings, placement stability workers, and the other programmes outlined in this report.

Modernising Placements

29. Our Modernising Placements Programme is an ongoing transformation project built on the model below

The transformation journey



30. A programme update was provided to the Board in October 2021, and a further update is scheduled for October 2022.

31. The programme covers a range of transformations designed to strengthen the placements on offer to Children in care. These include

- Hampshire Hives – small groups of foster carers who sport one another, and who can also facilitate support from professionals. The first Hives celebrated their first anniversary in May 2022.
- Improvements to payments processes, designed to reduce problems and delays.
- Improvements to the training offer for foster carers.

- Developing the marketing strategy and growing the fostering recruitment team, to increase the number of in-house foster carers.
- Developing Trauma Informed Services.
- Developing Urgent Care and Extended Care Services.

Participation

32. The department has recently written a new participation strategy, which covers the period 2022-2025. A separate report is being presented to the Board updating on the strategy.
33. Prior to the Covid-19 period, participation activity was mostly facilitated through engagement activities that were held in districts, through the Bright Spots survey and through the Experts by Experience project and the Care Ambassadors group.
34. The Covid-19 pandemic required us to approach participation differently and this was explored in the Children in Care annual report presented in June 2021. During the first lockdown, enthusiasm for virtual engagement was high, however as the pandemic has progressed young people have experienced Zoom fatigue and staff have had to find different, creative ways to run activities. There has been a shift towards collaborative activities that take place over a period of time, and use of platforms other than video conferencing to facilitate more direct engagement. The purpose of engagement activity is to maintain positive relationships with young people, especially when social workers were not able to complete face-to-face visits. This has reassured children and young people that they are still being kept in mind and sought to alleviate any feelings of isolation. These events have intrinsic value of their own, although there may not be measurable outcomes from individual events. Below are some examples –

We've Got Talent

Following the success of 2020s event, We've Got Talent took place again in 2021, concluding with a virtual showcasing and prize-giving in September 2021. A range of entries were received across different categories and age groups, and the quality of these was very high. The number of entries was reduced on the previous year, and, like other online participation events, it is likely that this was something that worked well and provided something to do during lockdown but will not continue in its current form. We continue to consider ways to ensure that there are continued opportunities for the children and young people in our care to showcase their unique and varied talents and interests, and for Hampshire to celebrate these.

Music videos

[Eastleigh CIC choir - This is me!](#) and [NW DCT - You Got a Friend in Me](#) are music videos created by splicing together clips of children and young people singing sections of a song. "This is me!" was created over a period

of 10 sessions, where participants were also asked to give feedback on a range of other topics relevant to them. [Programme outline for This is Me](#)

Local newsletters for children in care

Three teams now produce newsletters for children allocated to their teams – [Eastleigh/Winchester CIC](#), [North East CIC](#), and [Basingstoke CIC](#). The purpose of these newsletters is to keep in touch with young people through sharing information, jokes, get-to-know-the-staff profiles, and asking for feedback.

Minecraft With Ben

During lockdown Ben Donnelly (Personal Advisor in South West Care Leavers' team) ran Minecraft With Ben sessions for young people aged 14+. These sessions were an opportunity for young people to meet in a virtual space and play Minecraft together. [Minecraft with Ben - promo video](#)

Care Experienced young people/housing project

Basingstoke & Deane housing services worked with six Care Leavers to produce a video and “10 top tips” relating to specific areas of housing need

1. How to safely live with a private landlord
2. [Homebid](#)
3. [University](#)
4. What to do if you are homeless

These videos provided relevant, accessible information to care leavers about housing-related matters.

35. The Care Ambassadors group was a group of care experienced young people who represented the views of their peers in different forums. The group had been running for several years but lost momentum somewhat during the pandemic, for several reasons. The formation and purpose of this group has been reviewed as part of the new participation strategy. The local authority is looking to commission a voluntary agency to form and run a Care Ambassadors group for care leavers and a Children in Care Council. The expectation will be that this group is developed to include and represent the voices of a range of care experienced young people, including those who are harder to reach.

Covid 19 – impact and lessons learnt

36. Covid 19 was a significant feature of last year's report, however the last 12 months there has been a gradual reduction of restrictions with no lockdowns.
37. The department has continued to manage the impact of increased staff sickness, especially over the winter months when infection levels peaked. Core services have been maintained and the department has continued to meet statutory requirements however there has been an impact on

consistency for some children, with, for example, visits being rearranged or covered by duty social workers. This has been minimised where possible.

38. Moving forward, the children in care service is considering the lessons learnt from Covid, especially the use of virtual working to enhance the service that is provided. Virtual working has allowed for some efficiencies and some increased frequency of contact with some children, young people and their carers, especially where they may live some distance from Hampshire. Social workers have been able to reduce travel time by attending some meetings virtually and offer more flexible options for communications with children in addition to statutory visits. It is noted that virtual options do not replace our statutory responsibilities, and their use is led by the child's preferences where possible.

Finance

39. No finance issues noted.

Performance

40. No performance issues noted.

Consultation and Equalities

41. No consultation has been undertaken.

Other Key Issues

42. None

Any other headings (if required)

43. None

Conclusions

44. The children in care service continues to work to ensure our children in care have all of their needs met and receive the best start in life, ready for their journey to adulthood. . Although the immediate impact of Covid has been addressed, services across the branch continue to see the impact of the last two years on the mental wellbeing and resilience of children, their families, and wider communities. Staff continue to work hard to support these needs in creative and proactive ways.

45. The service's transformative agenda continues, building on the introduction of the Hampshire Approach in 2018. This has seen a shift in our approach to our children's journey through care and is evidenced in the relentless focus on returning children to their birth families, or identifying connected people who can care for the child on a Special Guardianship Order

wherever possible. Part of this shift has required the department to reconsider the support on offer to Special Guardianship carers, both financial and the wider social work support.

46. Children and young people's views are important, both in terms of their own plans, and also in terms of the shaping and delivery of services. We know that children's views are well reflected in their care plans. The participation strategy and the plans to form a Children in Care council and reform the Care Ambassadors group, will ensure that child's views are better captured and considered at a strategic level.

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

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:

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	15 June 2022
Title:	Participation Strategy
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Kavitha Maxy, Service Development Lead & Principal Social Worker

Email: kavitha.maxy@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

This is a covering report to the Children and Families Branch Participation Strategy 2022-2025.

Recommendation(s)

1. To note the contents of the Participation Strategy 2022 – 2025.
2. To take particular note of the governance of the strategy, specifically, the roles and responsibilities of the Corporate Parenting Board as laid out within the strategy.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to give members of the Corporate Parenting Board an overview of the Participation Strategy 2022-2025 which has been signed off the Children and Families branch management team in April 2022.
4. The previous strategy was in place from 2018 to 2021 and was agreed in line with the structure, functions and delivery model for participation in 2018. The branch has transformed several aspects of how we work with children and families and the most significant change has been the introduction of the Hampshire Approach¹, which is the practice approach that is used within the Children and Families branch to deliver a strength based and family focused service to our children.
5. As part of our move to the Hampshire Approach way of working, the delivery of our core social work and statutory responsibilities focused on hearing the voice of children, young people, their families and carers in relation to their individual plans. We were determined in Hampshire to get this right and

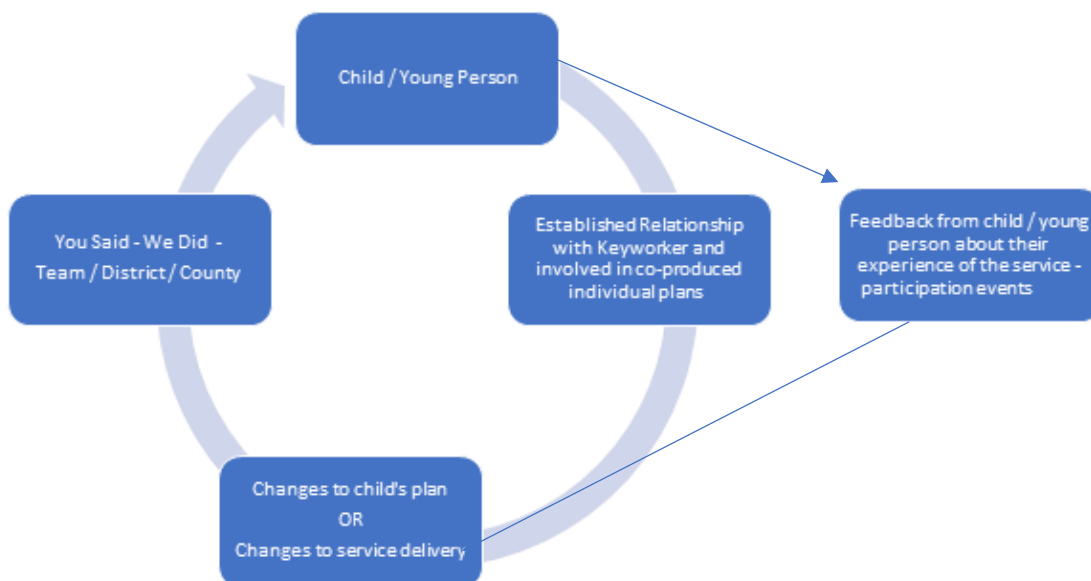
¹ See attached Hampshire Approach leaflet

consultation with children and young people has become integral to practice, processes and performance.

6. We also continued to engage with children and families, especially children we care for, and care experienced young people, through various fun and relationship building activities. These activities were prioritised when we went into lockdown in early 2020 and adapted to reflect the changes in the way we interacted and communicated with children and their families. Although the primary focus of these engagement activities was to support children and staff to build relationships and do something productive and satisfying, there were events where feedback was also gained about families' experience of receiving a service.
7. One of the main priorities in the Participation Strategy is to review our approach to the participation of the children we care for and support the set up and running of a Children in Care Council and a group for care experienced adults. We are currently consulting with our care experienced young people about the terms of reference of this group.

Contextual information

8. The Participation Strategy sets out the vision, principles, aims and benefits of participation.
9. The strategic framework clearly highlights that **all** staff in the Children and Families Branch are promoters and facilitators of participation. This is the direction in which the branch has been purposefully heading for the last 4 years and the governance arrangements make it clear that all staff, working directly or indirectly with children, understand the importance of integrating participation into their day to day work.
10. The methods of participation recognise the sea change in the way we communicate with children and families over the last 2 years, and we look to embrace technology and child friendly means of communication. The model of communication that we have adopted aligns with the advances in communication and technology, but also reflects the Hampshire Approach of shared planning and decision making.
11. The below image demonstrates the cycle of participation in both individual planning and in service improvement.



12. The governance arrangements for participation in the branch are multi-layered and reflect the business as usual model of shared responsibility and accountability. This is laid out in detail within Section 12 of the strategy. The roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children’s Services, the Children and Families Branch Management Team and the staff within the branch are clearly outlined here.
13. As part of wider governance arrangements, the Corporate Parenting Board will hold the Hampshire Children and Families branch accountable against its strategic priorities, through robust scrutiny of the delivery of these priorities for children in our care and care experienced young people. They will do this in partnership with children and young people who receive a service from the department.
14. A Participation Action Plan sits under the strategy and is reviewed every 6 months. This action plan is driven through the strategic leads for services, and they remain accountable for monitoring how well participation is embedded in their service.
15. The strategic lead for Participation will use the agreed evaluation mechanisms detailed in the strategy to understand the effectiveness and impact of our participation work. A ‘you said, we did’ approach will be taken with an emphasis on giving feedback to those we consult and celebrating success with staff and children and families.

Finance

16. There is an agreed central budget for Participation which is £14,000 per year. This will be used by the branch for agreed participation activity.

Performance

17. The Participation Action Plan will be tracked within the Quality Improvement plan (QUIP) which is a business as usual process for the branch. Strategic leads will be accountable for their performance measures on participation.

Consultation and Equalities

18. This will be considered within all the activities undertaken and the section on Inclusion in the Participation Strategy reflects the commitment of the department to ensuring all voices are heard and responded to.

Conclusions

19. The Participation Strategy is ambitious and requires political, strategic and operational commitment in order to ensure its successful implementation. The action plan rightly sets high expectations of leaders, managers and staff to prioritise listening to and acting on the views and wishes of children.

