

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE



Wednesday, 09 September 2020

Democratic and Members' Services

Fiona McMillan
Monitoring Officer

16:00

Shire Hall
Castle Hill
Cambridge
CB3 0AP

COVID-19

During the Covid-19 pandemic Council and Committee meetings will be held virtually for Committee members and for members of the public who wish to participate. These meetings will held via Zoom and Microsoft Teams (for confidential or exempt items). For more information please contact the clerk for the meeting (details provided below).

AGENDA

Open to Public and Press

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**

Guidance for Councillors on declaring interests is available at:

<http://tinyurl.com/coc-conduct-code>

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The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee comprises the following members:

Councillor Lis Every (Chairman) Councillor Anne Hay (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Anna Bradnam Councillor Adela Costello and Councillor Elisa Meschini

For more information about this meeting, including access arrangements please contact

Clerk Name: Richenda Greenhill

Clerk Telephone: 01223 699171

Clerk Email: Richenda.Greenhill@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: 15 July 2020

Time: 4.00-5.55pm

Venue: Meeting held remotely in accordance with The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020

Present: Councillors L Every (Chairman), A Hay (Vice Chairman), A Bradnam. M Goldsack and E Meschini

Apologies: Councillor A Costello (substituted by Cllr Goldsack)

143. NOTIFICATION OF CHAIRMAN/WOMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN/WOMAN

The Clerk reported that the Children and Young People Committee had been pleased to re-appoint Councillor Lis Every as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee and Councillor Anne Hay as Vice Chair for the municipal year 2020/21 at its meeting on 26 May 2020.

143. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Adela Costello, substituted by Councillor Mark Goldsack.

144. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

145. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 15 JANUARY 2020

The minutes of the meeting on 20 July 2020 were approved as an accurate record. A paper copy would be signed by the Chairman when possible.

146. ACTION LOG

The action log was reviewed and the following update noted:

Minute 141: Children in Care Not in Education, Employment and Training – A report on this had been considered by the Children and Young People Committee on 7 July 2020. Both the report and a recording of the meeting were available to view at:

<https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccclive/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1369/Committee/4/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>

The Chairwoman commented that a number of actions had been outstanding for some time and asked that they should be cleared before the next meeting.

(Action: Assistant Director for Children's Services)

147. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No petitions or public questions were received.

148. PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE ENGAGEMENT WITH CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS AND THE FORMAT OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE

Members considered proposals for revised arrangements for future engagement with children in care and care leavers and the format of future meetings of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee. The two young people who had been co-opted to the Sub-Committee had made a great contribution to its work, but the time commitment involved was significant and it had not been possible to identify anyone willing to take this role on going forward. A focused visit by Ofsted in February 2020 had provided positive feedback, finding that the Council had made significant progress following feedback given following an inspection in January 2019. It was vital that the voice of children in care and care leavers continued to inform the Sub-Committee's work so revised arrangements were proposed which would ensure that this remained the case. It was proposed that the Sub-Committee would continue to meet six times a year. Three of these meetings would remain formal meetings open to the public. These would alternate with three informal meetings held in private with children in care and care leavers to enable direct conversations to take place. The meetings would be based on the themes of Health, Education and Placement. The informal meetings would be based around case studies to provide Members with an insight into the lived experience of the children and young people within the Council's care and enable them to satisfy themselves about the provision on offer and provide challenge to officers where necessary. Subject to the Sub-Committee's approval, this would be complimented by revised performance reporting arrangements designed to focus on the Sub-Committee's areas of responsibility and to provide clear comparative data over time (minute 151 below also refers).

If the proposed arrangements were approved there would be less formal meetings each year. In order to ensure that Sub-Committee members were kept fully informed on relevant issues between formal meetings it was proposed that briefing notes would be circulated when appropriate. A briefing form had been produced which would be circulated as appropriate when issues about which Members needed to be informed arose between formal Committees. The Chairwoman welcomed this proposal and asked that she should be copied into any briefing requests.

The timeliness and processes around health assessments were recognised as being an area of particular concern to the Sub-Committee. A working group had been set up with health service partners to look at ways of addressing this which had resulted in strong working relationships being forged. The introduction of the LiquidLogic case management system in January 2020 had also improved the process. Following some initial teething problems this was now working well and performance was improving within Cambridgeshire. There were still issues in relation to health assessments for those children and young people accommodated outside of the county which reflected the national position.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Thanked the Chairwoman for advance notice of the proposals and for involving Members in the discussion.
- Welcomed the proposals which they described as both promising and refreshing.
- Welcomed the proposed informal meetings with children and young people and asked that these should be made as accessible and inviting as possible to encourage maximum attendance. Members were clear that the time, format and location of meetings should be based on the needs and preferences of the children and young people involved and that Members would fit in with this.
- Acknowledged that it would take time to build the relationships that would be necessary for the informal meetings to play a full part in the Sub-Committee's work. An important part of this would be providing feedback on what action had been taken in the formal decision-making process in response to any issues raised during the informal meetings.
- Commended the continued inclusion of the plain language summaries at the top of all formal Sub-Committee reports to make them as widely accessible as possible. Another Member commented that they would like to see these used across all published committee reports.
- Asked how the Children in Care Council (CiCC) would be involved in this process. The Assistant Director for Children's Services stated that Cambridgeshire's children in care population was quite widely dispersed geographically which had made it difficult to ensure that everyone had an equal opportunity to take part. Work was underway to re-build the CiCC to enable wider virtual participation. The CiCC was a space specifically for children and young people and would continue to be respected as such. The informal engagement meetings with members of the Sub-Committee would work in parallel to this.
- Asked about the role of foster carers in the new arrangements and what was proposed to ensure that their voice was heard. The Assistant Director for Children's Services stated that a later report on the agenda proposed that the Cambridgeshire Foster Carers' Association (CFCA) should be invited to submit a report, via officers, to each of the Sub-Committee's public meetings and that the Chair of the CFCA should be invited to attend those meetings as an observer (minute 150 refers).
- Asked whether initial health assessments included dental checks. Officers stated that this was not the case, but that information about dental checks, optician checks and vaccinations were picked up as part of the health assessment process and that any overdue checks would be flagged with foster carers. There were though sometimes problems getting a child registered with a dentist.
- The Chairwoman suggested it would be helpful for Members to have some training in preparation for the informal meetings with children and young people. This should include clear parameters around behaviours and expectations for the meetings. The Assistant Director for Children's Services suggested that a workshop should be arranged to address this with herself, the Head of Corporate Parenting, the Lead Practice Improvement Manager and other relevant officers.

(Action: Head of Corporate Parenting)

Summing up, the Chairwoman stated that she welcomed the proposals and that the key outcome would be to achieve and evidence children and young people having a voice at the centre of the Sub-Committee's work. She wished to place on record her thanks to the Head of Corporate Parenting and her team in relation to their work in relation to health assessments.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the information within the report relating to the Participation Offer.
- b) Agree the proposed meeting changes to facilitate increasingly effective engagement with Children in Care and Care Leavers.
- c) Agree the new reporting format of a Corporate Parenting Scorecard

149. PARTICIPATION REPORT

The Participation Report provided a summary of the participation events prior to the Covid-19 lockdown together with details of the revised offer. Officers had moved quickly to provide a virtual participation offer during lockdown which included fortnightly interactive newsletters including health and wellbeing resources and competitions designed for different age groups. Children in Care Council meetings had been moved to a virtual platform with sub-groups meeting virtually on a fortnightly basis. The Covid-19 lockdown had been used as an opportunity to reset and reframe conversations with young people through looking at the Promises which the Council made to those in its care. This included looking at how adults and corporate parents could support children and young people in the transition to the new normal.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Welcomed the detail provided and the ideas reported.
- Highlighted the importance of all Members being aware of their role and responsibilities as corporate parents.
- Noted that children in secure foster care placements tended to engage with Participation events less as they no longer identified with being children in care. Officers stated that they took a pragmatic approach to participation and that opportunities to engage on a one to one basis were offered for those who preferred this to group activities.

Summing up, the Chairwoman expressed her thanks to the Lead Practice Improvement Manager and her team for the tremendous amount of work which had gone into reshaping and delivering a revised participation offer in the light of Covid-19. The Cambridge University Science and Policy Exchange would be conducting a research project on care leavers as part on its 2020 work programme and this information could usefully be fed into that.

It was resolved to comment and provide feedback on the range of consultation events and activities the Participation Service provide for children in care and care leavers.

150. FOSTER CARER REPORTING TO THE CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee considered proposals to invite the Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association (CFCA) to submit a report, via officers, to public meetings of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee and for the Chair of the CFCA or their representative to attend public meetings as an observer. They would be invited to contribute during meetings at the absolute discretion of the Chair and would have no voting rights. If agreed, this would enable foster carers to contribute to the Sub-Committee's business and allow Members to hear their views direct.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Commented that there had already been very positive informal interactions with the Chair of the CFCA and welcomed the proposal to place this on a more formal footing.
- The Chairwoman welcomed the proposal to make foster carers an integral part of the Sub-Committee's work.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve the attendance of the Cambridgeshire Foster Care Association chairperson or their representative at Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee meetings as an observer. They will be invited to make a contribution at the absolute discretion of the Chair.
- b) Agree to accept a report from the Cambridgeshire Foster Care Association at each of its meetings.

151. CORPORATE PARENTING PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Sub-Committee considered proposals for revised performance reporting arrangements. If approved, Members would continue to receive basic performance information with the option of looking at performance in relation to particular cohorts in future if that would be helpful. This would be presented in a more concise and visual format to allow key data to be easily identified and to allow trends to be readily identified over time.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Welcomed the concise digest of information, but expressed some reservations at the loss of some interpretive and narrative detail. Officers suggested that this might be usefully explored as part of the proposed workshop in advance of the introduction of the new format of Sub-Committee meetings.
(Action: Head of Corporate Parenting)
- Asked that officers look again at navigation around the diagrams so that it was clear what narrative was associated with each table.
(Action: Assistant Director for Children's Services)

It was resolved to:

- a) Note the content of the report.
- b) Raise any queries with Lead Officers.

152. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) is a statutory role which sits within the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance team. Every child in care had an IRO who assessed the quality and consistency of their child in care plan. Reviews were conducted in accordance with statutory timescales and additional reviews could be carried out by the IRO as required. The IRO had an independent relationship with each child which was separate to that which the child had with their social worker. The service was delivered by a stable and experienced staff team. During 2019/20 IROs carried out 2275 reviews and the timeliness of these remained good. The escalation protocol provided a key tool in the IRO's role in making sure care plans were progressing. This was delivered through standardised communications between IROs and the social care service regarding any concerns which were identified. As anticipated, there had been more escalations and alerts than during the previous year which was attributed to the system becoming embedded and improving responses from social care. The Assistant Director for Children's Services commented that the IRO Service had moved on significantly and discharged a valuable function.

During 2019/20 55% of children and young people attended their reviews in person. IROs would like to see this number increase and were working to make review sessions as inviting as possible. However, there could be sensitive or difficult issues to discuss so it was accepted that not all children would want to attend. IROs also discharged an important function in tracking permanence. This was defined as a child being in a settled and stable placement with a legal order in place. Good progress on this had been seen over the period covered by the report and the overall picture was an improvement on the previous year. Looking forward, the aim was to improve the way feedback on the IRO service was obtained.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Expressed thanks to the IRO team for their hard work in support of the county's children and young people in care.
- Noted that the number of escalations in the period equated to an average of more than one per child. Officers confirmed that this was correct. An escalation could relate to quite a wide variety of issues so there might be several escalations, some of which could be very minor, relating to a single child.
- Asked for more information about the caseload figures in the report. The Independent Reviewing Service Manager stated that caseloads for IROs were higher for IROs than for social workers and this reflected their different roles. National guidance suggested a caseload of between 50-70 cases and the average in Cambridgeshire during the period was 60 cases.

- Asked for more information about the reduction in the number of children in care. The Assistant Director for Children's Services stated that this reflected a reduction in the number of children coming into care during the period. This was due in part to more work being done around supporting families so that children did not need to be taken into care. There had also been greater emphasis on rehabilitating children back into their families where this was appropriate and had been risk assessed. Unaccompanied asylum seeking children tended to come into care at an older age and move through the care system more quickly which also impacted on overall numbers.
- Asked for more information about advocacy. The Independent Reviewing Service Manager stated that the IRO Service worked with the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) who provided advocates for children in care. Anyone could make a referral to the NYAS, including the child themselves, but an advocate would only work with a child if they agreed to this.

Summing up, the Chairwoman commented that Independent Reviewing Officers played an important role and that it was good to see things improving.

It was resolved to note and comment on the report.

153. SUB-COMMITTEE WORKSHOP AND TRAINING PLAN

The Sub-Committee reviewed its workshop and training plan. In relation to Item 10, a proposed briefing session on the role of the personal advisor and update on the Local Offer, the Chairwoman stated that she had been delighted by the progress that had been made in relation to identifying business mentors for young people during the Covid-19 lockdown. Ten young people had been allocated a mentor to date and the mentors included Councillor Simon Bywater, Chairman of the Children and Young People Committee. Work was already underway to identify the next ten mentors.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the workshop and training plan:

- Asked that Substitute members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee should be invited to attend future training sessions.
(Action: Head of Corporate Parenting)
- Discussed whether the Members' Seminar briefing on care leavers which had been planned for 12 June 2020 and postponed due to Covid-19 could be delivered virtually. The Members' Seminar programme had been put on hold following the Covid-19 lockdown and Members felt it would be timely to take the views of Group Leaders on whether this should re-start or if a stand-alone seminar on care leavers could be offered.
(Action: Democratic Services Officer)
- The Assistant Director for Children's Services undertook to review and revise the workshop and training plan in consultation with the Chairwoman so that it would reflect the new themes and working practices agreed by the Sub-Committee earlier in the meeting (minute 148 above refers). This would include arranging a workshop to discuss what training was needed during the next 12 months to upskills members and substitute members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-

Committee and to ensure that all councillors were fully aware of their role and responsibilities as corporate parents and to identify any relevant skills or expertise they might be able to offer. The Chairwoman would also want to work specifically with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of all of the Council's policy and Service Committees to ensure that the Council's responsibilities in relation to children in care and care leavers was taken into account across the full range of Council business.

(Action: Assistant Director of Children's Services/ Head of Corporate Parenting)

It was resolved to review and note the Sub-Committee workshop and training plan.

154. AGENDA PLAN

The Chairwoman expressed her thanks to officers for their work in response to Covid-19. She noted that, whilst the Sub-Committee had not met since January 2020, the Children and Young People Committee had been meeting monthly and had received a report at each meeting providing an update on the Council's response to Covid-19 in relation to children's services and education.