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Links to the Strategic Plan

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Children and Families Participation Strategy

2022-2025

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Vision
3. Principles of Participation
4. Aims
5. Benefits of participation
6. Strategic Framework
7. Inclusion
8. Methods of Participation
9. Model of Participation
10. Participation of all Children and Young People
11. Participation of children in our care and care experienced young people
12. Governance
13. The roadmap - Accountability, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

1. Introduction:

Hampshire Children and Families branch is aspirational for the outcomes of all our children and young people. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that all children, young people and families receiving a service from children's social care in the Children and Families Branch, are listened to and involved in the decisions that affect their lives and more widely, have an active involvement in shaping the delivery of services we provide to children and young people within Hampshire Children's Services and beyond. Improving outcomes for children and young people as set out within the Hampshire Children and Young People's Plan is a central priority for our work.

This will be achieved through the promotion of meaningful participation of all children and young people and the Rights, Respect and Responsibilities (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child), to help children and young people to become responsible citizens, understand and promote their own rights and responsibilities and respect the rights of others.

Every child has the Right to be Heard (The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child, article 12 states). The voice of children and young people is a fundamental element which must remain at the heart of service delivery and development in order to provide a needs-led and aspirational service to our community.

We are continuing to strengthen our organisational culture, where participation and engagement of children and young people is embedded within practice and is the golden thread through all levels of service development and delivery. This requires continued departmental and corporate commitment. The department is responsible for equipping the workforce with the skills and knowledge needed to ensure that the views of children and young people are heard and make a difference through training, reflective supervision and outstanding leadership and management.



2. Vision

All children and young people have the opportunity to participate in decisions which affect the lives of children and families in Hampshire, and we will listen carefully and act on what they say will change and improve their lives.

3. Principles for Participation in Hampshire Children and Families

“The ‘right’ of all children to have their opinions taken into account when decisions are being made that affect them” – Unicef

The following principles form the foundation of the Participation Strategy:

- 1. Participation is driven by the needs of children, young people and families.**
- 2. All children and young people should have an equitable opportunity to participate, and we recognise our responsibility to provide additional support for those that need it.**
- 3. Children and young people’s participation is based on a properly resourced framework, that implements the ‘you said, we did’.**
- 4. Hampshire County Council recognises the importance of positive relationships as a stepping stone for effective participation which will bring mutual benefits for children, young people and service providers.**
- 5. Participation requires a whole service approach, which is consistent and responsive, and where the child and their needs are in the forefront of any service improvement.**
- 6. Hampshire County Council acts as the Corporate Parent for our children and young people in care and ensures that we provide the highest standard of care.**

4. Aims

The overarching aims of this strategy are to:

1. Establish a shared vision for participation for all children, young people and families in Hampshire.
2. Champion the principle that Participation is not simply about consultation with children and young people but ensuring their views influence decision-making and bring about change.
3. Ensure that the voice of children and young people, especially those with protected characteristics, is central to all participation work.
4. Ensure that participation is embedded throughout all design and delivery of services, highlighting the benefits it brings and the opportunities for continuous improvement.
5. Set out an action plan for the development of participation across the county, that incorporates the Hampshire Approach and our strength based way of working.
6. Agree and implement a monitoring process to ensure that an outstanding service is maintained, and agreed outcomes are met.

5. Benefits of participation:

1. Children and young people have a right to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them. (UNCRC, 1998)
2. There is a consistent strategic approach to anyone under the age of 18 years and in the case of care experienced young people, we extend the age range to 25 years.
3. Children and young people have the power to influence and achieve change in their own lives and for wider service delivery, which enhances their sense of self-esteem and wellbeing.
4. Participation gives individuals the opportunity to have their say on a whole range of issues, to shape decisions and create positive outcomes and changes.
5. Participation provides organisations with an opportunity to strengthen their governance arrangements through increased democratic decision making and shared accountability.

6. Strategic Framework

All staff in the Children and Families Branch are promoters and facilitators of participation. The below framework will support the governance of the strategy.

1. **The Children and Families Management Team provide the strategic governance for the participation strategy and action plan.**
2. **The children in care council and care ambassadors (among other groups) will contribute to assuring that our participation activities meet the stated principles and priorities.**
3. **Thematic or systemic priorities are identified by the strategic leads as part of ongoing service development and children, young people and their families are informed of changes or improvements.**
4. **Teams/services will be responsible for local engagement activity and will report back through county meetings.**
5. **Staff will be provided with opportunities to consult with experts on participation.**
6. **The Children and Families Toolkit will include resources on promoting participation of children in their own plans.**

All those who work directly, or indirectly, with children or young people within the Hampshire Children and Families branch should recognise the importance of their role in integrating participation into daily practice.



7. Inclusion

One important facet of Participation is the notion of inclusivity; offer *all children and young people* the equitable opportunities to participate. To achieve the above it is necessary to focus the required resource to include groups of children and young people that are harder to engage or require additional support to allow active engagement to happen.

When planning participation programmes/activities with children and young people, it is important to ensure that this is accessible to all relevant groups of children and families, and that particular consideration and support is given to the most vulnerable groups. The vulnerable groups are identified as, but not limited to:

- children we care for and care experienced young people
- children from minority ethnic backgrounds
- children and young people in relative deprivation
- children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- children and young people in service families
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people
- children and young people who are victims of domestic abuse
- teenage parents
- young carers
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children



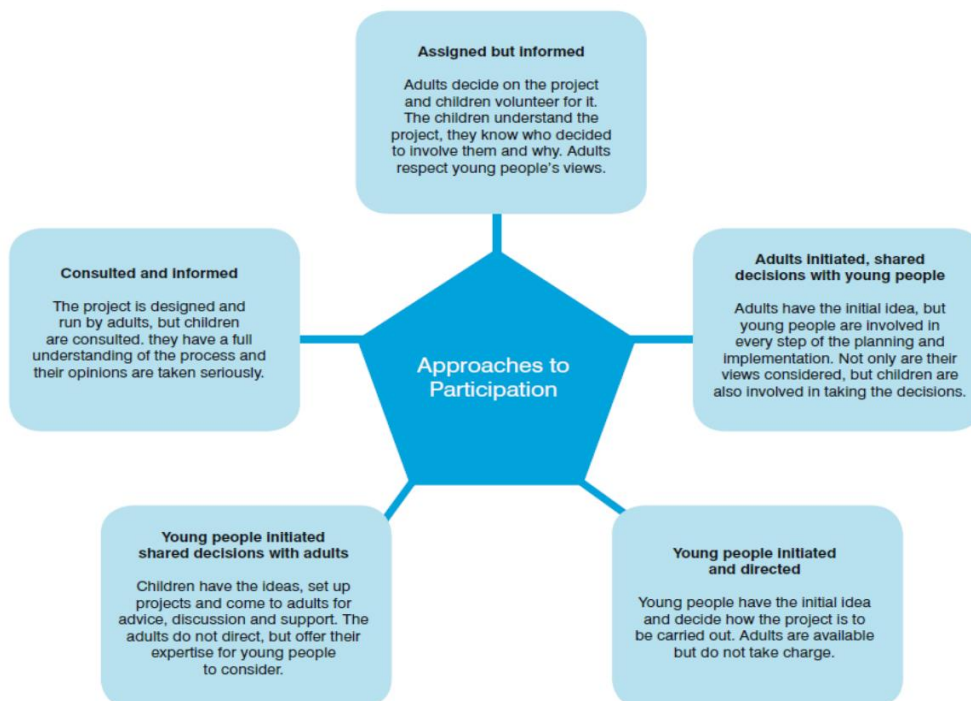
8. Methods of Participation:

Communication methods used will have an increasingly significant bearing on the successful inclusion of children and young people in participation. For children and young people, the preferred method of communication is consistently moving towards means such as social media, phone apps and websites, as opposed to letters or phone calls.

As important as the range of engagement activities/opportunities is, so too are the practicalities of letting children and young people know how, where and when they can participate. Similarly virtual participation is a way in which we can reach a larger cohort of children and young people who may not take the time to travel and participate in person but may be prepared to join in an online chat/ e-meeting or video conference. Activity days can also be used to offer practical, fun sessions with the purpose of group participation.

9. Model of Participation:

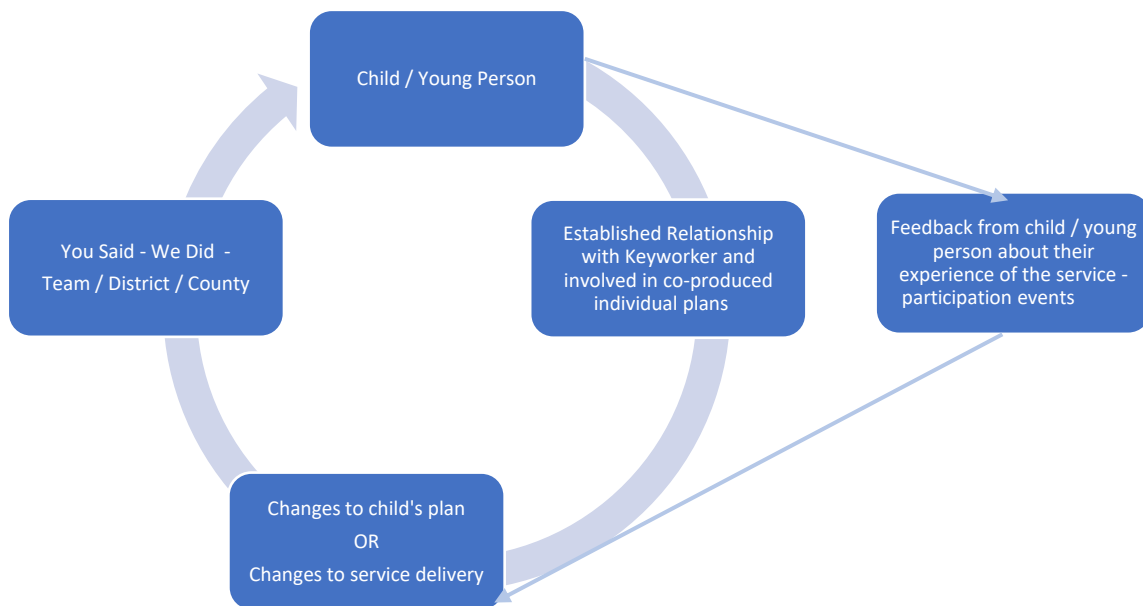
Hampshire Children and Families will use a Participation model that will incorporate one or more of the below approaches as needed, in response to children and young people's ideas and views or to the identified strategic priority.



10. Participation of all Children and Young People

Participation in their own plans - The strategy is set up using the principles of the social model¹, which recognises that societal barriers need to be actively removed in order to include all children and families. We ensure that everyone receiving a service from the department participates within their individual plans and contribute to its development and review. The purpose is to harvest the voice of children and young people through developing a trusting relationship with their workers enabling children and young people to express their views with confidence. As part of the strategy, we recognise the benefit of engagement in group activities for children and families, with people who may have had similar experiences.

Participation in planning and shaping service delivery and improvement – The strategy will cover planned participation activity that contributes to service improvement and children and families will be offered the opportunity to influence and shape the wider service delivery through defined and time limited programmes.



¹ The social model says that **people are disabled by barriers in society**, not by their impairment or difference. ... The social model helps us recognise barriers that make life harder for people. Removing these barriers creates equality and offers disadvantaged or disabled people more independence, choice and control.

11. Participation of children in our care and care experienced young people

Children in Care Council

A representative group of young people will form the Children in Care Council which feeds into the Corporate Parenting Board.

The Children in Care Council is an open group of children or young people of secondary school age, who are in our care, and they offer their views and experiences to ensure the 'voice of the child' is central in implementing change, in order to improve the experiences and outcomes for the children we care for and our Care Leavers. The Children in Care Council will hold the local authority accountable to Hampshire's Pledge for Children in Care and Care Leavers.

Care Ambassadors

Care Ambassadors will be set up by the Care Leavers Strategic Lead, to be an open group for care experienced young people who are aged 16 years and over and they, similarly to the CIC Council, offer their views and experiences to ensure their voice is heard in the shaping and delivery of support services, enabling young people to provide a positive contribution to society.



12. Governance

The governance arrangements for participation in the county are multi-layered and reflect the business as usual model of shared responsibility and accountability. This is described in detail below.

As part of wider governance arrangements, the Corporate Parenting Board will hold the Hampshire Children and Families branch accountable against its strategic priorities, through robust scrutiny of the delivery of these priorities for children in our care and care experienced young people. They will do this in partnership with children and young people who receive a service from the department.