Members agreed that the next meeting on 9 September 2020 should remain a public meeting with the new practice of alternating public meetings with private informal meetings with children and young people in care coming into effect after that.

It was resolved to note the agenda plan.

Chairman
(date)

CORPORATE PARENTING
SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes-Action Log



Summary

The Action Log is a list of all of the things that people have been asked to do at earlier meetings. It is included at each meeting so that members can check that everything is being done. It was last updated on 28 August 2020.

Minutes of the meeting on 18 September 2019

117.	Young People's Participation	Nicola Curley	The Assistant Director, Children's Services stated that an Instagram Story could be produced which would outline the topics that had been discussed at the Sub-Committee meeting. The Chairman supported this as an approach.	<p>07.11.19: The Assistant Director is taking a request to the next Voices Matter panel for them to help officers think through how we can make an Instagram story of the Committee purposeful for them. Tony Darnell from the CCC communications team is involved with this work. A further update will be provided after the discussions with Voices Matter.</p> <p>25.08.20: Tony Darnell and Sika Smith (Lead Practice Improvement Manager) have met to consider this action. Given the recent decision to change the format of the Sub-Committee, it was decided that Sub-Committee and the Participation Team will need to focus on developing the relationship and link with the Children in Care Council. The informal meetings will provide a more effective and comfortable forum for children and young people to talk about what is important to them and also to hear feedback from Members and Officers on the issues they have raised, specifically on practice and service developments.</p>	Completed
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Meeting on 20 November 2019

126.	Education transport for children in care and care leavers	Kate Knight	To meet with the Strategic Education Place Planning Manager and the Lead Corporate Parenting Manager to discuss how to start collecting the necessary information now to inform future decision-making on Post-18 education transport provision.	<p>10.01.20: Joe Gilbert and Rebecca McCullen to progress this with Clare Buckingham as part of their wider work on the Local Offer.</p> <p>04.03.20: Officers are collating and costing journey information for the past three years.</p>	Completed
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				<p>The results will be presented to the Sub-Committee when this work is complete.</p> <p>24.08.20: Joe Gilbert (Local Offer PA) and Rebeca McCallum, Employment, Education and Training Coordinator have compiled the statistics of post- 18 transportation trends in relation to Higher Education for the past four years. These now need to be costed by the Education Transport Department. Clare Buckingham has confirmed that this activity will progress within her service. No further actions relevant to the Sub-Committee Action Log.</p>	
127.	Cambridgeshire County Council Guide to Corporate Parenting for Elected Members	Fiona van den Hout	The Head of Corporate Parenting stated that there was a clear process around enquiries received from councillors or MPs and that she would reflect on how best this might be presented in the guide.	<p>10.01.20: The Head of Corporate Parenting discussing how best to present this with the Complaints Team. It is likely to be provided via the monthly Members' Newsletter.</p> <p>24.08.20: Jo Shickell, Customer Care Team Manager has confirmed that the Children's Services Customer Care Team will respond to any queries from Elected Members should they wish to raise a complaint or make an enquiry on behalf of their constituents. The Children's Services Customer Care Team contact details are available on CAMWEB. Jo Shickell also confirmed in January that Dan Snowdon (link officer in democratic services) has been asked to review the induction/training manual for Councillors, following each election which includes material for Members on complaints. No further actions relevant to the Sub-Committee Action Log</p>	Completed

131.	Local Offer for Care Leavers	Lesley Liston	<p>To establish with HR what the Council currently did in its role as an employer to support care leavers and what more could potentially be done in the future. Members also wanted to know the Council's current policy in relation to employing care leavers and what allowances, if any, were or could properly be made in relation to employing care leavers who might not hold comparable formal qualifications to their peers.</p>	<p>09.12.19: Raised with HR. There is not currently a policy specifically looking at this. A meeting will be arranged to update them on the discussions at the Sub-Committee meeting on 20 November 2019 and so HR can look potential processes to encourage managers to consider Care Leavers when recruiting. Discussions have also taken place with the LGSS Apprenticeship Team and this is something that they are looking at in relation to National Apprenticeship week in February 2020. A further update will be provided.</p> <p>19.02.20: The Local Government Association are currently working with CCC to support the development of an Apprenticeship Strategy and Action Plan. Officers have fed into this work that the needs of Children Leaving Care need to be taken into account.</p> <p>24.08.20 An update to Members in relation to Apprenticeships will be provided at the Care Leavers Members Seminar/training workshop that is currently being organised. No further actions relevant to the Sub-Committee Action Log</p>	Completed
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Meeting on 15 January 2020					
141.	Agenda Plan	Mark Cowdell	The six month update report on the refreshed strategy for reducing the number of children in care and care leavers who were not in education, employment and training (NEET) to the Sub-Committee in March 2020 to include details of what work is being done with providers to support English and maths skills Post 16.	04.03.20: The update report has been deferred. The next report will include details of what work is being done with providers to support English and maths skills Post 16. 22.07.20: The report was submitted to the Children and Young People Committee on 7 July 2020.	Completed

Meeting on 15 July 2020					
146.	Action Log	Nicola Curley	The Chairwoman commented that a number of actions had been outstanding for some time and asked that they should be cleared before the next meeting.	24.08.20: Outstanding actions have been cleared from the Action Log in agreement with Cllr Every	Completed
148.	Proposals for future engagement with Children in Care and Care Leavers and format of Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee meetings	Nicola Curley/ Fiona Van Den Hout/ Sika Smith	The Chairwoman suggested it would be helpful for Members to have some training in preparation for the informal meetings with children and young people. This should include clear parameters around behaviours and expectations for the meetings. The Assistant Director for Children's Services suggested that a workshop should be arranged to address this with herself, the Head of Corporate Parenting and the Lead Practice Improvement Manager.	24.08.20: It has been agreed to hold a workshop in October in advance of the informal meeting to be held in November	On-going

151.	Corporate Parenting Performance Report	Nicola Curley	Members welcomed the concise digest of information, but expressed some reservations at the loss of some interpretive and narrative detail. Officers suggested that this might be usefully explored as part of the proposed workshop in advance of the introduction of the new format of Sub-Committee meetings.	24.08.20: The format of the performance report will be discussed at the workshop being held in October	On-going
		Nicola Curley	Members asked that officers look again at navigation around the diagrams so that it was clear what narrative was associated with each table.		
153.	Sub-Committee Workshop and Training Plan	Fiona Van Den Hout	Members asked that Substitute members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee should be invited to attend future training sessions.	24.08.20: It is agreed that Substitute members of the Sub-Committee will be invited to future training sessions	Completed
		Richenda Greenhill	Members asked that Group Leaders should be consulted on whether the Member Seminar programme should re-start or if a stand-alone seminar on care leavers could be offered.	27.07.20: Group Leaders do not want to re-start the Members' Seminar programme at this stage, but are content for services to offer stand-alone seminars where appropriate. These should be arranged for 4.00pm where possible to maximise attendance. Seminars should also be recorded and uploaded to the Members' area on Camweb so that those Members who were unable to attend can watch it later.	Completed
		Nicola Curley	The Assistant Director for Children's Services undertook to review and revise the workshop and training plan in consultation with the Chairwoman so that it would reflect	28.08.20: Cllr Every and Fiona Van Den Hout have revised the workshop and training plan.	Ongoing

			<p>the new themes and working practices agreed by the Sub-Committee earlier in the meeting (minute 148 refers). This would include arranging a workshop to discuss what training was needed during the next 12 months to upskill members and substitute members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee, to ensure that all councillors were fully aware of their role and responsibilities as corporate parents and to identify any relevant skills or expertise they might be able to offer.</p>		
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YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION

To: Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

Meeting Date: 09 September 2020

From: Sika Smith – Lead Practice Improvement Manager

Electoral division(s): All

Purpose: Update on the participation of young people for the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

Recommendation: To comment or provide feedback on the range of consultation events and activities the Participation Service provide for children in care and care leavers.

Officer contact:	Member contact:
<p>Name: Sika Smith</p> <p>Post: Lead Practice Improvement Manager</p> <p>Email: sika.smith@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 01480 376268</p>	<p>Name: Councillor Lis Every</p> <p>Role: Chairman, Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee</p> <p>Email: Lis.Every@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: (office) 01223 706398</p>

Summary:

- In response to Covid-19 since late March 2020, the Participation Team hosted all activities virtually using TEAMS and more recently ZOOM, including a virtual Summer Activity Programme.
- The Participation Team continue to promote the use of the Mind of My Own APP – offering individual and group training.
- The Participation Team hosted two surveys for children and young people. One surveyed feedback about the virtual Participation News Letters, and one surveyed feedback about their experience of support from children's social care during the pandemic.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee requested an update on the work of the Participation Service at each of its meetings.

This report covers activity from July and August 2020.

2.0 MAIN ISSUES

2.1 Update on Involvement of Young People

Children in Care Council (CICC) Update

Throughout July and August, we have maintained regular virtual contact with our established Children in Care Council groups and our Care Leaver Forum.

The CiCC groups have met on three occasions throughout this period so far, which has been less frequent because lots of the members have been on staycations with their carers in the summer holiday period. The Care Leavers have met six times through the same period. Members of the CiCC groups have also been attending our Virtual Summer Activity sessions and contributing towards the end of summer Art Exhibition.

The focus of the meetings has been discussions around the Independent Reviewing Officer review process; the importance of being a CiCC member and the positive impact it can have for all young people in care. We have also discussed housing for Care Leavers, transport issues, appropriate support for mental health and the importance of maintaining positive social relationships throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

The experiences, views and feedback from the young people can be found in Appendix 1. This information is shared with senior managers for their consideration and feedback to the young people as to how their views are taken forward and impact practice and service delivery.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

This corporate priority is explicit throughout the report as it relates to children in care supported by the Council and the experiences of children and young people leaving the Council's care.

3.2 Thriving places for people to live

This corporate priority is explicit throughout the report as it relates to children in care supported by the Council and the experiences of children and young people leaving the Council's care.

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

This corporate priority is explicit throughout the report as it relates to children in care supported by the Council and the experiences of children and young people leaving the Council's care.

3.4 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

None identified

4.1 Resource Implications

N/A

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

N/A

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

N/A

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

N/A

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

N/A

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

N/A

4.7 Public Health Implications

N/A

Source Documents	Location
None	

Appendix 1

What does being part of the Children in Care Council (CICC) mean to you?
How do you see your role and the impact it can have on services?
What do you want CiCC meetings to look like when the Covid-19 Pandemic is over?

Themes from Young People's (YP) feedback:

What does being part of the Children in Care Council mean to you?

Some young people said that there are good opportunities to have fun and do new things, and it's "a place where you can express your views and opinions"

Some YP said it's a good platform for us as children in care to get their views and the views of others across, as not everyone wants to share their thoughts or be a representative for others.

Also YP said the CiCC is a nice environment where you can make friends and do fun things.

What would you like the CiCC meetings to be like when lockdown ends?

YP involved all agreed that meeting up in person is better than meeting online. Some YP prefer to have meetings in the school holidays as it is less stressful and doesn't interfere with school work and other commitments.

Being social is an important part of the CiCC and doing fun activities together.

One young person asked about the regional film project and whether it is still happening, which has now been put on hold until after the covid-19 pandemic is over and will aim to start the project up again as young people have put a lot of effort into it so far

Young People's ideas

YP involved all agreed that meeting up in person is better than meeting online. Some YP prefer to have meetings in the school holidays as it is less stressful and doesn't interfere with school work and other commitments.

Going forward:

As the pandemic restrictions ease, the team is working closely with the CiCC members to design and plan arrangements for face to face meetings to resume at the earliest opportunity.

What are your thoughts about your Child Care Review meetings?

The CICC spoke with Nicola Lloyd – (Independent Reviewing Officer) to discuss their thoughts around their 6 monthly child care review meetings.

Nicola asked the YP how they felt about the review process and if they felt involved enough.

Some YP said they didn't want the process to change, saying they were used to their meetings and liked coming together with the services that support them every 6 months. Nicola gave the YP an option to have the questions asked to them during their review sent to them prior to the meeting to give the YP time to prepare for their review. The YP said no, they are happy attending on the day without time to prepare.

Nicola asked if the YP were happy with where their reviews took place.

Several YP said they like them taking place at home and others said they would prefer them taking place at home rather than at school. When they are scheduled to occur in school the YP have said this makes them feel more different to their class mates.

Nicola asked the YP if they know who attended their meeting and understood why the meetings regularly took place.

Some YP said they would like the professionals that attend their meetings to introduce themselves better and give an explanation of the roles to the YP.

Additional feedback received from YP survey regarding Universal credits

In response to the survey about 'How we are doing', one YP requested a call back from the team and commented that they feel let down where their allowance hasn't matched the national increase in their universal credits benefit (16-17 year olds). During the COVID19 crisis 16-17-year-old who receive universal credits were given an automatic increase of £20 a week to their benefit. However, that age group of children in care in Cambridgeshire did not receive this increase and some young people were left wondering why some of their peers/friends received this increase in benefit but not children in care of Cambridgeshire county council. This young person shared that some young people felt no explanation was offered.

This young person was advised that there were other forms of support that care leavers received which they were aware of also.

It is noted that local authorities did not receive any funding for this, but children's services did put in place additional support to care leavers during the pandemic.

Care Leaver Forum

During July and August, the Care Leavers have had the time to explore their own feelings and discuss any issues arising during the Covid-19.

Key themes summary:

- Some care leavers are lonely and feel they need more support from their PAs. It is not always easy to reach out to their PA and it would be helpful if the PAs made contact more often.
- Some care leavers will face some significant new barriers to be able to access face to face meetings again during/post covid-19, this also extends to finding employment and social meetings.
- Some care leavers are making the most of the free driving lessons scheme in order to be more independent. They are more than willing to make the commitment of taking their theory test first, as in the long term it will help to overcome transport issues that can hold them back from seeking employment.
- The housing stability for some care leavers is always uncertain and this can have a negative impact and lead to never feeling settled as the situation can change at any moment, which is out of their control. Landlords and Housing Agencies changing arrangements last minute can have an ongoing negative effect.
- Care leavers need support from familiar relationships to help their wellbeing. Having a likeminded friend is important and the Care Leavers enjoy talking with each other outside of our group sessions.
- Some care leavers don't have a strong support network and are finding that when they are relied upon by others it adds pressure to deal with other people's issues and takes away time to deal with their own needs. This highlights the importance of having a positive relationship with their PA.