The Corporate Parenting Board will ensure that:

- The Hampshire Children and Families branch act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people who are or have been in our care.
- The Hampshire Children and Families branch encourage children in our care and care experienced young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
- The Hampshire Children and Families branch will take into account the views, wishes and feelings of the children and young people in our care and care experienced young people.
- The Hampshire Children and Families branch helps children and young people in our care and care experienced young people to gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.
- The Hampshire Children and Families branch promotes high aspirations, and seeks to secure the best outcomes, for children and young people in our care and for care experienced young people.
- The Hampshire Children and Families branch ensures that the children and young people in our care and care experienced young people are safe, and have stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.
- The Hampshire Children and Families branch prepares children and young people in our care for adulthood and independent living.

Roles & Responsibilities of Children and Families Branch Management Team (CFMT) and Director of Children's Services.

- To oversee development of integrated planning, commissioning and service delivery, which achieve agreed outcomes for children and young people in Hampshire.
- To agree principles, overall direction and resourcing of the Participation Action Plan 2022 and future years
- To monitor progress of the Participation Action Plan 2022 (and future years) and evaluate its impact annually via the Self-Assessment, QUIP and service plan review processes.
- To promote the Participation Strategy with the departmental management team, cross department and with elected members.
- To promote the Participation Strategy across partner organisations within Hampshire and regionally.

Roles & Responsibilities of the Strategic Lead for Participation

- Review and update the Participation Strategy as needed and at least every 3 years.
- To update the Participation Action Plan every 6 months in line with the reporting timetable to CFMT.
- To conduct an annual evaluation of outcomes in relation to the participation action plan.
- Collate and analyse the learning and feedback from county wide participation activity and use this to inform service development. The vehicle for service development will be the service plans and any bespoke projects commissioned by CFMT.

Roles & Responsibilities of the wider Children and Families Management Team – District, Service and other Senior Managers:

- To agree service priorities based on the Participation Strategy, and to agree participation related actions in service plans on an annual basis.
- To secure the resource needed to achieve the outcomes outlined by the Participation Strategy and agreed by CFMT.
- To manage the delivery of the Participation Strategy through the action plan.
- To manage the impact of the Participation Strategy.
- Contribute to the annual evaluation of outcomes in relation to participation.
- To ensure the Participation Strategy is implemented across the Children and Families Branch to enable children, young people to shape services.
- To promote the Participation Strategy across local partners and district-based organisations in Hampshire.

Roles & Responsibilities of Team Managers, Independent Reviewing Officers, Assistant Team Managers and Senior Social Workers:

- To inform the relevant District/Service/Senior Manager of the level of participation across their teams and the district including feeding into the quarterly updates to the Participation Action Plan/Service Plans.
- To outline need and resources required to implement the Participation Action Plan.
- To build a programme of participation and engagement activity locally in response to what children and families are telling us.
- To monitor the activity and quality of participation across various groups, activities and engagement events led by them.
- To support the Participation Leads in teams/districts/services and receive reports from them.
- To share good practice and implement a 'you said, we did' approach to participation.
- Contribute to the annual evaluation of outcomes in relation to participation.

Roles & Responsibilities of staff working directly with children and families including Participation Leads in districts/services.

- Participation Leads to meet on a regular basis as a whole group.
- To identify participation opportunities for children and young people.
- To share good practice and implement a 'you said, we did' approach to participation.
- Work together to respond to pieces of work and agree collective approaches to projects, consultations and participatory activities / events in Hampshire.
- Implement agreed pieces of work.
- Share strengths and support each other in areas where development is identified.
- Keep managers and the Participation Strategic Lead updated on progress.
- Publicise participation opportunities to other workers through the production of regular communication to inform others of work undertaken and ongoing locally and county wide.
- Publicise participation opportunities to children and young people in locally and county wide.
- Contribute to the annual evaluation of outcomes and impact in relation to Participation work
- Benefit from learning and development opportunities in relation to participation.

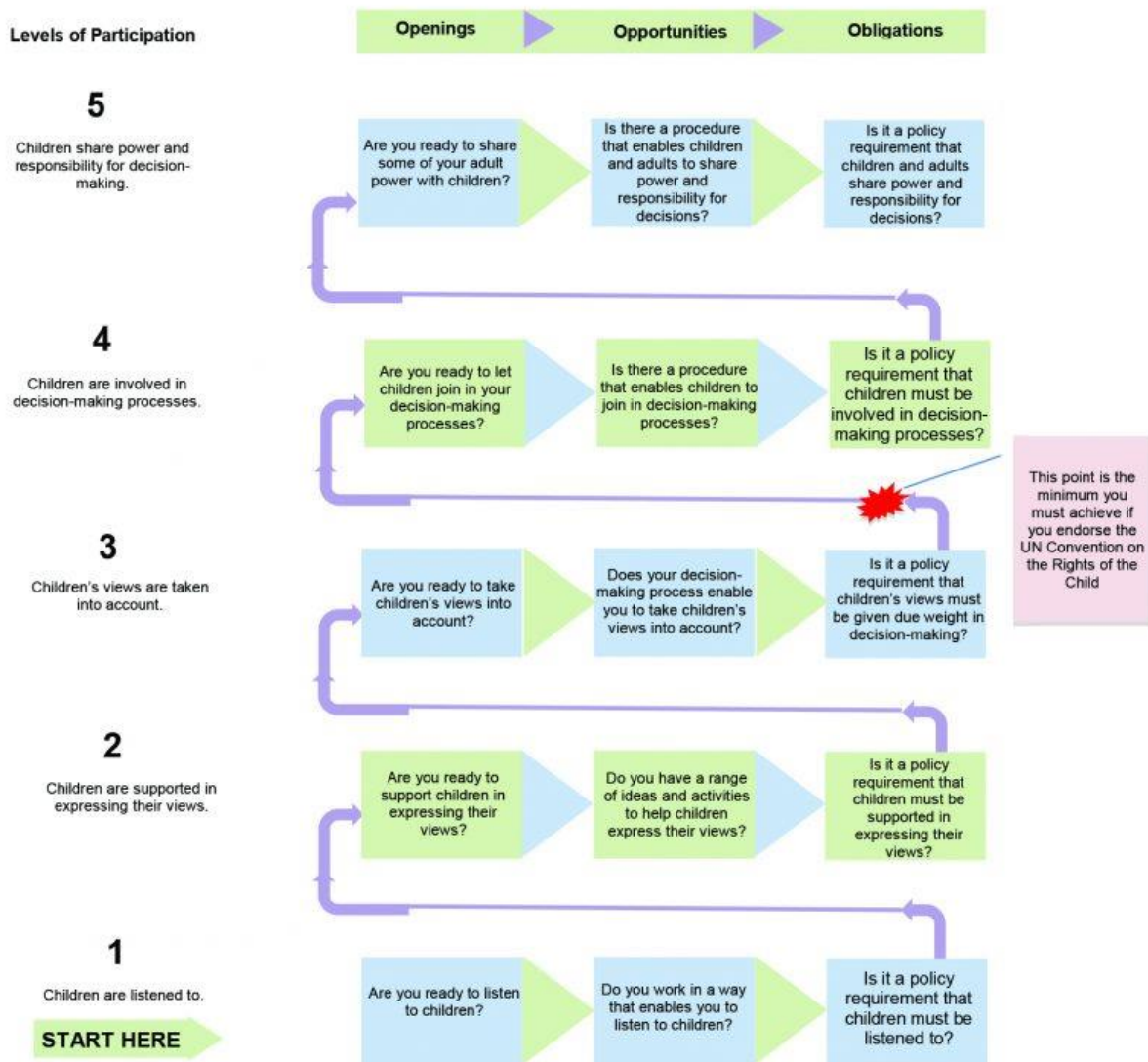
Responsibility for individual Children's plans

- SWs, TMs and IROs are responsible for creating, implementing and reviewing children's plans and listening to the voice of the child and ensuring this influences the plan. There are assurance mechanisms in place both internally (case file audits, reviews by IROs, peer inspections etc) and external to HCC (HSCP, Ofsted) that ensures this remains a priority.

13. Accountability, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement:

i. Following a consistent roadmap

The Children and Families Branch will use this roadmap in scoping, planning, delivering and reviewing the participation element of any strategic or service level activity, where appropriate. Levels 1 to 3 are well established in Hampshire and business as usual. Level 4 is continuously embedding with some areas stronger than others, for example children are involved in decision making within their My Life, My Future plans. Level 5 is aspirational, and we will try to maximise these opportunities for our children and families.



ii. Matrix of Participation - an evaluation tool

The below matrix is a particularly useful tool to encourage organisations to consider whether they are offering children, young people and families a spread of engagement opportunities, and our experience is that attempts to just provide opportunities at one side or other of the matrix is unlikely to lead to sustainable and effective youth participation which leads to positive change for young people.

In Hampshire, we have been strong for a while in involving individual children and young people in their planning and in encouraging children and young people to participate in surveys/one off events (Columns A and B). We have begun, through various initiatives (projects like Basingstoke Housing Project, Care Leavers' Week, involvement in interview panels etc.) to involve young people in time limited initiatives or peer reviews. It is known that participation methods towards the middle of the matrix are important. It is through involvement in events; in creative projects; and in short-term activities that many young people can develop the confidence to express their views and can build the networks with other young people and with supportive adults that enable and encourage them to then get involved in further participation where they could have power to make serious change happen. This type of activity will be our primary focus for the next 3 years.

		A	B	C	D	E	F
		Individual Complaints and Feedback	Surveys and one off events and consultations	Practice initiatives: time limited, focused activity	Peer activity: training, research, evaluation	Young representatives on advisory groups and shadow boards	Young people involved in governance with or without adults
L a d d e r o f p a r t i c i p a t i o n	8						
	Young person initiated shared decisions with adults						
	7						
	Young person initiated and directed						
	6						
	Adult initiated and shared decision with young person						
	5						
	Consulted and informed						
	4						
Assigned and informed							
3							
Tokenism							
2							
Decoration							
1							
Manipulation							

Useful links:

[Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers
\(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Case Study - Sarah

Sarah is being cared for by her maternal grandparents who are her connected carers, she has been known to Children's Social Care since 2008 from the age of 3 years old. Sarah's experiences both in the care of her mother and in the care of the local authority have had a deep and profound impact on her.

Sarah finds it difficult to meet with people on her own, without the safety of her grandparents being close by. This is because Sarah is highly anxious about any unknown people or even people her own age contacting her, she will not have an email address and will block any new numbers on her phone if she does not recognise them or will refuse any contact that her grandparents have not prepared her for.

Gaining Sarah's views may seem challenging but nevertheless, it is a priority for us to do so. Sarah spoke to her Independent Reviewing Officer about how we can ensure that she has a voice.....

- Provide me with information which is as clear as possible taking into account my dyslexia.
- Give me plenty of notice of any potential contact/visits so that I can prepare myself for any meetings.
- Send me feedback on what was talked about and how my views are being progressed or listened to.
- I prefer small group sessions with people/young people I have spent some time with.
- Please make contact through people I trust initially, as, if they are happy then I will be too.
- I do not like too many changes and want to be told in advance of any changes being made, as it takes time for me to digest the information.
- In order to build a trusting relationship with professionals or those who seek my feedback, please make sure that what I say is checked with me and is accurate.





Case Study - The Big Activity Week

105 young people between ages 8 to 14 years participated and covered six residential centres in August 2021. The week was extended to accommodate a larger age range across six residential centres. The young people in the eldest age range even ventured into our Hampshire County Council run Mountain Centre in Wales and had a successful residential experience. The feedback from carers and young people has been overwhelmingly positive.

A selection of feedback is below:

'...my girl hasn't stopped talking about it and took part in something that I never thought she would! She also asked me if she could go next year.'

'...our lad had the week of his life. Made new friends and took part in new experiences.'

'...I've loved being part of the BAW again this year after we missed out last year due to covid. I'm already looking forward to next year and hope we get the opportunity to go to Wales like my older brother did as he had an amazing time.'

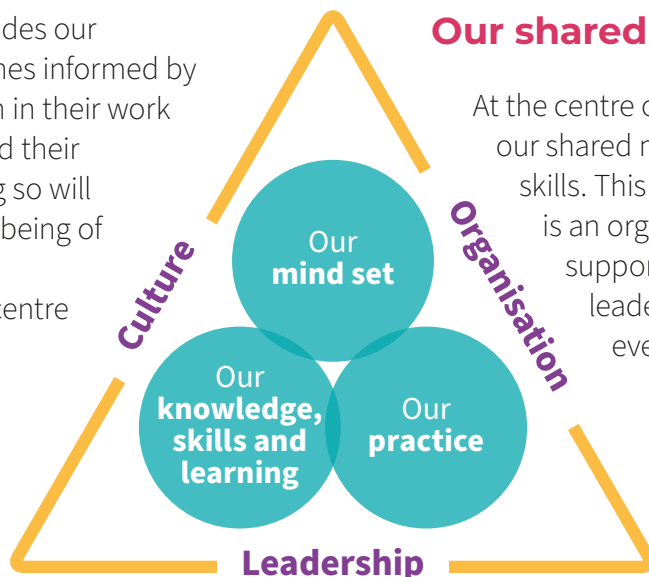
'...this is an opportunity like no other. Our children get to spend time with other children in a similar situation. it makes them feel like they are not alone. What an amazing project this is, it's impacted by 2 boys in so many ways, giving them memories that will last a lifetime.'

'...I've pencilled the date in for next year already and the children still talk about it all the time. I am so pleased this has been set up for our children. One of my boys has never had a successful residential experience with school because they cannot manage his behaviour. The staff are well trained and understand the needs of our children which is reassuring knowing they are in safe hands.'

The Hampshire Approach

The Hampshire Approach is our way of working, and a shared mindset that guides the way we work with children, young people, their families, and with each other in our organisation.

The Hampshire Approach provides our practitioners with clear guidelines informed by evidence, which supports them in their work with children, young people and their families. We envision that doing so will increase the resilience and wellbeing of the families we work with. The Hampshire Approach is at the centre of everything we do – from our meetings, conversations, how our practitioners are supported and supervised, and the policies, practices and forms we use every day.



Our shared mindset

At the centre of the Hampshire Approach is our shared mindset, our practice, and our skills. This has been possible because ours is an organisation whose culture supports the approach, and whose leadership models this mindset every day.



Five key principles underpin our way of working.

We aim:

- 1 To provide services and interventions which will improve children's outcomes in their homes and families.
- 2 To have a social work led service that is organised, consistent, responsive and draws on the expertise of various professionals and disciplines.
- 3 Create a way of working that supports our social workers to deliver meaningful and lasting change for children, young people and their families.
- 4 To provide our practitioners with an environment that promotes flexibility in practice, and one where good practice can flourish.
- 5 For children to be supported within their families and/or communities wherever reasonably possible.

We believe:

- 1 That developing positive relationships with families should be at the heart of what we do.
- 2 That everyone has strengths, and we get the best from each other when we recognise and build on those strengths.
- 3 In listening, respecting and working together with children, young people, their families or any other person who has responsibility over them.
- 4 That working to support the whole family will achieve the best outcomes for the child or young person in the long term.
- 5 That working in this way enables us to identify, respond to and manage any risks safely.

How the **Hampshire Approach** mindset is translated into practice:

To support our practitioners in putting the Hampshire Approach mindset into practice, we focus on five key areas

1 Building relationships

- A multi-disciplinary approach – bringing together professionals from various agencies is key – the practitioner who is best placed to understand the circumstances of, and work closely with the family should lead any intervention we provide. This is made possible by drawing on the skills and expertise of the other professionals working with the child and their family.
- Handovers and information sharing between the professionals are well supported and does not disadvantage the child or family. The family should tell their story only once.
- Adequate training is provided and available to our practitioners to support them in building relationships with families.



2 Strength based conversations

Strengths based working helps us to:

- Build purposeful relationships with children, young people and their families.
- Engage, empower and motivate families we work with.
- Develop realistic outcomes and goals for children, young people and their families.
- Create good plans in the delivery of services to children, young people and their families.
- Support families to build on their strengths and develop their own solutions.
- Connect families to sustainable support networks.



3 Working collaboratively

Collaborative working means that:

- Our interactions and engagement with families are not only limited to 'formal meetings' – all visits, whether at home or in the community, are an opportunity for us to work together.
- Wider family and support networks are identified at the earliest opportunity.
- Families are supported to be prepared for important meetings so that they get the best outcomes from these meetings.
- Meetings and conferences are designed to support family involvement and collaboration – this is achieved in part by thinking about when and how these meetings are conducted so that the family can meaningfully participate.

4 Understanding wellbeing and resilience

We aim to support the children, young people and families we work with to build resilience and to sustain long term positive change. Our practitioners are trained to understand and assess the factors that have a bearing on wellbeing. The strength based approaches we use to work with families including Motivational Interviewing, Solution Focused Practice and Restorative Practice underpins the journey from vulnerability to increased resilience, and provides families with practical ways to build a protective environment for their children.

5 Applying to policy, practice and interventions

Every aspect of our practice, from how we conduct our internal meetings to how we interact with children, young people and families is informed by the Hampshire Approach. This extends to our policies which provide practice direction in our work with children and families.

How can I find out more?

Speak to your Social Worker, Family Support Worker or the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) in the first instance to find out more about the Hampshire Approach and how it informs our practice. If you are a professional, please get in touch with the Project Officer on

ChildrenandFamiliesCommunications@hants.gov.uk

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	15 June 2022
Title:	Swanwick Lodge Secure Children's Home Update
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Sarah Herbert, Registered Secure Unit Manager

Tel: 01489 581913

Email: Sarah.herbert@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Swanwick Lodge Secure Children's Home.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Corporate Parenting Board note the update on Swanwick Lodge Secure Children's Home.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to:
 - provide a brief contextual background to the secure estate including specific reference to Swanwick Lodge Secure Children's Home.
 - Introduce Swanwick Lodge's new operating model and associated staffing structure
 - Highlight Swanwick Lodge's recent inspection achievements and consider next steps in the services development.

Contextual Information

4. There are 14 individually managed Secure Children's Homes throughout England and Wales, encompassing a range of services within a secure environment that support the individual needs of the children in their care. They provide placements for boys and girls aged between 10 and 17 and include full residential care, educational facilities and healthcare provision.
5. Secure Children's Homes (SCH) care for vulnerable young people in a high quality, safe and therapeutic environment. Each of the 14 homes operates with a high staffing ratio; the overarching aim is to encourage residents to develop a range of personal skills, supported by changes in behaviour and

attitude that will enable individuals to manage safely and responsibly on exit. SCH are subject to twice yearly inspection by Ofsted according to criteria within the Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF).

6. Referrals into the secure estate are coordinated nationally by the Secure Welfare Coordination Unit which acts as a single point of contact for all Local Authorities. This unit is based within Hampshire County Council and is funded via a Department for Education Grant. Data collected by this unit supports the view that the complexities of needs of the children being referred into the secure estate continues to become more complex. Referrals out strip available placements and routinely placements can not be found for all children that require them.
7. Swanwick Lodge is one of Hampshire County Council's Children's Homes and as such, benefits from the support of the wider council. Swanwick Lodge currently provides support and care for up to ten male and female young people aged between 10 and 17 years old whose behaviours present a significant risk of harm to themselves or to others (See paragraph 4.4). Placements can be provided to young people from across the country not just those accommodated by Hampshire. Young people who benefit from this provision are likely to have complex needs requiring on-going assessment, high levels of supervision, multi-agency services, and a period of stability in an environment which is conducive to therapeutic interventions.
8. Young people at Swanwick can access both an on-site school and a Health and Wellbeing Team. The integration of care, education and health, alongside excellent recreational facilities and a pleasant living environment maximises the outcomes for the young people. The integrated, needs led approach, is further enhanced by a commitment to understanding young people and working within a formulation driven, trauma informed framework (informed by The Trauma Recovery Model). This is a whole systems approach to understanding our young people, identifying underlying needs and focusing support and interventions utilising this framework. Swanwick has a strong focus on the need for stabilisation of our young people, as the essential foundation to the support we provide, achieved through consistency, relationship building and the development of trust.

Operating Model

9. In April 2022, a new operating model was agreed by the Children's Services Department Management Team. This model is focused on the development of a more commercial focus and a clearer process for managing occupancy safely and appropriately. The model is based upon the actual costs of caring for and supporting each child or young person in placement. Interim arrangements put in place in June 2021, have supported Swanwick to trial and develop its approach and ultimately move from a position of financial challenge to one where at the end of 2020/21 there was a significant surplus.

10. The new model operates by defining placements in blocks where one block equals a core offer of 1:1 supervision and additional blocks are added where higher staffing ratios are required. A 'core offer' of 2:1 support is now the baseline offer for all admissions pending further assessment. Additional elements to that offer, including specific support needs that would increase the required staffing level beyond the baseline are charged accordingly, based on increasing the care ratio.
11. The success of this model is dependent upon having a staffing establishment which meets the current and future business and care needs. The staffing establishment has therefore been increased, for Secure Children's Home Practitioners we have increased from 35 full time equivalents to 43. The services management team has also been slightly increased to ensure there is robust oversight and development of practice. Recruitment remains an ongoing challenge nationally and significant work is being completed to ensure that all opportunities to attract and retain new staff are being deployed.
12. Swanwick Lodge is currently registered as a 16-bed home, however the service plans to change its registration and Statement of Purpose of the home to reflect a reduction to 10 beds which reflects the true capacity of the home. This is due to the increasing complexity of the children being cared for and staffing establishment required to undertake that care. Remaining registered as a 16 bedded home does seem disingenuous when we know Swanwick will never be able to utilise all of those beds at the same time again.

Performance

13. On the 5 April 2022, Swanwick had its most recent full Ofsted inspection, five inspectors visited for three days. The last full inspection of Swanwick by Ofsted was in July 2021 when Swanwick was judged as 'requires improvement to be good'. The final report (See appendix A) has provided the following outcomes and identified that the overall experiences and progress of children and young people was 'Good' this took into account the following judgments:

• Children's education and learning	GOOD
• Children's health learning	GOOD
• How well children are helped and protected	GOOD
• The effectiveness of leaders and managers	GOOD
14. A significant achievement for a Children's Home but an excellent achievement for a SCH given the complexities of needs and risks presented by young people in secure accommodation. The service had previously been judged as 'Requiring Improvement' a grading that was first made in 2018 and which remained unchanged until this recent inspection. This reflected staffing and performance issues (capacity, capability and culture) and difficulties progressing the necessary improvements due to

outbreaks of Covid within the home. In this recent inspection, Ofsted rightly praised the dedicated staffing team who they recognised worked collaboratively to keep children safe, the report recognised that “children enjoy spending time with staff, who offer high levels of supervision and support”. The integrated leadership team was also recognised with inspectors commenting that “leaders and managers from care, health and education have been effective in driving forward an improvement agenda that places the children and staff at the heart of service delivery”. Everyone at Swanwick is extremely proud of its achievements and continues to push forwards to ensure this is not only maintained but also built upon.

The Future

15. Whilst everyone at Swanwick is proud of its collective achievements, we cannot be complacent. To sustain and build on the quality of care provided and the service’s financial viability we continue to focus on continual development and improvement. Areas of priority include:

- **Recruitment:** Swanwick has a number of vacancies across care and facilities. Swanwick continues to work alongside wider residential services to promote the opportunities available, ensure salaries are market competitive, provide flexibility in contract arrangements and utilise recruitment events and a focused marketing approach.
- **Staff training and development:** Swanwick needs to be supported by skilled and confident staff who can deliver a high quality of consistent care. Continued evaluation and redevelopment of induction and training pathways is ongoing. Most recently safeguarding workshops have been developed aimed at complementing existing more generically focussed safeguarding training.
- **Premises:** The Department for Education (DfE) and Hampshire County Council have provided substantial financial investment to continually improve and maintain Swanwick Lodge’s facilities. Nonetheless the building’s age and design continue to present daily challenges. The complexity of needs of children referred to the Secure Welfare Coordination Unit are often best met with a degree of physical separation from other children. Swanwick can accommodate this to an extent, however, there is a limitation to this related to the age and layout of the building and grounds. Early conversations are being held with the DFE about a potential new build secure home in Hampshire. This is likely to be a four- or five-year plan and a new location will need to be identified to ensure continuity of service.
- **Staff support mechanisms:** Swanwick is a challenging environment to work in. Whilst there are already a wide range of support mechanisms in place such as reflective supervision, management supervision, debriefing and clinical sessions, there needs to be a continued focus on ensuring this is consistently delivered to a high standard so that staff feel supported to develop resilience, reflect and develop their practice.
- **Integrated models of trauma informed care:** Ofsted recognised that integrated trauma informed care is already being implemented in many

areas across Swanwick. Continued focus is required to ensure this is maintained and opportunities to embed this further throughout the service are explored and utilised.