Impact of the group –

- The young people are using the forum effectively to share their views in a relaxed environment with adults who understand the issues that arise when a young person has been looked after and the challenges that they can face when leaving care.
- The young people are now proactively taking forward topics that are important to them to discuss with key officers of the council and being able to share their views on how they may be able to affect service improvement.
- In addition, the young people benefit from improved social skills and developing positive friendships where young people have been able to meet up outside of our meetings and share common interests and hobbies.

Building on the success of our virtual offer, we also held a launch event for children and young people who live in placements at a distance out of county, to explore how those young people can get involved with the CiCC. We are planning a follow-up event in October with a view to establish an Out of County group of representatives for the CiCC.

Summer Activity Programme

The Participation Team joined forces with the Peterborough Participation Team to host this summer fun activity programme for children in care and care leavers using ZOOM platform. Please see Appendix Two for the programme details which ran from 4th to 27th August 2020. This is the first time the participation team has run a summer activity programme and it has been well received with a core of 8 regular attendees. We will use feedback to inform future planning for virtual fun activities to enrich and engage children in care and care leavers in these uncertain times whilst the ability to provide face to face activity based remains precarious.

We had a number of remarkable art submissions in response to some of the Newsletter competitions and this inspired a Virtual Art Exhibition of art completed and submitted by children and young people we work with. Please see Appendix 2 for the details. The exhibition will be streamed on YouTube on 2nd September 2020

[Link to YouTube channel](#)

Survey – ‘How did we do?’

Feedback from children and young people about their experience of contact with social workers and the services and support they have received during the pandemic.

A children and young people’s survey was carried out during June, to understand the impact of Covid-19 on them and whether the support offered was felt to be sufficient.

We had 50 responses from children young people who are open to children’s social care and this included some children in care and care leavers though It was not possible to extrapolate data and analysis specific to children in care and care leavers.

Responses were overwhelmingly positive including services were rated highly in terms of communication with social workers; information about the virus; and support from schools and health overall. Arrangements for involvement in planning / meetings was not as strong overall. Information provided at the start of Lockdown to understand what coronavirus is and the rules of Lockdown was overwhelmingly positive. Feelings about communication of information around the changes remained positive, though slightly less so. Support from schools and colleges received a more positive response than support around health concerns. Of the respondents who considered these topics relevant to them, whilst 82% were ‘Happy’ or ‘Very Happy’ with support from schools and colleges, only 44% said the same for support for health concerns during Lockdown (including anxiety and mental health). Young people living in supported Housing/ Lodgings with a family reported that the majority were ‘Happy’ (7) or ‘Very Happy’ (7) with the support they have received at home, one felt ‘Very Unhappy’, and 4 were neutral. The young person who said that they were ‘very unhappy’ did not wish to receive any follow up and left no contact details.

The scoring was overwhelmingly positive, and Young People provided additional feedback through comments, most of which were also positive. More reflective comments shed light into the challenges around the impact of COVID on their education; access to health support; the variability of arrangements to support from schools; and notably for many care leavers a desire for more frequent visits and contact with their PA’s and this is consistent with the reflections from operational care leaver teams that COVID led to increased isolation and loneliness for many care leavers.

The analysis of the survey findings was shared through a staff briefing with all staff and a managers briefing to senior managers for their consideration of

- How can we identify and be responsive to those young people who would like more frequent contact during the pandemic?
- How do we ensure that social workers and PA's consistently share information we prepare for young people about the pandemic; and the participation offer – like the 'virtual drop in; newsletters etc
- How do we ensure all children and young people are invited to and supported take part in key meetings about their care planning? (By the appropriate mechanism)
- How do we support children and young people to access health support including support with emotional wellbeing / mental health in pandemic times?

We will be able to report the feedback and actions taken in response to the survey in our next report.

Interactive Newsletters

Since the COVID-19 lockdown and suspension of all face to face activities, the Participation Team has joined with the Peterborough Participation Team and we have continued to produce fortnightly interactive newsletters. One for the under 12's, one for teenagers and one for care leavers. The newsletters have included competitions, information regarding help and advice on Covid19 and emotional well-being, fun things to do such as virtual tours of zoos or museums, links to theatre productions and musicals, online courses and training, as well as quizzes and recipe ideas. The aims of the newsletters were:

- to maintain a channel of communication with children and young people in the care of Cambridgeshire County Council (CIC),
- to support CIC to feel comfortable feeding back their experience of Lockdown
- to reduce isolation through provision of helpful information and fun activities
- to promote future engagement in Participation groups.

Survey – Feedback from children in care and care leavers about the virtual News letters:

We conducted a survey to find out children and young people's views about the frequency of the Newsletters, the content and how they wished to be engaged in the Newsletters going forward.

The Newsletters received an overall positive response. It appears to have reached more children in the 12 to 17 age group, but over 18s seem to be valuing it the most with the highest numbers from this age group responding to the survey, reading the newsletter more than once, and providing all of the suggestions on content. Survey results suggest that the content has been well balanced, with the best remembered topic being 'helpful information' (which was mostly in relation to COVID and mental health / emotional wellbeing). All respondents wanted to continue to receive a Newsletter, but the majority consensus was for a frequency of monthly and as a result of this feedback we reduced the frequency to monthly with effect from August 2020. One young person expressed an interest for getting involved in the production of the Newsletters and the team has followed this up.

Networking and embedding participation

We have continued to attend operational based team meetings to share feedback from the children and young people who have engaged in the different activities and events we have hosted, and to share the planned participation activities and how practitioners can support young people getting involved. In this reporting period, the terms of reference for the strategic participation meeting with key senior managers across children's social care has been revised to align with the new four tier model of participation. The group now meets monthly and has as its primary function to support the participation communication strategy; proactively consider and promote co-production opportunities; and aims to increase the number of children and young people engaging in and contributing to the participation strategy.

Mind of My Own

The team continues to offer training and support as a team or on a one to one basis to enhance practitioners understanding in how to use the application to capture the voice of the child. Please see Appendix 1 for an update on Mind of My Own activity in July and August as at 26/08/2020.

Conclusion

We are committed to promoting and encouraging our children in care and care leavers to access various activity based events as the vehicle through which their voices can be heard, and they can also become involved in activities to influence service improvement and development. We are pleased that we have been able to maintain contact with a core group of members through the virtual spaces and there has been more new children and young people coming to events and getting involved. We will continue to work at pace to strengthen our feedback loops to children and young people and evidencing the impact of their contributions and work.

Appendix 1

Mind of My Own Summary

The Participation team continue to offer team training and one to one support.

166 Young people have their own Mind of My Own account and 438 workers with an account. We continue to see a decline in use of the App and we continue to promote the App in the monthly Newsletters, our meetings with teams and our contact with children and young people and their carers.

	JULY 2020	AUGUST 2020
New account sign ups each month	Workers - 3 Young People - 2	Workers - 0 Young People - 2
Number of One statements per month	12	1
MOMO Express Statements per month	1	6
Top 3 subject matters each month MOMO ONE	33% Worker Visit, 25% Foster Care Review, 17% Conference, 17% My Life	100% My Wellbeing
Top 3 subject matters each month MOMO EXPRESS	50% About Me, 50% My Day	50% About me 33% My Education 8% My Life, 8% My Health

VIRTUAL

SUMMERS SORTED!

For all Children in Care

All workshops via Zoom

Other virtual activities you might be interested in - all available until 31st August!

SCAVENGER HUNT Tuesday 4 th August @2pm Age: under 12s	XIDUS PAIN Lyric Writing Workshop Wednesday 5 th August @2pm. Age: 12 and over	MAGIC AT HOME Ft. Dave The Clown Thursday 6 th August @2pm. Age: All ages	Just Sing! For all ages, by Cambridgeshire Music 
THE BIG QUIZ Tuesday 11 th August @2pm Age: 12 and over	RAINBOW ART WORKSHOP Wednesday 12 th August @2pm Age: under 12s	LETS GET MOVING Thursday 13 th August @2pm Age: All ages	
VLOGGING WORKSHOP Tuesday 18 th August @2pm Age: 12 and over	POETRY WORKSHOP Wednesday 19 th August @2pm Age: 10 and over	CARD DESIGN WORKSHOP Thursday 20 th August @2pm Age: All ages	
XIDUS PAIN Lyric Writing Workshop Tuesday 25 th August @2pm. Age: under 12s	OWN YOUR STORY Ft. Sophia (Care Leaver) Wednesday 26 th August @2pm. Age: 12 and over	SIGN LANGUAGE WORKSHOP Thursday 27 th August @2pm Age: All ages	

For more information or to register your place on a workshop, please email us at ciccouncil@peterborough.gov.uk or csc.participation@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

Cambridgeshire County Council

VIRTUAL

ART EXHIBITION

Covid Creativity!

Prizes will be awarded!

Showcase your art creations made during lockdown in a special virtual art exhibition

WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER 2020

Send your entries* by **Monday 24th August**
 to: ciccouncil@peterborough.gov.uk or
csc.participation@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

* All art including drawings, paintings, digital art, photographs, collages, modelling clay, sculptures, etc. welcome. Please include your name, age and a short description of your artwork.

Your artwork here!

PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

Cambridgeshire County Council

REPORT FROM CAMBRIDGESHIRE FOSTER CARER'S ASSOCIATION

To: Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

Meeting Date: 9 September 2020

From: Fiona Van Den Hout
Head of Service: Corporate Parenting

Electoral division(s): All

Outcomes: The Sub-Committee is being asked to consider and comment on the report from Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association which details recent activity undertaken by the Association and future plans for engaging foster carers in service development and practice improvements.

Recommendation: Sub- Committee is asked to consider how foster carers, through the Association, can contribute to the three thematic formal Sub-Committee meetings: health, education and placement.

<i>Officer Contact:</i>	<i>Member Contact:</i>
Name: Fiona Van Den Hout Post: Head of Service Corporate Parenting Email: Fiona.vandenhout@cambridgeshire.gov.uk Tel: (office) 01223 518379	Name: Councillor Lis Every Role: Chairman, Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee Email: Lis.Every@cambridgeshire.gov.uk Tel: (office) 01223 706398

Summary:

The purpose of the report is to provide the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee with an overview of the Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association and activity over recent months. The report highlights:

- Activity carried out in partnership with the Fostering Service
- Challenges over the coming months
- How the Association engages carers and provide an opportunity to contribute
- Future vision for the Association

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee on 15 July 2020 the Sub-Committee agreed to the attendance of Cambridgeshire's Foster Carer Association Chair (or their representative) at future Sub-Committee meetings as an observer. It was also agreed that a report from the Association would be included on the agenda at each Sub-Committee meeting.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The report from the Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association is attached at Appendix 1.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES**3.1 A good quality of life for everyone**

This corporate priority is explicit throughout the report as it relates to children in care supported by the Council and the experiences of children and young people leaving the Council's care.

3.2 Thriving places for people to live

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

This corporate priority is explicit throughout the report as it relates to children in care supported by the Council and the experiences of children and young people leaving the Council's care.

3.4 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

n/a

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

n/a

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

n/a

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

n/a

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

n/a

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

n/a

4.7 Public Health Implications

n/a

Source Documents	Location
None	

Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association's Report
September 2020

Summary

The purpose of this initial short report is to provide the following:

- Indicate activity carried out in partnership with the Fostering Service
- A view of challenges we face together over the coming months
- How we engage carers and provide an opportunity to contribute
- Future vision for our Association

Background

The aim of our Association is:

To raise the profile of foster carers and ensure we are viewed as professionals by social workers and those working with the children we look after.

Work in partnership with the Fostering Service to; advance foster carer's views and recommendations and improve the support, services and remuneration of foster carers.

Ensuring the best possible care and service to all our Children in Care.

Recent Partnership Activity

Facilitated by our Association, carers have been working together with Managers on a number of projects over the past year. Below are some highlights of recent partnership activities.

Foster Carers' Charter - A carer worked together with a senior manager to create the document. Final draft agreed and now with the Fostering Service for final approval

Foster Carers Agreement - Significant input from carers to both wording and style. Final draft agreed

Renewal of FosterTalk Contract - The Fostering Service arranged virtual presentations delivered by FosterTalk and The Fostering Network. Together with the Association, we enabled carers to select their preferred option.

Challengers for the Coming Months

Before the publication of the proposed 'Review of Fostering Allowances', committee members were given the opportunity to review and suggest changes to the letter sent to carers. The final version reflected our input. Since the publication, our Association has been supporting and encouraging carers to get involved in the consultation process outlined in the letter.

We now look forward to working together to design a consultation process to manage the supplementary financial issues of savings, pocket money and travel

expenses. There are carers with no links to our Associations, accordingly we recognise our role as facilitating and supporting the Fostering Service communication activity to ensure all carers have the opportunity to be heard.

Our Association has welcomed the initiative to recognise the contribution made by carers throughout Covid-19 pandemic. The letter sent to carers recently clearly highlighted the difficulties we all faced, especially those caring for children with complex needs.

We share a common objective of coming to the end of this year with many of these difficulties behind and building a fostering community with the capability to make a real difference to the children we care for.

Engaging Carers

As with other organisations, the lack of face to face communication has made us consider how we involve carers in Association activity.

The Association has a Closed Facebook Group of 109 members and a website email system. We are able to successfully share information with 140 carers. System data shows 85 - 90% open our emails and read Facebook posts. We have the opportunity to distribute surveys and questionnaires to a significant number of carers.

We recognise the need for better communication in the opposite direction, from carers to committee members to improve our representation. We intend to hold our first Virtual Carers Meeting on 8th September, sending an invitation link to all carers. Previously, with face to face meetings, opportunities to attend or get involved are limited for child care reasons. We will see how many carers log on and if we can manage a sizable virtual meeting.

Future Vision

Facilitated by The Fostering Network, our Association has started attending virtual meetings with other foster carer associations in our region. We want to build on the experience of others and share good practice.

The Covid-19 pandemic restrictions continue to limit progress in meeting one of our key aims of supporting local activities and events across our county. Previously, we had started using the Local Fostering Support Meetings as a meaningful way to engage more carers and act on their ideas and suggestions.

The vision for our Association is twofold. To have a valued contribution to our Fostering Service at a strategic level while supporting and facilitating local activities for both carers and children across our community.

VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

To: **Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee**

Meeting Date: **9 September 2020**

From: **Claire Hiorns
Virtual School Head Teacher**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Outcomes: **Increased awareness of members of the outcomes for the qualifying cohort of children in care and the direction of the work of the Virtual School.**

Recommendation: **The Sub-Committee is asked to note and comment on the report, offering support and challenge as necessary.**

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contact:</i>	
Name:	Claire Hiorns	Names:	Councillor Lis Every
Post:	Virtual School Head Teacher	Role:	Chairman, Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee
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Summary:

The purpose of this report is to detail and evaluate the work undertaken by the Virtual School from September 2019 to July 2020 and to set out the key priorities for the academic year 2020/21. It also shares the outcomes of the qualifying cohort (children in the care of Cambridgeshire County council for a year or more as of 31st March 2019).

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The attached report sets out and evaluates the work undertaken by the Virtual School between September 2019 and July 2020 together with the key priorities for the academic year 2020/21.

2. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Report authors should evaluate the proposal(s) in light of their alignment with the following three Corporate Priorities.

- 2.1 **A good quality of life for everyone**
The attached report above sets out the implications for this priority.
- 2.2 **Thriving places for people to live**
The attached report above sets out the implications for this priority.
- 2.3 **The best start for Cambridgeshire's children**
The attached report above sets out the implications for this priority.
- 2.4 **Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050**
There are no significant implications for this priority

3. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 **Resource Implications**
N/A
- 3.2 **Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications**
N/A
- 3.3 **Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications**
N/A
- 3.4 **Equality and Diversity Implications**
N/A

3.5 **Engagement and Communications Implications**
N/A

3.6 **Localism and Local Member Involvement**
N/A

3.7 **Public Health Implications**
N/A

Source Documents	Location
Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services 18 February 2019 Children's Services Focused Visit 5 March 2020	Public document Public document Ofsted Inspection Report 18 February 2019 and Children's Services Focused Visit 5 March 2020

Cambridgeshire Virtual School



Head Teacher's Annual Report

Author: Claire Hiorns

Produced July 2020

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to detail and evaluate the work undertaken by the Virtual School from September 2019-July 2020 and to set out the key priorities for the academic year 2020-2021. Furthermore it is to share the outcomes of the qualifying cohort (children in the care of Cambridgeshire County council for a year or more as of 31st March 2019).

1.1 Context

Since April 2014, every local authority in England has had to appoint at least one person to fulfil the local authority's statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of its Children in Care (CiC) wherever they live or are educated. This person is called the Head of the Virtual School. Within Cambridgeshire there is a team of education professionals who support the Virtual School Head in fulfilling these responsibilities. Cambridgeshire Virtual School support children and young people between the ages of 2 and 18.

The statutory remit of the Virtual School expanded in September 2018 to include information and advice for children previously in care; including those who have been adopted from care, those under special guardianship and child arrangement orders. Cambridgeshire Virtual School are responsible for children previously in care who attend a Cambridgeshire school or education setting.

Cambridgeshire Virtual School sits within the Education Directorate. The Virtual School Head is line managed by the Director of Education. The Virtual School has a 'management board' which offers both challenge and support to the work and direction of the Virtual School.

Since the last reporting period the Virtual School has strengthened capacity by appointing a Data Officer, Education Advisor for Children Previously in Care, increased leadership capacity by promoting a teacher to a senior post and appointed a further Senior Advisory Teacher (to start September 2020).

Cambridgeshire Virtual School Team:

Role	Full Time Equivalent
Head of Virtual School	1
Deputy Head of Virtual School	0.9
Senior Teacher	1 (+ 0.8 to start September 2020)
Teachers	5.8
Post 16 Officers	2
Access and Inclusion Officers	3
Education Psychologist (seconded)	0.6 (decreasing to 0.4 from September 2020)
Data Officer	0.7
Business Support	0.7 (41 weeks a year)
Education Advisor for Children Previously in Care (joint role with Peterborough)	0.4

2. Role of the Virtual School

The Virtual School should be judged by the degree to which it diminishes the difference between outcomes for Children in Care and all children and that Cambridgeshire Children in Care do at least as well as Children in Care nationally. The Virtual School strive to achieve this by working in the following ways:

Child Centred Work

- To ensure the voice of the Child / Young Person (CYP) is paramount within the Personal Education Plan (PEP) process
- To monitor the attainment and progress of all CYP in care and provide challenge and support in order to maximise this
- To manage and distribute the pupil premium grant and ensure that it is used effectively by schools and settings in order that CYP in care achieve specific outcomes as detailed in their PEPs
- To advocate on behalf of the CYP where it is felt that the school is not fully meeting individual needs

Education Setting focused work (including Early Years (EY) and Post-16 settings)

- To support schools, specifically designated teachers, to carry out statutory duties including completion of the PEP
- To support EY and post-16 settings, specifically designated persons, to carry out statutory duties including completion of the PEP
- To deliver training which addresses particular needs of Children in Care and Children Previously in Care (collectively referred to as care experienced children and young people)
- To promote aspirational attitudes when setting targets and outcomes for care experienced CYP

Access and Inclusion

- To hold a detailed knowledge of individual schools and settings in order to secure the best provision
- To have knowledge of services within and beyond the Local Authority (LA) in order to access additional support where appropriate
- To support the admissions process in order to minimise the amount of time out of education
- To challenge attendance issues and support interventions to improve outcomes
- To monitor exclusions and any CYP not accessing full time education to challenge and improve outcomes

Key Partners

- To deliver training to social workers, foster carers and other key partners to promote the educational needs of care experienced CYP
- To work in partnership with other key partners, within and beyond the LA, to secure the best possible educational outcomes

3. Cohort characteristics

The Virtual School Head Teacher's report is required to report on the 'qualifying cohort'. This means those children that have been in the care of Cambridgeshire Local Authority for a year or more on 31st March 2019. The actual Virtual School cohort is fluid, with children entering and exiting care by way of reunification, adoption, Special Guardianship Orders or Child Arrangement Orders, or reaching adulthood throughout the year. The Virtual School work with all Children in Care (as described in section 2) regardless of the length of time in care; therefore it should be recognised that there are differences between the data reported and the actual number of CYP supported by the Virtual School.

In May 2020 there were 716 Children in Care on the Virtual School roll compared with 706 at the time of reporting last year. The qualifying cohort totals 376 children.

3.1 Placements

Placements of the qualifying cohort according to region where the CYP is placed. 51% of Children in care are placed in Cambridgeshire.

Placement Region for Cambridgeshire Children in Care	% of Cohort	Number
East	73.7%	277
South West	1.1%	4
South East	4.5%	17
North West	0.8%	3
East Midlands	13.0%	49
London	4.3%	16
West Midlands	1.6%	6
North East	1.1%	4
Total	100.0%	376

The OFSTED focused visit (2020) identified 'still too many of Cambridgeshire's Children in Care live in placements which are outside the county and a long way from their families and friends.' Whilst there is a drive within Children's Services to increase capacity in county, the Virtual School has the following arrangements in place to mitigate against barriers for children who are currently placed out of county:

New to Care / Placement Move

- All children new to care or requiring an education placement move are assigned to a member of the Virtual School Team
- Where an education placement is required out of county, the Virtual School research OFSTED ratings and seek advice from the Virtual School (and where relevant SEND Services) in the receiving authority to support a decision on which school to apply to

Personal Education Plan (PEP) Support / Training

- Schools new to supporting Cambridgeshire Children in Care receive phone / skype support on how to complete the PEP
- There is a PEP Champion within the Virtual School that all schools can seek advice via email, phone or skype on an ongoing basis
- The Virtual School have created documentation such as exemplar PEPs which are available on E-PEP system
- All PEPs are quality assured by the Virtual School and feedback provided
- Out of county schools, within reasonable travelling distance are invited to all face to face training offered
- This academic year the Virtual School have introduced live webinars to facilitate the involvement of designated teachers all over the country in training; these have been recorded and are also available for DTs to view at their convenience

Support for Children in Education Settings

- The Virtual School support all Children in Care from 2 years old (if attending early years provision) to 18 years old (until the end of year 13 if in education)
- All schools where there is a Cambridgeshire child placed have an named link advisory teacher / officer
- The offer of advisory meetings is according to need rather than location
- The PEP is used to monitor attainment, progress and attendance each term
- There is daily monitoring of attendance for all children who are of statutory school age
- Where there is a specific need regarding an individual student the Virtual School provide advice and guidance to empower the designated teacher to lead and manage complex situations and ensure teams within the receiving authority are supporting the situation

Specific Education Challenges for Children Placed Out of County

Admissions – It can be harder to source education when a child moves out of county. This is particularly relevant for CYP placed in some local authorities e.g. Kent.

Actions to support:

- The Virtual School work closely with the Admissions Team within Cambridgeshire. Where an academy refuses to admit, notice to direct is served promptly

- The Virtual School work closely with the Virtual Schools in the Eastern Region and will elicit support to navigate LA systems when needed
- Since September the Virtual School have been working more closely with the Access to Resources Team and Social Care, so that education is considered at the earliest opportunity; the Virtual School's views are routinely sought to feed into placement searches
- Where it is likely securing a school place will be delayed the Virtual School source and fund tuition

SEND – There are additional challenges in securing an EHCP for children placed out of county and for admissions when a CYP has an EHCP. This is linked into a dependency on services managed by other local authorities

Actions to support:

- The Virtual School have worked with Social Care and the Statutory Assessment Team to create a joint protocol with the aim of minimising drift in these situations.
- The Virtual School, SAT and Social Care hold solution focused meetings (CENE) every two weeks aimed at moving situations forward. The Virtual School provide challenge at these meetings

3.2 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

	SEN Support			EHCP		
	2018	2019		2018	2019	
	% of Cohort		Difference 2018 to 2019	% of Cohort		Difference 2018 to 2019
National - ALL Pupils	11.6%	11.7%	0.1%	2.9%	3.1%	0.2%
Cambridgeshire - All Pupils	11.1%	10.7%	-0.4%	3.0%	3.2%	0.2%
National - CiC	29.6%	29.0%	-0.6%	26.5%	27.2%	0.7%
Cambridgeshire - CiC	25.8%	22.6%	-3.2%	30.8%	29.3%	-1.5%

The percentage of Cambridgeshire CYP in care, reported to have a categorisation of SEN Support is slightly below the figure for national CiC, whereas the percentage of Cambridgeshire Children in Care with an EHCP is above the national level. There is a significant difference between those in care with SEND and all pupils (both nationally and within Cambridgeshire). This reflects the complexities of the cohort of Children in Care.

4. Training and development

The Virtual School recognise the importance of training in developing practice and empowering professionals working with care experienced CYP.

Training is offered at no charge; the retained Pupil Premium Plus and Previously in Care grant fund this.

Training for Schools and other education settings:

Training	Number of settings attended	Number of participants
Designated Teacher Training	39	45
Attachment Awareness and Trauma Informed Schools	10	19
FASD	28	47
Designated Person for Children Previously in Care	12	12
Towards a new way of working	16	16
Towards a new way of working – Early Years	22	22
Network Meeting (Virtual)	12	12
Supporting Unaccompanied Asylum Minors	6	21

This totals 194 participants. This is a reduction on last year's figures (479). However COVID-19 impacted on the training; training from March-July was cancelled.

The Virtual School has offered bespoke sessions as required.

Training	Number of settings attended	Number of participants
Attachment, Trauma and Executive Functioning	1	20
Trauma and Attachment Awareness	6	120



Training for other key stakeholders has comprised of;

Training delivered	Number of participants
1. Foster Carers	
Virtual School: New way of Working	58
FASD	8
Role of the VS	9
2. LA Partners	
Virtual School: New way of Working	31
Social Care, Education Training	84
IROs, Education Training	10
Education Inclusions Officers	12
3. New Adopters	
Supporting Education	19

5. Attainment and Progress Context

The attainment and progress data referred to in sections 5 to 9 is a year old. This is the data local authorities are required to report on. The cohort of children it refers to will have changed with children over the last year both coming in and leaving care. Specific consideration is not therefore contained on the response to individual data. However in recognition of the limitations of the reported data, a focus for the Virtual School over the next academic year is the collation and analysis of termly data. This will be a golden threading running through each of the development priorities. It will be used to provide enrichment opportunities to children in care and to support and challenge designated teachers to match appropriate support and intervention to promote educational outcomes for children in care. This will be achieved through training, advisory meetings, regular 'check ins' with DTs and PEP quality assurance. Further details can be found in section 16.

6. Early Years Attainment Data

GLD refers to Good Level of Development. This is the national benchmark for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (aged 5). Children are deemed to have met GLD if they have achieved the Early Learning Goals in the curriculum areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Communication and Language Development, Literacy and Mathematics.

It is the second year outcomes for this age group have been published, therefore year on year comparisons are limited.

Good Level of Development (GLD)	RECEPTION (EYFSP)			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cambridgeshire - CiC Number in Cohort	x	x	12	8
Cambridgeshire - CiC	x	x	42%	38%
National - CiC	x	x	47%	48%
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	70%	71%	71%	71%
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	69%	71%	72%	72%

- The Cambridgeshire cohort consists of only 8 children meaning the percentage per child is 12.5%. Such a small cohort means that cohort analysis is not valid.
- Cambridgeshire are 10% below the national figure for Children in Care (less than one child).

7. Year 1 and 2 Phonics Screening

All children complete a phonics screening check towards the end of year 1. Those that do not pass have a further attempt in the summer term of year 2. The assessment involves the child reading 40 words to a familiar adult. There are a combination of real words and 'non-words'. The 'non-words' are included to ensure the child could not have encountered the word previously and therefore must rely on their phonic knowledge rather than sight vocabulary.