Consultation and Equalities

16. The contents of this report neither require consultation or an Equality Impact Assessment.

Conclusions

17. In conclusion Swanwick continues to take significant strides forwards both in terms of its financial viability and the high standard of care it provides. There needs to be a continued drive to move forwards and ensure that this progress is not only maintained but improved upon.

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:	No

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

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SC038719

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this secure children's home

This secure children's home is managed by a local authority. It is approved by the Department for Education to restrict children's liberty. The children's home can accommodate up to 16 children, who are aged between 10 and 17 years.

The secure children's home provides accommodation for children placed by local authorities under section 25 of the Children Act 1989.

Admission of any child under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who is under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

The commissioning of health services in this home is the statutory responsibility of NHS England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Education is provided on site.

The acting manager has applied to Ofsted to be registered.

Inspection dates: 5 to 7 April 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
Children's education and learning	good
Children's health	good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good

The secure children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/10/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/05/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff vacancies and absences through the period the COVID-19 have presented major challenges for the home. However, the decision to limit admissions has gone some way to reducing an over-reliance on agency staff and improving the overall continuity of care. At the time of the inspection, there were five children living in the home.

Managers recognise that it is important to get admissions right. Information about each child is used to formulate multidisciplinary plans and risk assessments that are shared with and implemented by care, health and education staff. As a result, children benefit from a highly individualised and needs-based approach to helping them to stay safe and make progress relevant to their individual starting points.

Staff work exceptionally hard to break down barriers and build positive and secure relationships with the children. They use these relationships well to make children feel safe and enable them to express, better understand and regulate their emotions. Staff are creative and are constantly adapting their approach to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children. Over time, children are making small but significant strides forward. A parent said, 'The home is a perfect fit for [name of child]. Staff have taken the time to get to know [name of child] and know how best to support her. Although slow, [name of child] is making good progress.'

Children enjoy spending time with staff, who offer high levels of supervision and support. It was a pleasure for inspectors to see lots of examples of children seeking out staff and engaging in positive educational and recreational activities, including a competition and quiz that involved all children, staff and managers. This is a weekly occurrence and gives the children an opportunity to spend time with staff from each discipline in an informal and fun way, developing their interpersonal and teamwork skills as well as building their tolerance of being with others.

Key working and reflective conversations are used to enable children to become more self-aware and develop coping mechanisms that will help them going forward. Staff are patient and determined in their efforts, overcoming adversity to influence positive change. However, inconsistent recording means that staff are not always evidencing how they have contributed to the small but significant increments of progress that children make.

There is a good focus on preparing children for leaving the home. Opportunities for children to develop basic life skills such as cooking, menu planning and budgeting are readily available. Mobility is used well to enable children to spend time in the community as well as visiting potential placements. For one child, this has been purposeful in enabling her to return to her school in the community, in advance of her leaving the home.

Strong multi-agency working ensures that children are supported to move out in a planned way. Staff work in partnership with the placing authority to identify the right placement and other support that the child may need when they leave.

Staff recognise the importance of children maintaining relationships with family members and other people who are important to them. The quality and safety of contact are considered as part of the care planning process, and arrangements are changed when appropriate. This ensures contact is purposeful and safe.

Children's education and learning: good

Managers have successfully broadened and enhanced the learning curriculum. They now offer a varied and flexible timetable that better meets the children's needs, supporting them to achieve their individual learning goals and preparing them more effectively for their next steps. However, managers correctly recognise that they need to fully integrate life skills, independent living skills and digital skills into the wider curriculum and work of the home. Although it is expanding, the range of subjects in which children can gain accredited qualifications remains relatively limited.

Teachers assess each child's prior learning accurately and use this information well to provide a bespoke learning package. Teachers are well informed about the specific needs of individual children and are highly responsive, adapting their teaching to suit the ever-changing environment in which they work. They support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities well. SENCo support is provided by a qualified and specialist member of staff from the local authority.

When children are not yet ready to learn in a formal way, teachers have successfully developed creative and often unconventional ways to engage the child in activities that are not immediately recognisable to them as learning activities. As a result of this approach, children have developed new skills and knowledge and have achieved qualifications.

Managers have introduced a trauma recovery model throughout the home and the school. This has significantly improved the children's introduction to education and the ongoing support that they receive. Education staff work closely with health and care staff to help children with the most complex needs and traumatised lives to settle and engage in learning.

Teachers and personal tutors monitor the progress individual children make and share this through progress monitoring and weekly staff meetings. They maintain detailed learning plans for each child and a chronology of their significant progress milestones and achievements. However, they do not yet capture in sufficient detail the incremental steps made by those children who have the greatest distance to travel.

Education staff are well qualified and have the necessary expertise and experience to work with children with highly complex and challenging needs. Staff benefit from a supportive peer environment where the sharing of good practice is the norm.

Children develop their knowledge and understanding of difference, the wider social context, the community and their own health and well-being. Education and health staff work together effectively to deliver health promotion sessions, for example sessions on sexual health and relationships.

Children have access to impartial careers advice and guidance on a fortnightly basis from a well-qualified and experienced adviser. When they are ready, children can access work experience and taster sessions.

Since the last inspection, the number of children refusing to attend school has reduced. Managers have improved the accuracy with which they record the involvement of children in education and learning activities. They have adjusted the threshold at which each child triggers a positive attendance mark, to better reflect their personal journey and complexity of need.

Children recognise and appreciate the support they receive. They can identify the progress they are making both socially and academically and they recognise the progress they have made since they first arrived. They are proud of what they have achieved.

Children's health: good

The well-led multidisciplinary health and well-being team works hard to improve the physical, mental and emotional well-being of the children. The children's health assessment tool (CHAT) process is used to identify the specialised care and support required to meet a child's needs when they arrive at the home. Any assessments performed outside of the timescale are rationalised to prioritise emotional care and support for the child. However, there is an unnecessary delay in some aspects of the primary care assessment due to the availability of the contracted GP service.

A comprehensive formulation is completed for each child. Children are supported with their mental health through a range of tailored interventions that meet their unique and individual needs. They are provided with opportunities to have a voice and express their needs and explain what is important to them and why.

Caring and dedicated healthcare staff know the children extremely well. They provide good compassionate support to meet each child's individual needs and keep them safe. Staff work hard to gain the trust of children, seeing them daily and giving them a positive learned experience of working with healthcare professionals.

The occupational therapist works with children from a sensory perspective to aid emotional regulation. This helps children to better cope with challenging situations occurring in everyday life and helps them to improve their mental health and emotional well-being. The well-equipped sensory room provides a therapeutic calm

environment that helps children improve their visual, auditory and tactile processing, as well as fine and gross motor skills.

Apart from the contracted community GP service, children have good access to both primary and secondary health services when required. There is a good emphasis on age-appropriate immunisation and vaccination cover. Pathways are in place to support children with their dental and optical needs. Medicines administration is safe and effective, with good oversight from the health and well-being team.

All health staff receive regular managerial and clinical supervision with good access to training to aid personal development and enhance knowledge and skills. Staff say that they are well supported by managers and are motivated and passionate about their roles.

Children's health needs are considered and planned for when they return to the community. Comprehensive discharge summaries are prepared and shared with healthcare services in the community. This ensures that children can continue to access good levels of health support when they leave the home.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

A child-focused and well-coordinated team around the child approach means that everybody is working collaboratively to keep children safe. Close working relationships between care, health and education promote a consistent approach to risk management and the messages delivered to the children. This is particularly relevant for those children whose learning and communication needs are compromised by past trauma.

Detailed support plans and risk assessments are trauma-led. Risk assessments are written in clear concise language and are reviewed following each incident. Attention to detail makes sure that staff are fully aware of and understand each child's risks and vulnerabilities, their triggers and the strategies to lessen risk-taking behaviour. This includes environmental factors in both the home and community, such as the risk of exploitation or going missing. This is useful in terms of mobility and transition planning.

Staff are providing good care for children who have suffered significant trauma in their lives. Multidisciplinary formulation meetings are used effectively to develop plans and interventions that focus on stabilisation first, and then using a small steps approach to influence change.

Inspectors reviewed several incidents of physical restraint using closed-circuit television. Staff responses were seen to be proportionate to the level of risk, with an obvious focus on the use of de-escalation techniques to minimise the need for restraint. When de-escalation was unsuccessful, approved holds were used with minimum force in a calm and caring way. Managerial oversight and monitoring are apparent at every level and the quality of written records is good.

Single separation and managed away are carried out in accordance with regulations. Records and closed-circuit television demonstrate the rationale and justification for such measures of control, with senior staff and managers at the forefront of overseeing all stages of the intervention.

The manager comes from a safeguarding background and has high expectations of her staff. She is working hard to develop a culture where staff can be critical of each other as a means of improving staff practice. Systems have been introduced to enable staff to highlight low level concerns that on their own mean little, but in the larger picture may mean a lot. This is work in progress, but the early signs are positive.

Managers are proactive in their response to safeguarding concerns and allegations. Swift action is taken to manage the immediate risk and information is quickly shared with the relevant safeguarding professionals. Investigations are thorough and well-coordinated. The designated safeguarding officer expressed a confidence in the home's commitment to safeguarding children and improving practice. The designated safeguarding officer said, 'Lines of communication are much improved with the new management in place.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a much-improved multidisciplinary approach to service delivery. Leaders and managers from care, health and education have been effective in driving forward an improvement agenda that places the children and staff at the heart of service delivery.

Collectively, leaders and managers demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the progress already made, and further improving standards of care. They have a clear vision of what they want to achieve and continue to use the home's improvement plan as a live document that is frequently reviewed and added to.

It is fair to say that staffing has presented significant challenges over the past year. Staff vacancies and absences brought about by COVID-19 have meant that at times staffing arrangements have been fragile. Efforts to improve the staffing situation are ongoing. For example, a creative recruitment drive and changing the staffing structure to improve management support on the units is having a positive effect. Going forward, and if approved, the implementation of the revised staffing model which is based on individual needs rather than occupancy can only strengthen things further.

Managers and staff are working hard to develop and embed a trauma-informed approach. The trauma recovery model is used to train all staff and help develop an integrated centre-wide approach to supporting the children to feel safe and improve their emotional health and self-esteem. The progress made in this respect could be seen throughout the inspection. For example, staff were seen patiently supporting children to maintain a positive routine, as well as helping them to stay safe and

regulate their emotions. This support was unconditional and highlighted staff persistence and resilience when responding to complex and often challenging behaviours.

Health staff offer regular clinical supervision for staff. This is an opportunity for staff to reflect and to rationalise the challenges of their work, and is an essential part of building resilience, in line with the 'Secure Stairs' model. However, staff do not receive regular practice-based supervision and a large majority of performance appraisals are outstanding.

Plans are in place to improve the range of training that is available to staff. Managers recognise the importance of extending the training offer beyond the mandatory requirements, which have continued to be delivered throughout the pandemic. Opportunities for more purposeful face-to-face training are being developed, including targeted workshops on topics such as record-keeping and recording.

Managers have high expectations of staff. A broad range of systems are used well to quality assure staff practice and ensure the safe implementation of each child's plan. Reflective practice is developing and supports everyone to recognise where improvements can be made.

Working relationships with partner agencies are used effectively to promote a team around the child approach. Feedback from professionals is extremely positive, with them recognising the benefits of their children spending time at the home. One professional said, 'Despite the many challenges and complexities at the start of the placement, [name of child] is now in a position where she no longer needs secure.'

The home's statement of purpose has not been updated since April 2021 and does not provide accurate information about the management arrangements or the current staffing model.

What does the secure children’s home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, the Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the ‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met. (Regulation 10 (1)(a))</p> <p>Specifically, review the effectiveness of the GP service level agreement to ensure that it meets the needs of the service and the children living in the home.</p>	12 May 2022
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (4)(a)(b))</p>	12 May 2022
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c))</p>	12 May 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they more fully integrate life skills, independent living skills and digital skills into the wider curriculum and the work of the home, expanding their accredited qualification offer to include these subjects. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 29, paragraph 5.18)

- The registered person should ensure that the incremental steps made by those children who have the greatest distance to travel are captured and celebrated to reflect the progress they are making in their social, personal and academic development. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'.