Phonics - Working at Expected	Year 1 and Year 2	
	Year 1	Year 2
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	14	9
Cambridgeshire - CiC	57%	56%
National - CiC	64%	48%
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	80%	54%
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	82%	56%

- The percentage passing in year one is slightly below the national level for Children in Care, however the percentage in year 2 is above this figure

8. Key Stage 1 and 2 Attainment and Progress Data

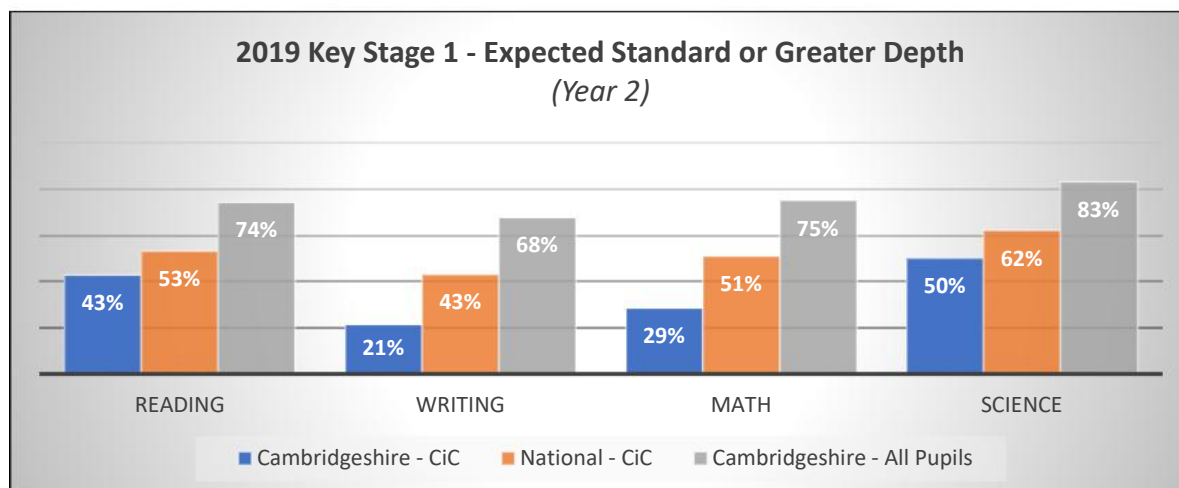
At the end of Key Stage 1 (aged 7) and Key Stage 2 (aged 11), children are assessed as:

- **Working towards the expected standard:** not yet reaching the standard expected for their school year
- **Working at expected standard:** at the level expected for their year group

- **Working at greater depth:** working more deeply within the expectations for their year

8.1 Key Stage 1 Attainment Data

- There are 14 children in this cohort (one child equates to 7%)
- 3 children have EHCPs, 2 of which attend special school
- There are 6 children with a classification of 'SEN Support'



- The percentage of children achieving expected standard in reading, writing and maths is 21% compared to 38% nationally
- Year on year data shows a decline with 31% of Cambridgeshire Children in Care achieving the combined expected standard last year
- This Virtual School team are aware of the results of this cohort, and as a result there will be greater scrutiny of ongoing progress through advisory visits and PEP quality assurance, with a specific focus on how to use the pupil premium plus to maximise progress. This is in line with the overall focus next academic year on attainment and progress. See development priorities 2020-2021 for further details (section 16)

8.2 Key Stage 2 Attainment and Progress Data

- There are 26 children in this cohort (one child equates to 4%)
- 8 children have an EHCP (with 6 attending specialist provision)
- There are 7 children with a classification of 'SEN support'

ALL Subjects - 2019 (Expected Standard or Greater Depth Standard)					
Expected or Better	KEY STAGE 2				
	Reading	Writing	Maths	GPS	RWM Combined
Cambridgeshire – Number in CiC Cohort	26				
Cambridgeshire - CiC	35%	52%	54%	50%	28%
National - CiC	50%	51%	52%	53%	37%
Cambridgeshire - All Pupils	73%	75%	76%	76%	63%
National - All Pupils	73%	78%	79%	78%	65%

- Writing, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling are in line with Children in Care nationally
- Reading is below Children in Care nationally; there were 3 children that narrowly missed the expected standard in reading (within a scaled score of 3). All three achieved the expected standard in both writing and maths
- Cambridgeshire compares favourably with its statistical neighbours (11 authorities), with Cambridgeshire being ranked highest in writing, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Cambridgeshire is 6th for reading
- Year on year data shows a percentage point increase from 2016-2019 in all areas with the exception of reading which in line with the outcomes in 2016. This is illustrated in the tables below:

Reading				
Expected or Better (EXS or GDS)	KEY STAGE 2			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	26	22	29	26
Cambridgeshire - CiC	35%	32%	38%	35%

Writing				
Expected or Better (EXS or GDS)	KEY STAGE 2			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	26	21	29	26
Cambridgeshire - CiC	39%	36%	45%	52%

Maths				
Expected or Better (EXS or GDS)	KEY STAGE 2			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	26	22	29	26
Cambridgeshire - CiC	35%	27%	38%	54%

Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling				
Expected or Better (EXS or GDS)	KEY STAGE 2			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	26	22	29	26
Cambridgeshire - CiC	42%	41%	38%	50%

8.3 Progress Data From Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2

Progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2	KEY STAGE 2		
	Reading	Writing	Maths
Cambridgeshire - CiC	-1.05	0.83	0.43
National - CiC	-0.22	-0.77	-0.95
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	0.16	-0.80	-0.30
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	0.03	0.01	0.04

- Progress data demonstrates the progress the cohort have made from their Key Stage 1 results to their Key Stage 2. A score of zero indicates expected progress from the Key Stage 1 result
- The cohort have made less than expected progress in reading
- The cohort have made above expected progress in writing, making better progress than all children in Cambridgeshire and all children nationally
- The cohort have made above expected progress in maths, making better progress than all children in Cambridgeshire and all children nationally

9. Key Stage 4 Attainment and Progress Data

For the first year all GCSEs are graded 9-1, with 9 being the highest grade and 1 the lowest; the new GCSE content is recognised as more challenging. The phrase 'Achieving the basics' refers to 'a pass' English and maths. Grades 4 being equivalent to a low C and 5 equivalent to a high C in the 'old' GCSE grades. Grade 5 is known as a strong pass and grade 4 as a standard pass. Students that do not achieve at least a 4, will be expected to re-sit the GCSE (unless there are specific circumstances e.g. SEND). The ongoing changes to the Key Stage 4 examinations mean it is hard to compare year on year; meaningful comparison can only be made against 2017 and 2018 data.

- There are 64 children in the cohort (one child equates to approximately 1.6%)
- There are 26 children in the cohort with EHCPs, 22 of whom attend specialist provision
- There are 7 children in the cohort with a categorisation of 'SEN Support'

Achieved Basics	KEY STAGE 4					
	2017		2018		2019	
	Standard (9-4)	Strong (9-5)	Standard (9-4)	Strong (9-5)	Standard (9-4)	Strong (9-5)
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	43		55		64	
Cambridgeshire - CiC	12%	7%	15%	7%	13%	5%
National - CiC	17%	7%	17%	8%	18%	7%
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	67%	47%	67%	46%	57%	43%
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	x	43%	64%	43%	56%	40%

- The number of children achieving a standard pass is 5% below national for Children in Care but Cambridgeshire was within 2% of national (Children in Care) for a strong pass

Attainment 8 score is a measure of performance in 8 subjects. The progress 8 score shows how they have improved during secondary school, compared to other pupils who were at the same level when they finished primary school. The average progress 8 score of all secondary schools nationally is 0. Further explanation of these measures can be found here: https://www.slideshare.net/SimonPerry9/naht-progress-8-and-attainment-8-explained?next_slideshow=1

Attainment 8	Key Stage 4
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	64
Cambridgeshire - CiC	17.4
National - CiC	19.1
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	46.1
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	44.8

Progress 8 (Progress from KS2 to KS4)	Key Stage 4
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	59
Cambridgeshire - CiC	-1.04
National - CiC	-1.28
<i>Cambridgeshire - All Pupils</i>	0.14
<i>National - All Pupils</i>	-0.08

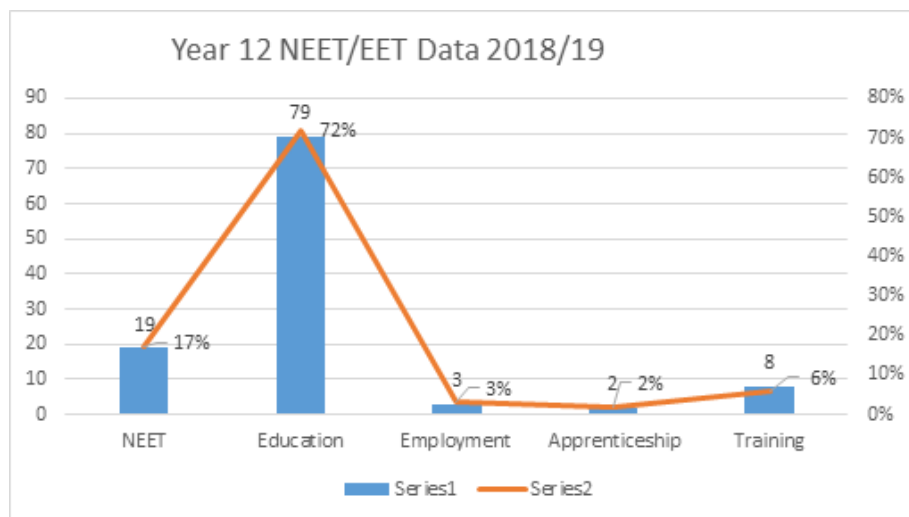
- The discrepancy between the number of children accounted for within the attainment 8 figure (64) and the number of children in the progress 8 figure (59) is because there are 5 children whose Key Stage 2 results are not available and therefore progress between Key Stage 2 and 4 cannot be measured.

- Attainment 8 scores show Cambridgeshire Children in Care were two points below Children in Care nationally. This ranks Cambridgeshire 6th (out of 11) against statistical neighbours
- Cambridgeshire Children in Care made better progress from their Key Stage 2 results to their Key Stage 4 results than Children in Care nationally (0.24). This ranks Cambridgeshire 4th (out of 11) when compared to statistical neighbours

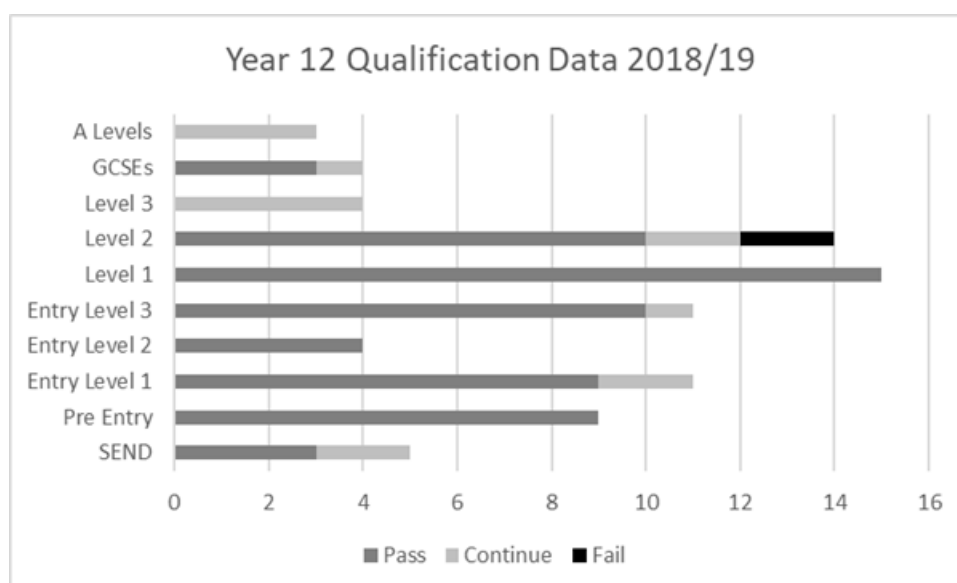
10. Post 16 Data

Post 16 data focuses on the full cohort rather than those that have been in care for a year or more.

10.1 Year 12

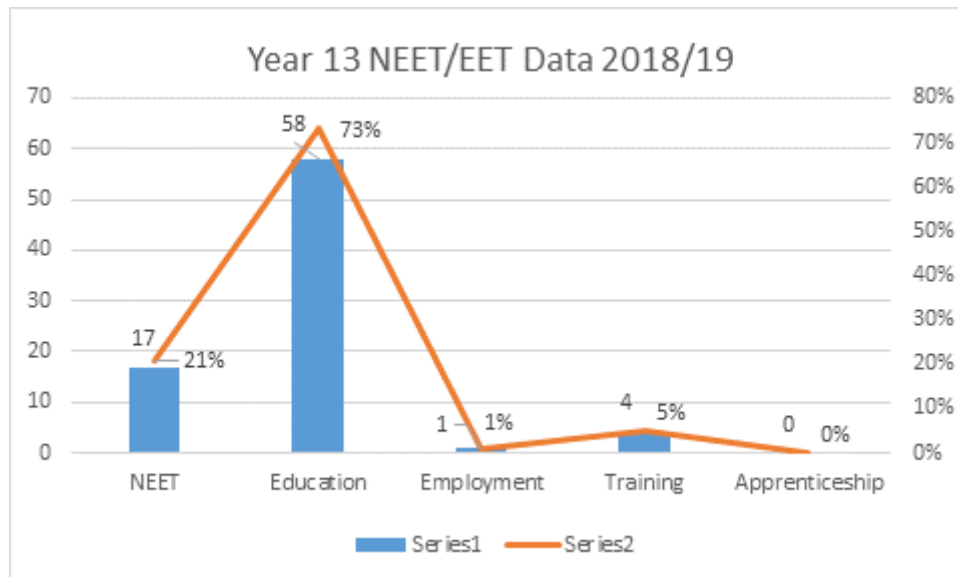


Of the 79 young people that continued in education. At the end of year 12 the following qualifications were achieved:

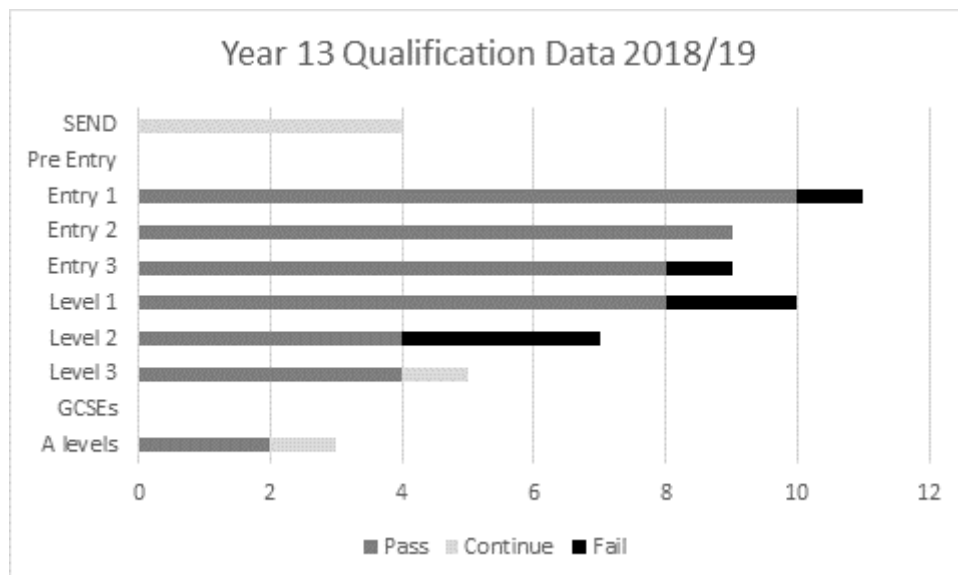


- 47 of the cohort are UASCs which accounts for the high number of Pre Entry – Entry 3 figures (as most were on ESOL at those levels)
- Both A level and Level 3 studies are two year courses which is why all these students are continuing not completing in Year 12

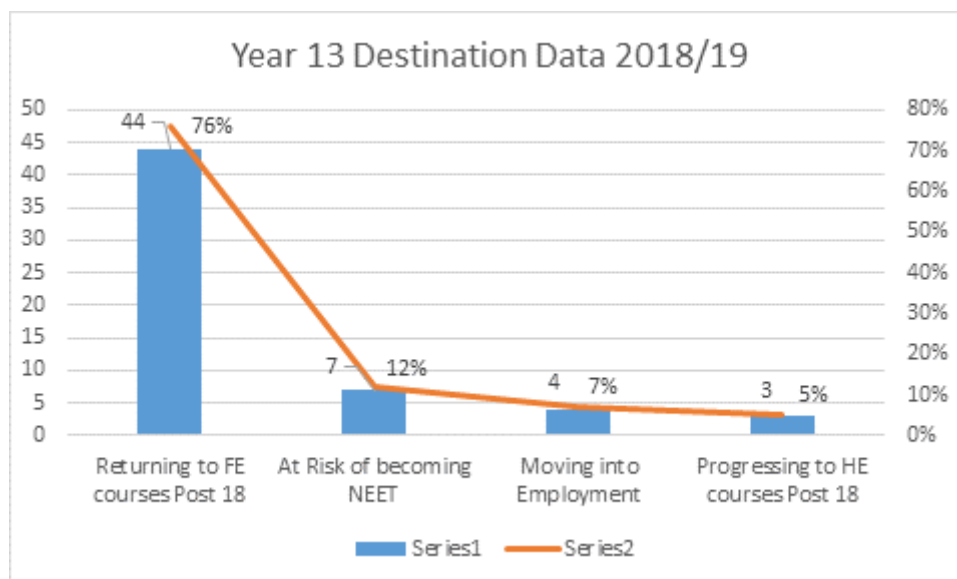
9.2 Year 13



Of the 58 young people that continued to access education in year 13, the following qualifications were achieved:



- 30 of the cohort are UASCs which accounts for the high number of Pre Entry – Entry 3 figures (as most were on ESOL at those levels)



- 76% are returning to Further Education, as they need to complete further courses to be able to move on to Higher Education
- The figure of 76% also includes 30 UASC students who need to progress up to an Entry 3 ESOL course before they can access vocational subject study

11. Inclusion

11.1 Attendance and Exclusions

- Absence from school is deemed unauthorised where there is no acceptable reason for the absence
- Persistent absence is where a child has missed 10% or more

	Unauthorised Absence	Persistent Absence	At Least 1 Fixed Term Exclusion
	% of Sessions	% of Sessions	% of Sessions
<i>National All Pupils</i>	1.4%	10.9%	4.8%
<i>Cambridgeshire All Pupils</i>	1.1%	9.0%	5.9%
National CiC	1.4%	10.9%	11.7%
Cambridgeshire CiC	0.9%	9.8%	12.5%

The exclusion figures relate to 2018 because exclusion data is published a year behind attainment data by the DfE. Detail has therefore also been provided of the Virtual School real time data (2019-2020).

- Cambridgeshire Children in Care's unauthorised absence and persistent absence data compares favourably to both the national Child in Care percentage and to all children

nationally. Against statistical neighbours Cambridgeshire are ranked 4th and 2nd (out of 11) respectively. This compares to 9th and 4th the previous year

- Cambridgeshire Children in Care experience a slightly higher rate of fixed term exclusions than Children in Care nationally. However Cambridgeshire ranks favourably against statistical neighbours (4th out of 11 authorities). The previous year Cambridgeshire was ranked 3rd

Virtual School Internal data

The data is for September 2019 to the end of March 2020 only due to COVID. Please note this relates to the full Virtual School statutory aged cohort (not the qualifying cohort). Furthermore COVID will still have had an impact on these figures as lockdown commenced on 23rd March, offering explanation as to the contrast between the reported data and the figures below.

Type	Percentage of Cambridgeshire CiC
Unauthorised Absence	9.6%
Persistence Absence	19.4%
Fixed Term Exclusion	8.8%

11.2 Alternative Provision

Where it meets the needs of individual pupils, alternative provision (including tuition) has supplemented the education offer for Cambridgeshire Children in Care. This provision was offered in a variety of circumstances including new to care, unplanned placement moves and children who were not managing the 'typical' education offer currently on offer to them.

At the time when COVID-19 necessitated lockdown (March 2020), 54 children received education outside of a 'typical' offer. This figure includes:

- 9 new to care UASCs
- 2 children who had recently moved into pre-adoptive placements
- 19 children unable to attend their on roll school; of these 2 children are missing abroad and 17 were children who experienced unplanned placement moves meaning that they were unable to continue with current education provision

Excluding the 30 children detailed above, 24 children did not receive a full offer from their on roll school; 5 of these children were on a reduced timetable, 4 of the children received a top-up education offer of tuition or an alternative programme and the remaining child was a reception child moving into an pre-adoptive placement, not yet of statutory school age, for whom a reduced timetable was deemed to be in his best interest.

For the remaining 19 children, where it was not possible for the primary provision to offer 25 hours, this was typically supplemented by:

- Tuition (face to face and online)
- Alternative learning opportunities including noise solutions, farm club and equine assisted learning

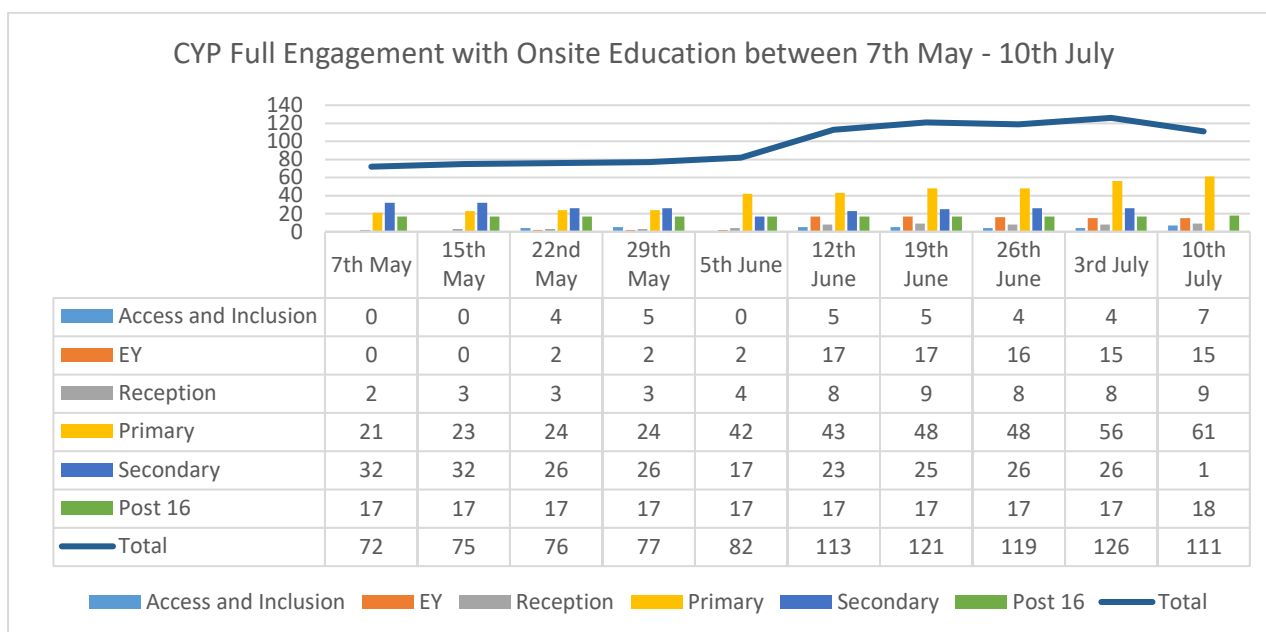
These 19 children received upon average 20.74 hours education per week although this average is significantly skewed due to refusal from 5 CYP who did not engage in any offer; there are significant CCE/CSE concerns for all 5 of these CYP and agencies beyond the Virtual School, including Youth Offending Service are already proactively involved.

11 of the 54 children within this overall group are placed within county, the rest are placed outside of Cambridgeshire. Significant work has been invested in order to develop relationships and further understanding within CCC Access to Resources team in order to mitigate the impact of unplanned placement moves and minimise disruption to education, including work towards keeping increasing numbers of Cambridgeshire Children in Care In county. Cambridgeshire Virtual School are aware of the limitations and barriers regarding suitable placements within county and are working in partnership with social care colleagues around this (as described in section 3.1). For all CYP who experienced an unplanned placement move, a tuition offer was put in place.

11.3 Impact of COVID on Education Engagement

Since March 2020 when schools closed to the majority of CYP, the Virtual School has:

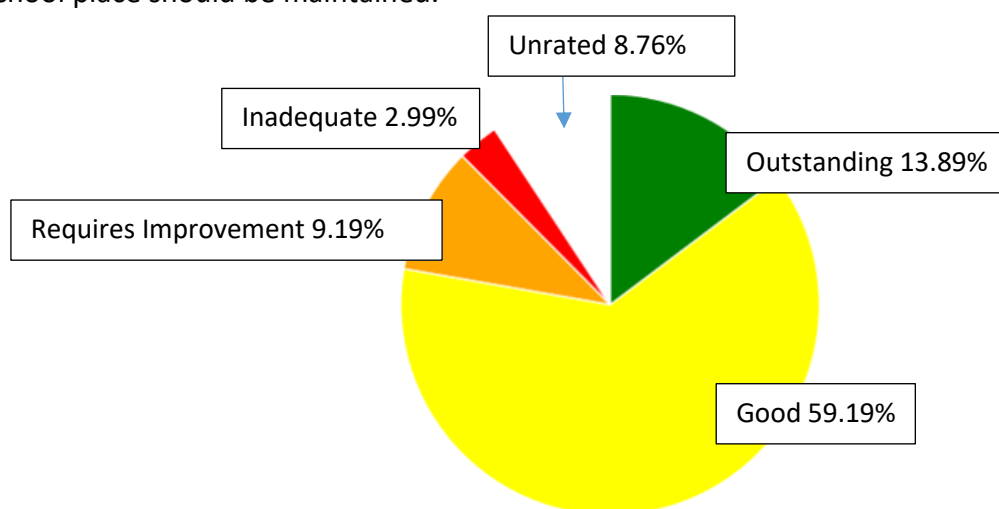
- Monitored attendance and engagement
- Supported CYP to access on-site provision; where deemed to be in the best interests of the CYP and carers
- Provided laptops to facilitate home education
- Provided guidance to carers to support home learning
- Operated a foster carer's support line
- Revised PP+ spend to take account of individual circumstances



As the term progressed more CYP returned to on-site provision. This can be explained by the national increased provision for all Early Years, year 1, year 6 (from 5th June) and year 10 (from mid-June). Additionally, there was a sense that in some instances the longer children were at home, the greater pressure this began to put on placements. Where this was the case, the Virtual School supported attendance.

11.4 Quality of Provision

73% of CYP in care of statutory school age, attend good or outstanding provision (July 2020 data). The schools with no ratings typically are new schools or schools that have converted to an academy, and not yet experienced an inspection. Where a child or young person is in a school that is less than good, the Virtual School consider on a case by case basis, whether the school place should be maintained.



12. Personal Education Plans

Improvements in the compliance and quality of PEPs has been a key priority for the Virtual School this year. In particular, there has been a focus on the quality of the desirable outcomes and the linking of pupil premium plus to these. In order to facilitate this the Virtual School have:

- Streamlined the PEP
- Added a RAG rating to each section of the PEP
- Provided a prompt within each section, asking the DT to decide if anything detailed in the section needs to be reflected in the desirable outcomes
- Revised the quality assurance process
- Developed webinars and a leaflet on desirable outcomes
- Created exemplar PEPs
- Created specific guidance documents on key aspects of the PEP
- Focused advisory visits on PEPs
- Offered training to social workers on their role within the PEP
- Introduced the PEP Champion role
- Written termly reports analysing the compliance and quality of PEPs to further inform practice

There has also been an external review of PEPs by the Local Authority Quality Assurance Team. See section 14 (priority 1 and 3) for the strengths identified. All action points have been reviewed and are detailed within the full Virtual School development plan.

12.1 Impact of COVID-19 on PEPs

In light of COVID-19, the Virtual School worked with Welfare Cloud (the e-PEP provider) to create a bespoke PEP which was more meaningful. This focused on current provision, wellbeing, the views of the CYP, the carer and social worker and transition. Where possible virtual meetings were held. If this could not be achieved, views were gathered by the designated teacher to feed into the document.

In relation to this one DT wrote to the Virtual School to say: *'Thank you for creating such a helpful Covid-19 summer term PEP. I think you are the only LA we work with who has done this and as it is designed for the current situation, is very helpful.'*

The change in PEP for the summer term has impacted on the possible analysis across the full year.

12.2 Compliance with the PEP Process (including attendance)

Term	Percentage of children with a PEP	Social Worker Attendance	Social Worker sign off of My Details	Designated Teacher sign off of education sections
Autumn	99.5%	64%	73%	86%
Spring	99.2%	62%	60.1%	80.6%
Summer	98.0%	See below	84.0%	16.0%

	Social Worker Contribution			Designated Teacher Compliance		
	Full	Partial	No	Full	Partial	No
Summer	74.6%	10.8%	14.6%	90.0%	8.0%	2.0%

- It is disappointing that there has not been an improvement in social worker attendance or PEPs sign off between the autumn and spring term PEPs. A start and finish task group has convened to plan how to impact on this for next academic year. It is also a priority identified in the ILACS action plan following the Focused Visit in February 2020.
- There was some impact of Covid-19 which resulted in a low number of PEPs being submitted after the submission deadline in the spring term and this was communicated with link advisory teachers; allowances were made for late submission, however all PEPs were signed off on the final day of the spring term regardless of completion (27th March 2020)
- The contributions from social workers to the summer term COVID PEP was pleasing
- Designated teachers responded positively to the COVID PEP and compliance was high

12.3 PEP Quality

Each section of the PEP is now rated separately. The analysis below focuses on desirable outcomes. These are the targets set by designated teachers using the identified strengths and needs detailed in all sections of the full PEP. There are also details on the quality of the 'my details' tab. This contains relevant social care information.