Secure children's home details

Unique reference number: SC038719

Provision sub-type: Secure Unit

Registered provider: Hampshire County Council

Registered provider address: Hampshire Council, 3rd Floor, Elizabeth II Court North, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG

Responsible individual: Kieran Lyons

Registered manager: Post Vacant

Inspectors

Paul Scott, Social Care Inspector

Debbie Holder, Social Care Inspector

Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector

Judy Lye Forster, HMI FES

Gary Turney, CQC Health and Justice Inspector

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	15 June 2022
Title:	Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Children in Care Provision
Report From:	Rachel Walker, Operational Director, CAMHS, Specialist, Learning Disability/Neurodevelopmental Services

Contact name: Lao Cooper, Head of Service - Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

Tel: 0300 304 1091

Email: lao.cooper@spft.nhs.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to introduce a presentation update to the Corporate Parenting Board of the work priorities of the Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service in relation to Children in Care.

Recommendation(s)

2. The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to consider the report and accompanying presentation and note the priorities for the Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service in relation to Children in Care.

Executive Summary

3. The presentation seeks to highlight the priorities of the Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service in relation to Children in Care.
4. The Virtual Children in Care Team in Hampshire work from within 7 locality based community CAMHS teams across Hampshire to ensure that the mental health needs of Children who have a Care Experience, are best supported locally to where the young person lives.
5. The Hampshire CAMHS Children in Care team use a trauma informed approach. The framework used to understand presenting difficulties in the young people referred is "what has (and still often is) happened to you" rather than "what is wrong with you". This is the starting point of any assessment and consultation.
6. The clinical model adopted by the Hampshire CAMHS children in care virtual team means we continue to focus on increasing understanding, knowledge

and confidence of the professional network.

7. During 2022/23 there is an opportunity to work with partners to further develop the Hampshire CAMHS Children in Care model and expand the current service provision. The presentation provides an overview of the principles and service provision proposed and the steps to be undertaken in 2022/23 in order to agree the service model and financial envelope for implementation in 2023/24, subject to Commissioner approval.

Contextual information

8. Across Aldershot, Basingstoke, Winchester and Test Valley, New Forest, Eastleigh, Fareham and Havant, the Service employees 6.11 whole time equivalent Children in Care Clinicians and a lead Children in Care Therapist.
9. The need to collaborate across agencies is paramount; particularly carers, social workers and education, to be able to build a working assessment about the needs of the young person and how they are best met. Whilst often the presentations are very risky and include self-harm, low mood, anxiety and challenging behaviours for carers, the umbrella behind all these is usually developmental trauma.
10. The trauma model adopted by the virtual Children in care team is based on rethinking specialist and liaison services for young people who have experienced adversity or trauma, Dr Nick Hindley and Dr Carmen Chan. It is highly unlikely when working with young people with complex difficulties who may have experienced significant adversity, that a single intervention or agency will provide a single solution. In general, complex situations require complex solutions and good cross-agency collaboration focussed on achieving consensus is likely to have the most productive results. This requires a specialist service to recognise and consider the dynamic interplay between a young person, their family, and their social environment.
11. Equally, grounded in the first phase of any trauma-informed intervention with young people, should be the development of a sense of safeness and stability that clearly takes into account the child's hierarchy of need. The importance of joint consideration of ecology and hierarchy of need is fundamental and underlines how important more general consideration of factors such as physiology, safety and social needs may be before more complex needs such as self-esteem and self-actualisation can be addressed.
12. As a result, it is often the case that recommendations involve a focus on core needs and strengths which can be provided by professionals already involved with the child (as long as they are reassured that a specialist service will continue to support them and will become more directly involved if needed). This is a key issue for the credibility and perceived usefulness of a specialist service: a service which provides advice and consultation alone without demonstrating a willingness to become more directly involved in cases when the need arises is unlikely to foster confidence or contain anxiety within

professional systems.

13. In recognition of the above, the Service has been working to develop a model which has expanded capacity to meet the above considerations. The expanded model will continue to be based upon a trauma informed approach, using the best available clinical evidence, and be developed in accordance with the THRIVE framework (*Wolpert, M., Harris, R., Hodges, S., Fuggle, P., James, R., Wiener, A., McKenna, C., Law, D., York, A., Jones, M. and Fonagy, P. (2015) THRIVE elaborated*).
14. The THRIVE Framework is an integrated, person centred and needs led approach to delivering mental health services for children, young people and their families. It was developed by a collaboration of authors from the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust.
15. With additional capacity, there will be greater opportunity to increase the support available to partner agencies, and re-balance the focus of work away from responding to escalating crisis'.
16. The business case is in the final stages of being developed and we will engage and consult with partners prior to formal sign-off from Commissioners. This will take place during 2022/23.
17. The proposed model will increase the capacity of the children in care service from 6 WTE to 26 WTE and, subject to approval from Commissioners, will be implemented from 2023/24.
18. The expanded Service would have the capacity to deliver circa 1,000 contacts per month, not inclusive of the additional capacity created for advice, consultation, training and other activities not directly associated with individual referrals.

Finance

19. There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

Performance

20. The service received 398 in 2021/2022 for children in care. This is a 4% increase on 2020/21. However, in 2019/2020 the service received 136 children in care referrals, representing a 66% increase from 2019/2020.
21. The total number of contacts attended by children in care in 2021/22 was 6,282. This is a 11% increase on 2020/21. 476 children in care were seen at least once in 2021/22.
22. The total number of assessments undertaken for children in care in 2021/22 was 123. The average waiting time from referral to assessment was 16

weeks. Of those currently waiting, the average waiting time is 18 weeks.

23. Total first treatments in 2021/22 was 163. The average waiting time from referral to treatment was 26 weeks. Of those currently waiting, the average waiting time is 54 weeks.
24. Waiting times for initial assessment and treatment continue to be a significant challenge for the Service. The proposed service model described above will support increasing the available capacity for the Service, enabling a greater opportunity to respond to all levels of need within the THRIVE framework.

Consultation and Equalities

25. In preparing this report, due consideration has been given to the statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. No adverse impacts have been identified as a result of the information contained within this report.
26. Engagement with key partners is planned in relation to the proposed children in care model, which will be undertaken during the 2022/23 financial year.

Other Key Issues

27. There are no other key issues identified.

Conclusions

28. Adopting a trauma informed clinical model enables the team to use available resources effectively to target the widest audience of professionals in a systematic way.
29. The virtual team continue to offer a model which focuses on the first steps of the care pathway and the provision of information, advice, consultation and training.
30. Resources for the Children in Care virtual team continues to be a challenge. During 2022/23 there is an opportunity to work with partners to further develop the Hampshire CAMHS Children in Care model and expand the current service provision, subject to approval. It is hoped that this model will be developed, consulted upon and agreed by April 2023.

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

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:

- 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*

WELCOME

HAMPSHIRE CAMHS, CHILDREN IN CARE

Lao Cooper, Head of Service
Sarah Matthews, Lead Children in Care Therapist

 [@HANTS_CAMHS](https://twitter.com/HANTS_CAMHS)

 [@withoutstigma](https://twitter.com/withoutstigma)

What will we cover today?

An overview of the Hampshire CAMHS Service and in particular the **Children in Care** provision.

An overview of the **planning approach** taken, since March 2020, in responding to increases in demand for children's mental health services.

Performance metrics in relation to the **Children in Care** Provision.

The **successes** and **challenges** in relation to the Children in Care provision.

An overview of the future **proposed clinical model** in relation to the Children in care provision and next steps.



Our service

In 2021/2022 our service:

Received **11,657** referrals

Started treatment with **2,725** young people

Completed **4,087** initial assessments

Offered **104,661** contacts

Average open caseload of **9,274**

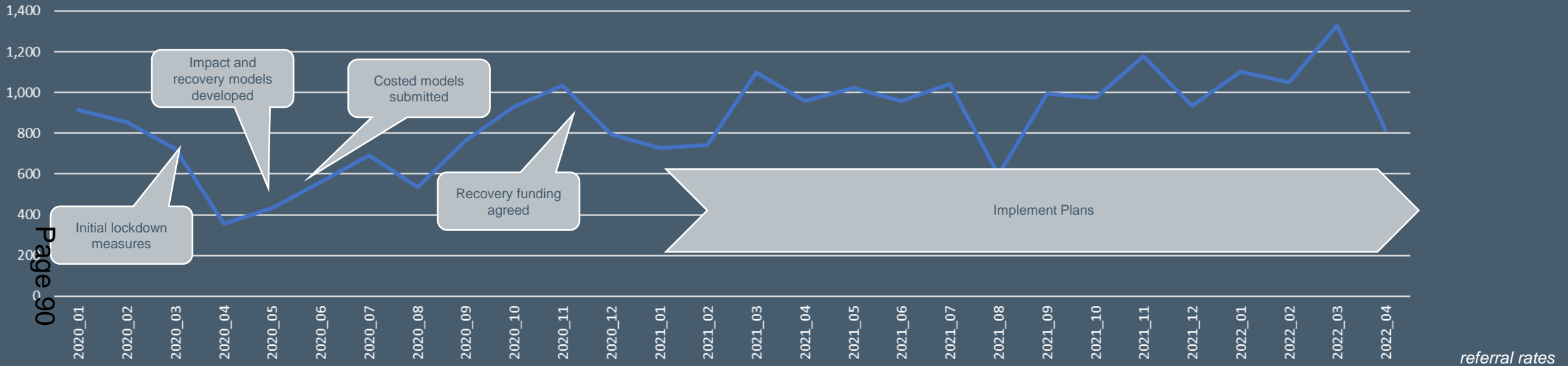
Hampshire CAMHS is provided by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

The Service has 413 WTE clinical and administrative staff. There are 7 community CAMHS teams, a home treatment service, psychiatric hospital liaison service, a community eating disorder service, a digital team, an early help service, which includes our single point of access and now seven Mental Health Support Teams in Schools.



Sussex Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

Timeline



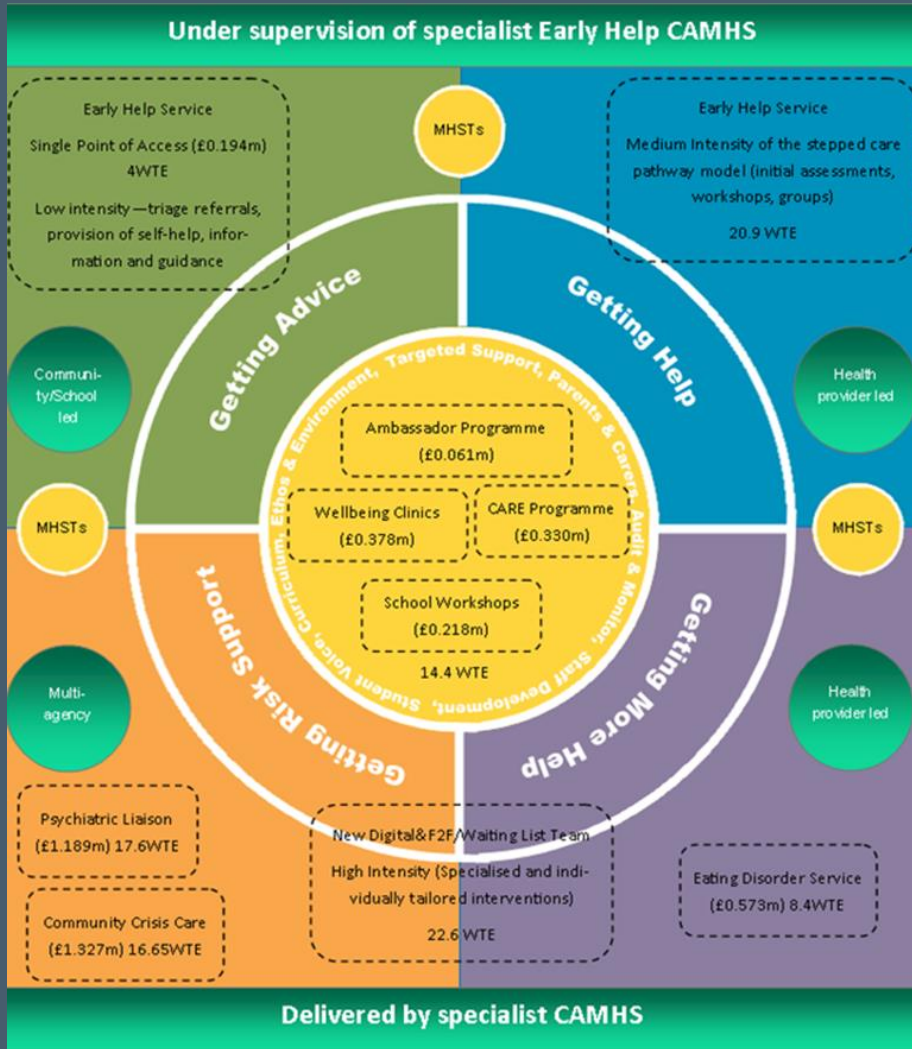
Page 90

Continue to monitor, review and support the Service throughout using our Business Continuity Framework as a basis

Our aim was to champion the rights of people with mental health problems and learning disabilities by keeping ourselves and the system focused on delivering a proactive response to the likely impacts of COVID-19 on mental health



Investment Decisions



The overall investment in 2020/21 (part year effect) and 2021/2022 onwards totals **£6.5m per annum** covering a range of areas and will ultimately increase our workforce by 100 WTE. This excludes the Mental Health Support Teams in Schools Investment.

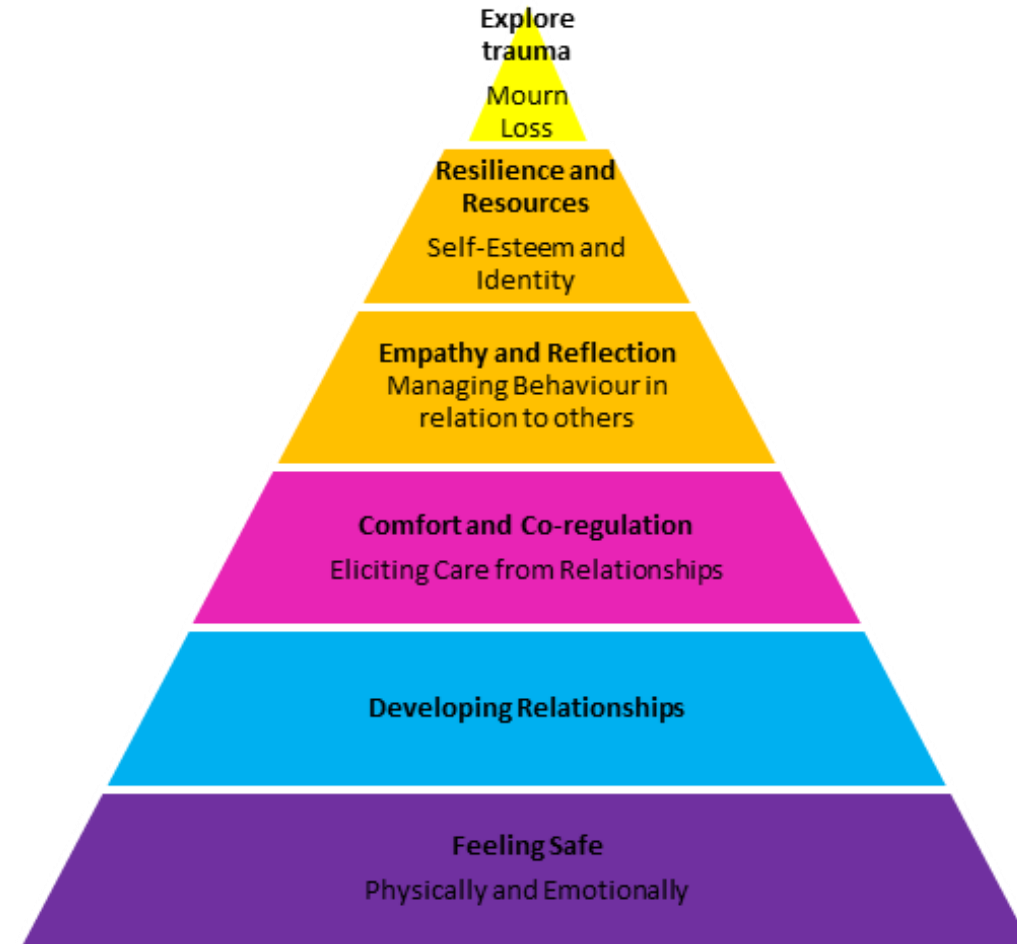
Children in Care Service

The Children in Care Service consists of 6.11 WTE, and a lead children in care therapist.

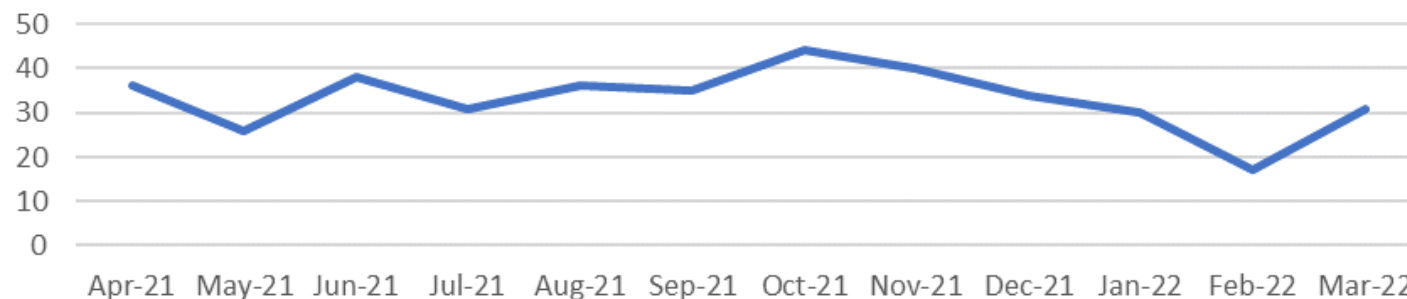
This equates to broadly one therapist in each locality based community CAMHS Team.

The clinical model is based on a Trauma informed approach. This uses Dyadic Developmental Practice Principles to underpin intervention at all levels. This model was first developed by Dan Hughes and forms the basis of the SE NHS England Clinical Guidelines for Children in Care.

Interventions are considered as multi-agency from the outset due to the impact of historic and often current trauma. This is to ensure basic needs of safety are met in the first instance.

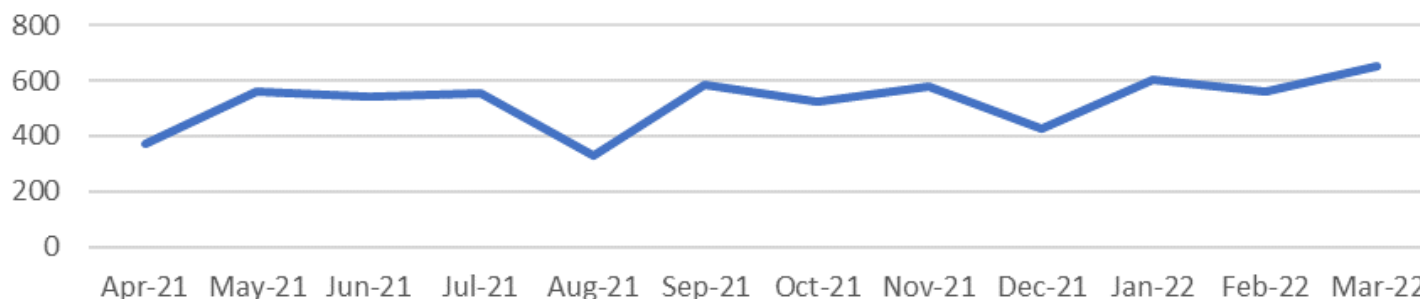


Children in Care Service



Total referrals in 2021/22 was 398. This is a 4% increase on 2020/21

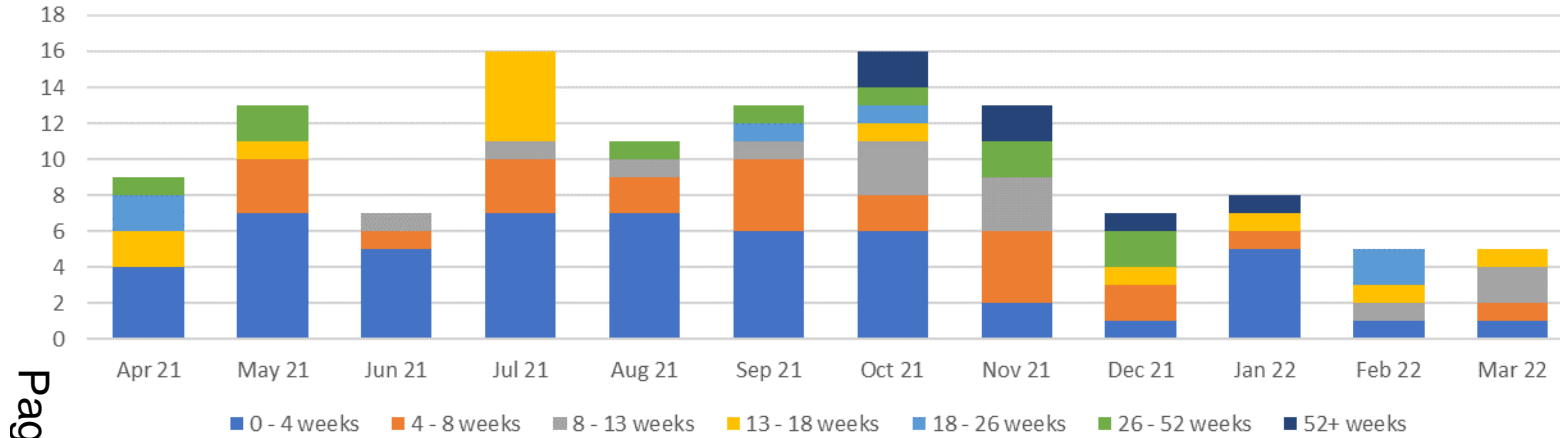
Page 93



Total contacts attended in 2021/22 was 6,282. This is a 11% increase on 2020/21. 476 children in care were seen at least once in 2021/22

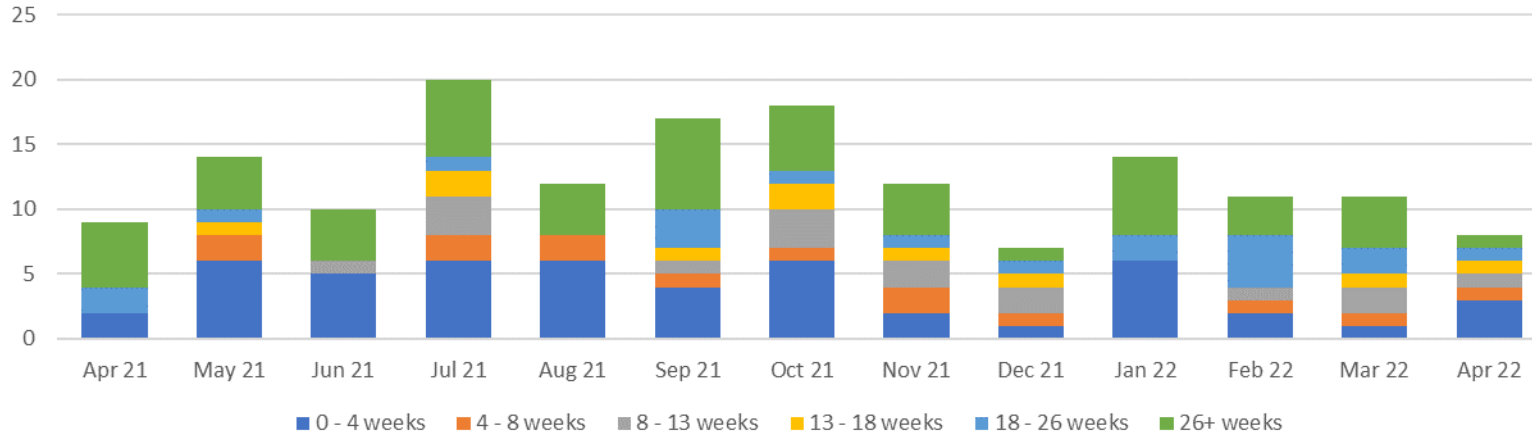
	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22
Total	370	559	539	556	328	587	525	580	425	603	560	654

Children in Care Service



Total assessments in 2021/22 was 123. The average waiting time from referral to assessment was 16 weeks. Of those currently waiting, the average waiting time is 18 weeks.

Page 94



Total first treatments in 2021/22 was 163. The average waiting time from referral to treatment was 26 weeks. Of those currently waiting, the average waiting time is 54 weeks.