	Autumn Term 2019			Spring Term 2020		
	GREEN	AMBER	RED	GREEN	AMBER	RED
Desirable Outcomes (Early Years)	EY moved to the revised model in the Spring term			70%	24%	6%
Desirable Outcomes (Year 1-11)	24%	46%	30%	42%	44%	9%
Desirable Outcomes (Post 16)	55%	29%	16%	66%	22%	12%

- It should be noted that in the autumn term, where outcomes were red, DTs were given feedback and an opportunity to amend them before the final ratings. In the spring term, DTs were not.

- It is pleasing to see the improvement in desirable outcomes, evidencing the impact of the Virtual School's focus. It is not possible to compare the summer term owing to COVID-19

Social Care 'My Details' Rating	Autumn	Spring	Summer
RED	21%	33%	31.8%
AMBER	13%	23%	30.8%
GREEN	64%	42%	37.4%

- There has been a decline in the quality of social care sections over the year
- There will be a focus on improving the quality of the 'my details' next academic year. Social Care are invested in working with in partnership with the Virtual School to achieve this

13 Pupil Premium Plus Spending and Impact

13.1 Allocations to Schools

- Following the implementation of the new model, changes were made in the Autumn Term 2019 which required schools to request PP+ and account for this by setting and reviewing 'desirable outcomes' at an individual child level. Designated teachers are now required to set a 'desirable outcome' within the PEP, identify an action and then cost it, identifying what PP+ is required to enable the action to take place. This is reviewed termly
- At the end of the Autumn Term £211,706 PP+ was awarded to CiC of statutory school age. The approximate breakdown of this can be seen below:

Autumn Term 2019	
Area of Learning / Development	% of PP+ Grant
Cognition and Learning	59%
Communication and Interaction	5%
Sensory and Physical	1.5%
Social Emotional & Mental Health	30%
Attendance	0.25%
Transitions	1%
Wider Achievement	3%
Other	0.25%

- The impact of the autumn term allocation was reviewed within the spring term 2020 PEPs. Prior to quality assurance £251,643 was requested for summer term PP+ spend. Following the QA process and challenge from the Virtual School regarding appropriateness of planned spend and carry over from previous term, the final

planned PP+ spend was determined to be £199,703.50. The approximate breakdown of this can be seen below:

Spring Term 2020	
Area of Learning / Development	% of PP+ Grant
Cognition and Learning	60%
Communication and Interaction	5%
Sensory and Physical	2%
Social Emotional & Mental Health	32%
Attendance	0.5%
Transitions	2%
Wider Achievement	0.5%
Other	0%

- As a result of Covid-19, designated teachers were asked to review their proposed PP+ spend and resubmit only those interventions which could still be accessed. As a result of this, £119,083.20 was paid to schools in the summer term 2020
- Impact is currently identifiable at an individual child level. Between the autumn and spring term desirable outcomes were fully achieved in 37.8% of cases and partially met in 43.2%; they were not met for 19%; this can be broken down further in line with the areas of learning and development

	Outcome Fully Achieved	Outcome Partially Achieved	Outcome Not Achieved
Cognition & Learning	38.6%	41.2%	20.2%
Communication & Interaction	35.5%	46.8%	17.7%
Sensory and/or Physical	33.3%	55.6%	11.1%
Social Emotional Mental Health	31.4%	51.8%	16.8%
Attendance	58.8%	29.4%	11.8%
Transitions	45.0%	27.5%	27.5%
Wider Achievement	44.9%	36.7%	18.4%
Other	46.7%	40.0%	13.3%

- Comments from PEP reviews included:
 - "CiC has received regular and intensive adult support for learning this term, and has made excellent progress in all areas of learning, reaching or exceeding ARE in all areas (see assessment data section of PEP). This represents excellent progress from his starting points"
 - "CiC is now able to move from the playground during his break and lunch times smoothly. He responds well to completing small tasks around the classroom when returning"
 - "CiC is now working at a level 5 for science which is now within her target range of 5-7 where previously CiC was working at a 4. CiC is doing regular recap work at home on Doodle and also My Maths. CiC has been covering science topics at level 5-

7 with her home tutor for 1 hour per week and has made good progress in chemistry word equations and in electricity where she now has a good understanding, CiC is also completing science practice exam papers. CiC's teacher in school checks regularly with CiC her understanding of lesson content"

- Within the Academic Year 2019-20, 26 CYP had tuition which was paid for from PP+. This equates to just over £70 000. This was made up of new to care (8), placement move (13), school breakdown (3), Covid19 (2) and does not include CYP who have an EHCP as this tuition is funded by SAT. Engagement within tuition has varied between CYP and is detailed below

Summary of Engagement within Tuition Provided by PP+		
Full Engagement	Partial Engagement	No Engagement
15/26 = 58%	6/26 = 23%	5/26 = 18%

- 101 laptops have been provided at an approximate cost of £54 000. The Virtual School opted to purchase laptops out of PP+ as opposed to using the DfE allocation for school aged children. This was because the DfE laptops are loaned rather than owned by the child and the allocation did not arrive in the local authority until the end of June, they then needed to be set up and distributed. The Virtual School were able to source and allocate the first requests in March 2020. The DfE allocation has been used for 16-18 year olds who do not attract the PP+ grant

13.3 Staffing Within the Virtual School:

Access and Inclusion Team (4.0)

- Following the restructure of the model, there are now 4 members of staff who work in a sub-team dedicated to promoting the access and inclusion of CiC. (x1 Senior Advisory Teacher, x3 Access and Inclusion Officers). The remit of this team includes processing of CiC new to care, managing school admissions, sourcing interim provision for CiC not accessing provision
- Access and Inclusion Officers also offer support across the whole Virtual School, each holding a specific responsibility including the roles of PEP Champion, Safeguarding Lead and CENE (Children with an EHCP not in Education) Lead
- Since September 2019, the Access and Inclusion have supported 134 CiC. Approximately 35% of these have been CYP new to care, including UASCs, for whom the initial assessment remains the undertaking of the Virtual School
- There have been 59 planned school moves, including CiC moving into pre-adoptive placements. Typically these are attributable to SEND needs, planned care moves and school moves following approval of permanence
- There have been 62 unplanned school moves as a result of placement moves/breakdown or school breakdown where the child is not new to care

- There have been two formal directions this academic year and one case where direction was considered, although this was then resolved before the formal process commenced
- 3.5% of PEPs were completed by the Access and Inclusion team due to the cohort not attending an educational setting

Educational Psychologist (0.6)

- An EP was seconded to the Virtual School in April 2019 for 3 days a week.
- Following the ILACS inspection in January 2019, the EP was asked to lead improvements in the quality of the Desirable Outcomes within the PEP. She undertook work with the Virtual School team in order to upskill advisory teachers and also delivered face-to-face training and webinar sessions; these remain on youtube to be viewed by new designated teachers.
- Data from quality assurance has been detailed in section 12.2, which demonstrates clear impact on the quality of desirable outcomes
- The EP has also provided bespoke EP support for complex cases, including CiC placed out of county. She has led complex case discussions, specifically with the Access and Inclusion team
- The EP has offered supervision to members of the Virtual School Team upon request
- During the COVID-19 period she has worked with SEND Services and the Clinicians to provide advice and support to carers. This has had limited usage with only two carers using the service. The service is currently being reviewed with plans to extend the remit to include advice where there are children previously in care, and an offer for schools and education settings

Data Officer (0.7)

- A tracker has now been established which ensures that the Virtual School roll remains accurate. This tracker also includes child level detail for CiC aged 2 and below to ensure that there is a smooth transition for the Virtual School Early Years Advisory Teacher.
- The use of Welfare Cloud Analytics, Nexus, LAIT and Fischer Family Trust is now embedded in the work of the Virtual School.

13.3 Training

All training offered by the Virtual School is funded through PP+. Please see section 4 for details.

13.4 Resources

The Virtual School have invested in virtual reality headsets. These have been incorporated into key training courses in preparation for next academic year. The Cornerstone VR programme provides an immersive experience which offers accelerated learning and understanding of the needs of children in or that have experience of the care system.

The Virtual School has purchased the 'Reach to Teach' App for all schools and education settings / providers worked with. This app supports educators to reflect on what various behaviours may be communicating and provides suggestions / approaches which may increase the inclusion and participation of the child or young person.

The Boxall Profile is one tool which supports educators to consider the social and emotional needs of children and young people. The Virtual School have purchased this resource and will be making it available to schools next academic year.

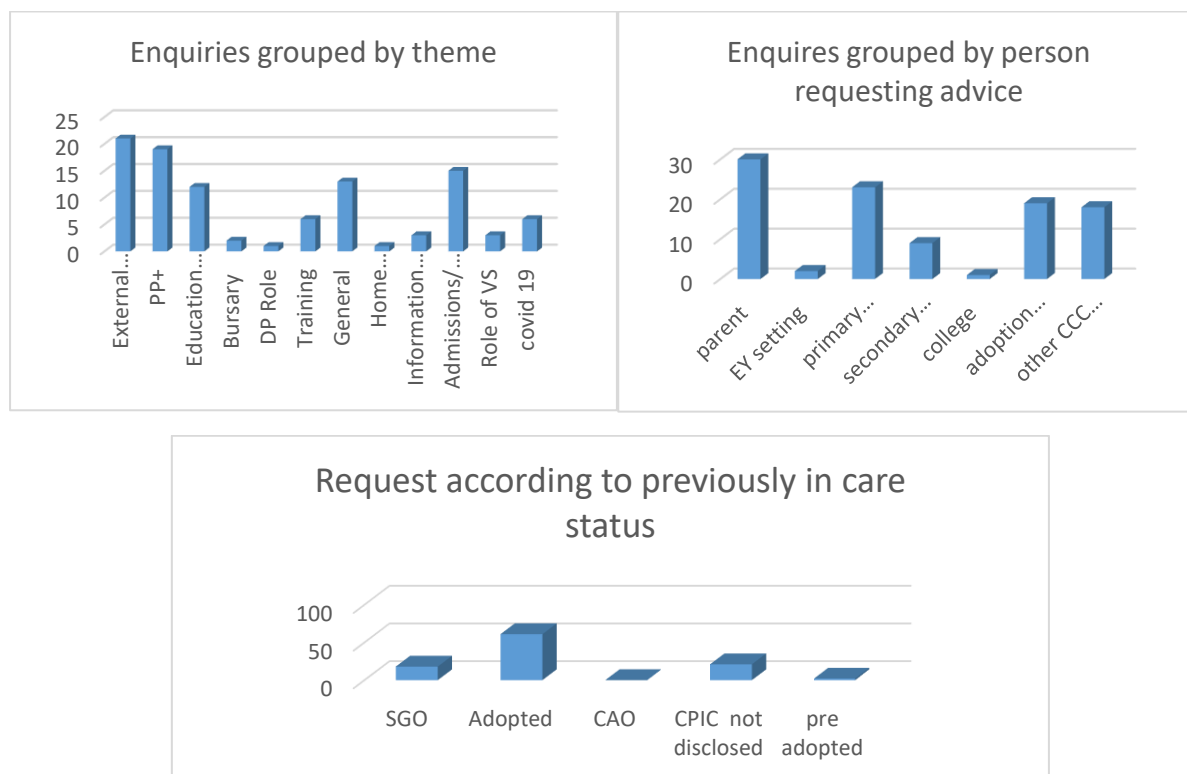
14 Children Previously in Care

In October 2019 the Virtual School recruited a Previously in Care Advisor jointly with Peterborough Virtual School. This offered Cambridgeshire two days of support. The Advisor is leaving in August. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have made the decision to split the role, but will continue to work closely together.

The focus this year has been on:

- The creation of resources and literature to support families and professionals
- A training offer for families and professionals
- Advice and information for families and professionals around individual circumstances
- Creating links with key agencies and other Virtual School Previously in Care Advisors within the Eastern region.

Over the year there have been 102 enquires of which 60% received a response the same day and a further 37% were responded to within 1-3 days.



- The analysis by type of enquiry has informed the production of literature to cover these common themes.
- It is evident that the service has been more commonly used by families and professionals linked to adoption (64% of enquiries compared to 18% of enquiries linked to SGOs and no enquiries where there is a CAO). Over the next year, further consideration will be given as to how to promote the role of the Virtual School to families and professionals linked to children subject to Special Guardianship Orders and Child Arrangement Orders.
- £68,796 was provided to the local authority to fulfil this duty. A further sum is guaranteed for the next year.

15 Review of Priorities for 2019 / 2020

Six priorities were identified in the Virtual School development plan; the first four of which are central to the Virtual School's long term development plan. These are:

1. PEPs consistently meet the needs of children and young people in care
2. Children and young people in care have increased access to and inclusion within education, leading to improved outcomes
3. Projects and intervention (including those funded by PP+) raise attainment, engagement and aspirations
4. There is a collective responsibility for the education of Children in Care, with all parties feeling empowered to support effectively
5. Policy and practice promotes educational outcomes for children previously in care
6. There is stability within the Virtual School Team and a sense of wellbeing

The first year's impact can be evidenced in the following way:

Priority 1:

- Education sections of the PEP have shown a term on term improvement in quality (see section 12 for further details)
- There has consistently been above 98% of children in receipt of a PEP

The external PEP audit completed December 19 identified the following strengths:

- The Virtual School Quality Assurance standards are applied in the majority of cases.
- Virtual School QA system is effective in identifying actions which are not SMART, and are producing resources to assist ePEP authors make improvements required
- Children and young people were given support to assist with transitions between school and through key stages

Priority 2:

- Relationships have developed between the Virtual School, Social Care, Statutory Assessment Team and ART
- The Virtual School Access and Inclusion Team are now leading on support for children new to care or requiring a change to education provision*

- CENE meetings are now taking place fortnightly*
- All children without an EHCP have an offer of education within 10 days of the need arising
- There were no permanent exclusions. Where a school did initiate the process, VS intervention enabled an alternative outcome

** Data processes are currently being developed which will enable the impact of changes made to be monitored and reported on*

Priority 3:

- Pupil Premium Plus spend now links directly to desirable outcomes
- Examples of the review of spending are reported (see section 13.1 for details)
- The spend can be reported against 'area of need' (see section 13.1 for details)
- 8 children took part in the REES Centre Paired Reading intervention. Post intervention assessments are currently underway
- The impact of the role of the EP is evidenced in section 13.2

The external PEP audit completed December 19 identified the following strengths:

- Pupil Premium Plus payments were appropriately scrutinised by the Virtual School
- Children's views were being used to create child centred actions for Pupil Premium Plus spending

Priority 4:

- Evaluations from the Early Years launch demonstrate an understanding of the new model
- A total of 500 advisory visits took place over the autumn and spring term
- Advisory visits paperwork show that the majority of education settings have made progress towards the outcomes set. These have linked to the empowerment of DTs in their role and support to enable DTs to complete PEPs with increased confidence. Where this isn't the case, there is evidence of increased VS intervention
- There is an understanding within the VS of the remit of other teams and direct lines of communication are established

16 Priorities for 2020 / 2021

These four priorities will continue to underpin developments within the Virtual School, with data being a golden thread running through. For this year a fifth priority has been identified, which relates to COVID recovery. All of the priorities identified will be detailed in the Virtual School Development Plan 2020 / 2021. The development plan will include key actions and termly review points, in order to measure impact. The progress towards achieving the outcomes will be shared both through the Corporate Parenting Board Sub-Committee and with the Virtual School Management Board.