Successes

Successes

- The development of a business case which is aimed at increasing access to specialist advice, guidance, assessment and intervention across the whole spectrum of need.
- Converting and running a trauma care psychoeducational group virtually during the pandemic to teach and support parents/carers how to best help the young person they are looking after to feel safe and begin to recover from their experiences. This was particularly beneficial given the isolation and pressure carers were under during this time.
- Continuing to develop, train in and offer evidence based trauma interventions that best engage a young person and their carers and affect change. This has been both face to face in clinic, schools, homes, virtually, outside and even animal assisted. Dyadic Developmental Practice has been offered county wide both and with carers and young people and has brought about stability and understanding of needs and safer communication of these often in a more timely way.
- Stakeholder meeting and consultation with a private children's home, where we were seeing an over presentation of YP in hospital, has now helped to address the issues behind this so the young people are no longer using hospital to feel safe.

Challenges

Challenges

- Increasingly complex presentations, both mental health/neurodevelopmental, with high risk, complex multi-agency planning often being across counties and often where young person is constantly moving or 'homeless' in hospital. These involve a lot of work often on a daily basis. These have often been those who have come into care after being known to CAMHS.
- Transition to adult services and Care leavers teams. Adult mental health services do not have a pathway for CIC so rarely offer support. Care Leaver PA support has sometime been sporadic from other counties and young people have been left unsupported at a vulnerable time.
- Placements: basic levels of care given, particularly in private residential settings. This has included safeguarding concerns, placement suitability and staff training and support. The young people become very risky and are seen as the 'problem' rather than seeking to help them feel safe in everyday care.
- Capacity of the children in care provision is not enough to meet existing levels of demand.

Proposed framework

There is the opportunity to seek additional funding for 2023/24 in order to expand the CAMHS children in care workforce from 6 WTE to 26 WTE.

The business case is in the final stages of being developed and we will engage and consult with partners prior to sign-off from Commissioners. This will take place during 2022/23.

The overall clinical model will continue to be based upon a trauma informed approach, but will be modelled within the overall THRIVE framework.

The THRIVE Framework is an integrated, person centred and needs led approach to delivering mental health services for children, young people and their families. It was developed by a collaboration of authors from the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust.



THRIVE elaborated framework (Wolpert, M., Harris, R., Hodges, S., Fuggle, P., James, R., Wiener, A., McKenna, C., Law, D., York, A., Jones, M. and Fonagy, P. (2015) THRIVE elaborated)

Service Capacity

With additional capacity, there will be greater opportunity to increase the support available to partner agencies, and re-balance the focus of work away from responding to escalating crisis'. This is demonstrated in the staffing and activity assumptions below:

Framework element	Total Staffing	Estimated contacts per month
Getting Advice Training and Consultation	3.78	N/A
Getting Help consultation, assessment, follow-up and stabilisation	9.79	520.6
Getting More Help specialist trauma formulation, intervention, post abuse work and multi-agency planning, current abuse and exploitation	4.11	218.47
Getting Risk Support unplanned multi-agency planning, risk support, care planning, placement breakdown, crisis support	4.33	230.01



THRIVE elaborated framework (Wolpert, M., Harris, R., Hodges, S., Fuggle, P., James, R., Wiener, A., McKenna, C., Law, D., York, A., Jones, M. and Fonagy, P. (2015) THRIVE elaborated)

Overview of provision

- Increased trauma and children in care resources
- Regular trauma consultation and supervision to social care teams (inc. fostering teams), family nurse partnership, and other professionals
- Specialist training to professionals

Page 99

- Crisis support in order to stabilise placement.
- Urgent assessment and care planning.
- Complex multi-agency planning
- S117, CETR processes
- Discharge planning for high risk cases



- Consultation with young person and network
- Trauma informed assessment
- Trauma recovery workshops
- Stabilisation
- Specialist assessment (e.g. Occupational Therapy assessments)
- Consultation to residential care settings
- DBT Groups
- Trauma care group supervision
- Specialist staff training

- Support recovery for PTSD, complex developmental and relational trauma
- Specialist trauma formulation
- Specialist intervention: DDP, EMDR, Arts Therapies, Play Therapy, Psychotherapy, Systemic Family Therapy, Clinical Social Work.
- Specialist multi-agency planning, risk management and safeguarding work
- Specialist post abuse work

THRIVE elaborated framework (Wolpert, M., Harris, R., Hodges, S., Fuggle, P., James, R., Wiener, A., McKenna, C., Law, D., York, A., Jones, M. and Fonagy, P. (2015) THRIVE elaborated)

Next Steps

- Develop business case in order to submit to Commissioners.
- Consult with partners in relation to the proposed clinical model and framework.
- Finalise business case in readiness for formal sign-off by Commissioners.
- Submit business case for funding approval in anticipation of 2023/24 financial agreement.
- Implement service model from April 2023.

Page 100



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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	15 June 2022
Title:	Virtual School Update
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Nicola Blake, Executive Headteacher of the Virtual School

Tel: 01962 835227

Email: Nicola.blake@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the services and support provided by Hampshire's Virtual School for children in care.

Recommendation

2. The Corporate Parent Board note and agree the content of this report.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to set out the services and support provided by Hampshire's Virtual School to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of Hampshire's children in care.

Contextual information

4. The Virtual School Head discharges the local authority's corporate parent role as the educational advocate for children in care. The Virtual School approach is to work with children in care as if they were in a single school, tracking the progress they make and supporting them to achieve as well as possible.
5. In 2021, the improvement seen in 2020 has been sustained in our overall GCSE results for our cohort of children in care with 33 children (25.8%) achieving grade 9-4 in English and maths, compared to 32 children (28.1%) in 2020. We had an increased number achieving the EBACC and more pupils who sat any exam, 75.8%, up from 73.7% in 2020.
6. The delivery of a high-quality personal education plan (PEP) is a key tool for promoting the educational outcomes of children in care. The PEP should cover the full range of education and development needs, outline the appropriate provision and set out the support in place for each child including the out of school hours learning. The PEP should clearly identify short- and

long-term targets, actions and timescales which will drive forward educational improvement and should set out how the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) will be used to support children's educational attainment and progress.

7. The Virtual School has a quality assurance role in relation to PEPs and must ensure they are effective, high quality and that the local authority has in place systems and arrangements to ensure they are delivered and reviewed within statutory timeframes.
8. Following the Ofsted inspection in 2019, the Virtual School Head (VSH) has planned and led work to continue to improve both our local authority wide approach to improving our PEP system and measures to drive up the efficacy of the existing system, to improve both return rates and quality.
9. The VSH led a PEP review project as a joint initiative between Children and Families and Education and Inclusion branches which was delivered by 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. Following this project, we are in the process of reviewing the model of PEP delivery in Hampshire with a view to developing an electronic PEP.
10. As a result of the project, the Virtual School increased our offer of statutory training to designated teachers (DTs) to twice termly and has introduced a follow up session specifically on writing an effective PEP to ensure we continue to strengthen practice in this area. In addition, we have planned to deliver 'lite bite' training sessions across all social work districts and will be included in the induction e-learning programme for new social work staff. The VSH has commissioned more dedicated time for the school improvement service to enable more PEP auditing and feedback to schools to be undertaken as part of our 'Corporate Parent' visits to schools.
11. The Virtual School undertakes regular PEP audits every term. The key findings and themes are then used to inform our practice, planning and priorities. The number of PEPs rated as excellent for their identification of children's educational needs improved between spring and summer term 2021. In summer term 2021, we had improved our PEP return compared to summer term 2020. During Covid, we focused our PEP auditing activity specifically on transition year groups given their increased vulnerability. We have provided additional transition training for Year 6 pupils and developed a specific resource pack project for 35 children. We also delivered emotional literacy training for 15 delegates in Early Year settings. The Advisers from the Virtual College now attend the spring and summer PEPs for Year 11 pupils to ensure that appropriate planning is undertaken to support post 16 transition.

12. The Virtual School's approach is to build capacity across schools and strengthening the role of the designated teacher is central to our strategy to improve educational outcomes. A key component is the high quality of our guidance and training on PEPs delivered to designated teachers, foster carers and social workers. This is complemented by our 'Attachment and Trauma Aware' training programme for schools.
13. The Virtual School has developed a comprehensive PEP Toolkit which helps schools to identify and understand children's unmet needs and areas of difficulty. As well as supporting needs analysis, it offers practical guidance on strategies and interventions to raise attainment. This innovative tool was identified by Ofsted as enabling key professionals to understand the reasons for lower attainment.
14. The Virtual School has developed an Education Plan for Adopted Children (EPAC) and our exemplary practice in this area has been recognised in this academic year by both the National Association of Virtual School Heads (NAVSH) who wish us to lead a webinar on our good practice and by the Rees Centre (Department of Education) who are interested in collaborating with us on a substantive piece of research on its impact.
15. One of the key statutory duties of the Virtual School Head is to directly manage the arrangements for the distribution of the pupil premium plus (PP+) grant for children in care. This should be used without delay to meet the individual needs of children as outlined in their PEP. Most of the funding is provided directly to schools to meet individual children's educational needs. The centrally retained funding is used to fund the Virtual School team, to support our training and capacity building and to support partnership working. Our work in these three areas makes a significant difference to the educational experiences and outcomes of Hampshire's children in care and the key adults in their lives as outlined below.

Virtual School Team

16. The Virtual School Management Team consists of the Virtual School Head, Deputy Head for children in care, Deputy Head for children with a social worker and three Education Advisers. The Education Advisers lead on delivering a full programme of training and support to designated teachers, social workers and foster carers which focuses on their vital role in promoting education. The Education Advisers also lead on 'Corporate Parent' visits to schools ensuring that designated teachers are supported and challenged to fulfil their statutory role.
17. The Education Officers lead the operational work of the Virtual School and are linked to social work district teams serving children in care. They work closely with social care colleagues to support timely admissions and to maintain school stability for individual children. There is a focus on monitoring patterns of attendance, children at risk of fixed term exclusion and supporting children when they face difficulties in school or transitions. The impact of

Covid has been challenging in the last two academic years. However, in the recent DfE statistical release for outcomes in the 2021 reporting year, our overall absence rate for our children in care was 0.3% lower than the national figure.

Training and capacity building

18. The Virtual School places a strong focus on providing the highest quality training for social workers, foster carers and designated teachers. This includes statutory training guidance for new designated teachers including on how to use the PEP Toolkit.
19. The well-established Attachment and Trauma Aware Schools and Settings (ATAS) programme led by the Virtual School has entered its fourth year in partnership with Kate Cairns Associates (KCA). We currently have 78 schools in Hampshire who have completed the specialist training. The fourth Cohort will be externally evaluated by the Rees Centre at the University of Oxford as part of the Alex Timpson Attachment and Trauma Awareness in Schools Programme in October 2022. The wide-ranging impact of the programme includes whole school implementation of emotion coaching to support co-regulation of children's behaviour 'in the moment,' and programmes of staff development around attachment and trauma initiated and led by designated teachers.

Partnership working

20. The Virtual School collaborates with Hampshire Futures to deliver the work of the Virtual College, the post 16 arm of the Virtual School. The proactive work of the team around the most vulnerable young people in years 10 and 11 as they transition into the post 16 has contributed to fewer young people not in education employment and training (NEET). In Hampshire in 2021, the percentage of looked after children securing a place in post 16 education was higher (97.9%) than the overall cohort (97%).
21. The Virtual School has continued to collaborate with Services for Young Children (SFYC), and this contributed to the improvement in the number of children achieving a good level of development in our last published dataset in 2019, at 51.5%. This compared with 48% nationally, as indicated by NEXUS data. We have an Education Adviser in the Virtual School with an early years' specialism who has helped us to develop a 'Virtual Preschool' model. The joint work around the training offer for year R teachers, use of the early years PEP toolkit and focus on transition into school has had a significant impact.
22. This Virtual School works closely with Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service (HIAS) and Hampshire Educational Psychology Service (HIEP) ensuring that expertise and specialism is provided in our service as needed for individual casework, school level challenge, corporate parent visits, PEP auditing and a wide range of training. We ensure that designated teachers

have access to individual consultations from Educational Psychologists every term to support them with children facing difficulties or challenges in school.

23. The Virtual School has worked in partnership with the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) to pilot an approach to provide our unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people with a language assessment and profile of needs to support their transition into mainstream school. The success of this approach led to a more formal service level agreement for 15 assessments in 2021-22 which have all been undertaken.

Conclusion

24. 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 schools, education, inclusion services and social care to ensure we adhere to corporate parent principles in seeking to promote the educational achievements of our children in care.

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
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

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:

- 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 action*

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