Within these priorities, the following developments are planned:

- 1. PEPs consistently meet the needs of children and young people in care**
 - There is increased compliance and quality of PEPs within social care
 - Personal Advisors have increased understanding of PEPs and their role within it
 - Engagement of MATs in raising compliance and quality of PEPs within their schools is piloted
 - Attainment and progress data is accurately completed within PEPs
 - The Advisory Team are upskilled and able to use the data within PEPs to offer support and challenge to schools
 - There continues to be a high level of training around PEPs; the offer is supplemented by the creation of webinars
 - The initial PEP process is embedded, ensuring compliance is above 95%
 - The scope of the role of the PEP Champion is formalised
 - A PEP QA audit panel (to include representatives from social care, the education sector and the local authority) is created which provides greater scrutiny of the QA process
- 2. Children and young people in care have increased access to and inclusion within education, leading to improved outcomes**
 - Data systems for SEND, AP, NEET (at Post 16), attendance and exclusion enable accurate monitoring and reporting which inform a VS response
 - Processes are further developed which enable education to be seen as central at the point of entry to care / placement move
 - Tuition is tailored to the individual's strengths and needs. It is evaluated in terms of cost and impact
 - SEND protocol is operational. The VS team and key partners understand the protocol and CENE meetings; it is used to increase inclusion leading to improved outcomes for children and young people
 - The foster carers support line is extended to include families and professionals supporting children previously in care, and educational professionals supporting Children in Care
 - Resources which promote inclusion e.g. Boxall and Reach to Teach are provided for DTs
- 3. Projects and intervention (including those funded by PP+) raise attainment, engagement and aspirations**
 - Aspirational Futures project is initiated and developed
 - The feasibility of participating in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library scheme is considered and if relevant progressed
 - Virtual Reality Headsets are incorporated into VS training offer and the impact is measured
 - PP+ allocated through PEPs is monitored and analysed to evaluate impact against attainment and progress

- Advisory visits focus on using term on term data, alongside end of year stage data to support and challenge DTs in targeting effective intervention to raise attainment and progress
- A VS grant is available to support the educational needs of 16-18 year olds, increasing EET
- A programme is developed which supports life skills for young people (post 16)
- Trauma informed training is extended to include targeted young people

4. There is a collective responsibility for the education of Children in Care, with all parties feeling empowered to support effectively

- The training offer is further developed to include virtual network meetings, webinars and face to face sessions for all key partners (IROS, carers and residential carers, SW, schools, governors, ART, connected persons team, Adoption team)
- Data is used to highlight key barriers and successes, this is shared with key partners in order to drive forward change
- Policy and practice is developed to enable the VS Team to empower others to effectively support care experienced children
- Internal VS data and tracking facilitates effectively support the work of the wider VS team
- The website is updated and kept relevant
- Twitter is used to promote key messages with all key partners
- Current barriers with access to shared systems are overcome

5. COVID 19 Recovery Plan

- The Virtual School is abreast of the national and local context and responds accordingly
- The VS EP provides support to carers, parents and schools to support transition back into school post COVID
- Additional PP+ requests are considered in response to impact of COVID (catch up provision and SEMH support)
- Tuition is in place for year 11s and 13s who wish to re-sit following the results being issued
- There is strong advocacy for any year 11s and 13s who have not achieved the minimum grades required to enable entry to the next phase of their education, impacting on EET
- Risk assessments facilitate the return to office bases and face to face working in line with CCC policy

17. Glossary of Acronyms

ARE	Age Related Expectation
CAO	Child Arrangement Order
CENE	Children with an Education Health Care Plan not in Education
CiC	Child/ren in Care
CPiC	Child/ren Previously in Care
CYP	Children or Young Person
DfE	Department for Education
EET	In Education Employment or Training
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan
EP	Education Psychologist
ESOL	English to Speakers of Other Languages
EY	Early Years
FASD	Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
GLD	Good Level of Development
ILACS	Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer
KS (1,2,3,4)	Key Stage (1,2,3,4)
LA	Local Authority
LAIT	Local Authority Information Tool
NEET	Not in Education Employment or Training
PA	Personal Advisor
PEP	Personal Education Plan
PP+	Pupil Premium Plus
RAG	Read Amber Green (rating)
SEMH	Social Emotional Mental Health
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SGO	Special Guardianship Order
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child/ren
YOS	Youth Offending Service

**DRAFT CORPORATE PARENTING SUB – COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT
2019/2020**

To: **Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee**

Meeting Date: **9 September 2020**

From: **Fiona Van Den Hout
Head of Service Corporate Parenting**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Outcomes: **To approve the draft Annual Report which details key Council business for 2019/20 in relation to Children in Care and Young People leaving care for submission to the Children and Young People Committee.**

Recommendation: **Approve the Draft of the Annual Report**

<i>Officer Contact:</i>	<i>Member Contact:</i>
Name: Fiona Van Den Hout Post: Head of Service Corporate Parenting Email: Fiona.vandenhout@cambridgeshire.gov.uk Tel: (office) 01223 518379	Name: Councillor Lis Every Role: Chairman, Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee Email: Lis.Every@cambridgeshire.gov.uk Tel: (office) 01223 706398

Summary:

The Draft Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee Annual Report sets out the Sub Committee's activity over the year 2019-2020 and looks at the performance and progress in the Council's work with Children in Care and young people leaving care against the following five key priorities:

- Being and feeling safe
- Being healthy and leading a healthy lifestyle
- Achieving stability and permanence
- Preparing for adulthood
- Hearing the voices of children and young people

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Corporate Parenting Sub Committee provides an annual report to the Children and Young People's Committee detailing activity undertaken by the Sub-Committee throughout each year. The report details the performance and achievements relating to the Council's work with children in care and those leaving care from April 2018 to March 2019.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 Please see the full draft report in Appendix 1.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES**3.1 A good quality of life for everyone**

This corporate priority is explicit throughout the report as it relates to children in care supported by the Council and the experiences of children and young people leaving the Council's care.

3.2 Thriving places for people to live

This corporate priority is explicit throughout the report as it relates to children in care supported by the Council and the experiences of children and young people leaving the Council's care.

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

This corporate priority is explicit throughout the report as it relates to children in care supported by the Council and the experiences of children and young people leaving the Council's care.

3.4 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

n/a

4.1 Resource Implications

n/a

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

n/a

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

n/a

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

n/a

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

n/a

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

n/a

4.7 Public Health Implications

n/a

Source Documents	Location
None	

Cambridgeshire County Council

Corporate Parenting Annual Report Sub Committee

2019/20



Welcome Foreword from Councillor Lis Every, Chairperson of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee



Welcome to this year's Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee Annual Report. In this report we will be looking back on our successes and achievements throughout 2019 and the progress we have made against our priorities for children in care and care leaving young people.

In writing this foreword, I realise that any report covering this period would not be complete without an acknowledgement of the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic which arrived with us in the latter part of this reporting year. I fully appreciate the enormity of effect this has had on many people's lives, on the children we support and the staff that have worked tirelessly to continue to deliver a service to our most disadvantaged and vulnerable children. I extend a sincere and wholehearted thank you to all our staff from myself and from my colleagues who sit on the Sub-Committee. We have been reassured that the children and young people whom the Council cares for and supports have been in the forefront of everyone's mind during these challenging times.

A key event took place in October 2019 when we were fortunate to participate in a supportive peer review visit by Central Bedfordshire which looked at our services for children in care and young people leaving care and provided us with an expert external perspective on our services. Whilst peer reviews are not inspections, they are a key tool for improvement, identifying strengths and challenging us to think about areas for development. The areas for improvement are noted within the body of this report but the key positive messages included:

- Children's Services had clearly evidenced significant improvement because of considered and effective change in the structure of the service, processes and priorities
- Improvement was reflected in performance data, reviews of case files and the view of practitioners
- Social Workers and Personal Advisors know their children well and are able to articulate considered and effective planning for children, the service knows itself well

In February 2020, Cambridgeshire's children's services also received a focussed visit from Ofsted, looking specifically at the Local Authority's arrangements for children in care. Inspectors noted that senior leaders had focussed on addressing actions highlighted for improvement in the last inspection (early 2019) and that they fully understood both the service strengths and areas for development working systematically, together with partners, to drive up the quality of social work practice. Crucially for children, Inspectors recognised the improvements that had been made in services for children in care and that these improvements had positively impacted on their experiences and progress.

The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee was also considered within the focussed visit and Inspectors did note that the committee provided a forum to challenge and hold officers to account, as well as providing direction to inform improvements. When I met with the Inspectors, I did agree that more work needed to be undertaken to ensure that we develop processes and structures that support our ambition for children in care and care leavers to be fully involved in steering and influencing the committee agenda and outcomes. Alongside our participation service and Council officers, we have identified this as a target area for next year and I look forward to noting the improvements in next year's annual report.

Finally, in recognition that the service children in care experience is enhanced by the passion and commitment of the Council's workforce, I would also like to thank our Children and Safeguarding Director Lou Williams, his staff and our foster carers for all their continued hard work. This year I am also noting the departure of Assistant Director, Sarah Jane Smedmor and welcoming Assistant Director Nicola Curley who joined the Corporate Parenting service in March and I look forward to working with her as we continue on our improvement journey



CONTENT GUIDE TO THE 2019- 2020 CORPORATE PARENTING SUB- COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

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The role of the Corporate Parenting Sub Committee – how we do things in Cambridgeshire

What is corporate parenting?

Corporate parenting is founded on the principle that the Local Authority, collectively with other relevant services, should have the same aspirations and provide the same kind of care that any good parent would provide for their own children

Background

In April 2017, the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee of the Children and Young People (CYP) Committee became active following a review of the long established Corporate Parenting Board. The new arrangements reflected the drive to strengthen arrangements for oversight and decision making in respect of corporate parenting activity with clear accountability to the CYP Committee through adopting a scheme of delegated authority and a framework for decision making.

Purpose

The purpose of Sub-Committee is to ensure that the Council effectively discharges its role as Corporate Parent for all children and young people in its care and provides a key role in ensuring accountability. The transformation of the Sub Committee has been led by the Chair, reinvigorating it into one which is proactive in challenging service delivery and advocating strongly for Children in Care and Care Leavers resulting in a more robust constitution with stronger governance principles.

The Sub-Committee has delegated authority to exercise all the Council's functions relating to the delivery, by or on behalf of the Council, of Corporate Parentings functions with the exception of policy decisions which remains with the CYP Committee.

Delegated authority includes:

- Working with the Virtual School to raise standards of attainment and developing education, employment and training opportunities for children in care, former children in care and children leaving care.
- Ensuring mechanisms for consultation and participation are positively promoted and that the Council actively listens and responds to the views and experiences of children in care, former children in care and children leaving care.
- Receiving regular reports on the provisions of services for children in care and care leavers as required by legislation and for the purpose of monitoring and offering advice.
- Working with the Clinical Commissioning Group and health providers to ensure delivery of services to meet health needs including health assessments and plans, emotional health, sexual health, substance misuse and teenage pregnancy.

The National Care Advisory Service (NCAS) reminds us that: 'corporate parenting should seek to ensure supportive relationships where young people feel cared for, not just looked after'. Being a Good Corporate Parent involves championing the rights of Children in Care and Care Leavers, ensuring they have access to good services and support from the local authority and from other partner agencies working with them

Future developments

Over the last year, the Sub-Committee has been focussing its activity around five key priorities which has helped us to maintain scrutiny on specific areas and topics that are central to the lived experience of children in care and those leaving care. This report will follow the format of the following priorities:

- Being and feeling safe
- Being healthy and leading a healthy lifestyle
- Achieving stability and permanence
- Preparing for adulthood
- Hearing the voices of children and young people

During the focussed visit from Ofsted in February 2020, Inspectors told us that we needed to improve on how, as a Council, we demonstrate “the impact of children’s involvement and participation, so that children are told what is being done in response to their views and wishes, both for their own individual case plans and when contributing to strategic service planning.”

In response, the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee agreed to review and consider a restructure of meetings in order to help us to bring about more effective engagement with children and young people. During 2020, a proposed structure will be considered that will see the Sub- Committee continuing to hold six meetings a year but these will arranged over three formal and three informal meetings. The meetings will be themed around Placement, Education and Health and each topic will be considered in both sets of meetings.

The informal meetings will be chaired by the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee Chairperson, attended by representatives from the Children in Care Council, Elected Members and Council officers. The informal meeting is seen as an opportunity for Corporate Parents to listen to young people in an environment where they feel able to talk freely about their experiences in care and as care leavers and discuss ways to improve services going forward.

Be someone to talk to if you
just want a listening ear

Talk about Covid or
anything you want

Help you with tools
to manage anxiety

Follow a recipe, prepare
a meal with you or do a
quiz or game with you

Help you find
useful things
online

Share fun things to do online
like zoo tours, plays and
musicals and games

Children in Care and Care Leaver demographics Who our children are;

714

children in care who Cambridgeshire were responsible for

74

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children in care in Cambridgeshire

416

young people in the leaving care population

229

children and young people in a long-term fostering placement

65

children in care with a recorded disability

302

female children in care

412

male children in care

Children in Care	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20
Total CIC Population	785	786	778	783	771	766	750	752	743	740	727	714
Non-Unaccompanied Children	713	717	712	710	696	690	672	668	658	655	645	640
Unaccompanied Children (UC)	72	69	66	73	75	76	78	84	85	85	82	74
Unaccompanied Children %	9.17 %	8.78%	8.48 %	9.32 %	9.73 %	9.92 %	10.40 %	11.17 %	11.44 %	11.49 %	11.28 %	10.36 %
Rate per 10,000	57.8	57.9	57.3	57.7	56.8	56.4	55.3	55.4	54.7	54.5	53.6	52.6

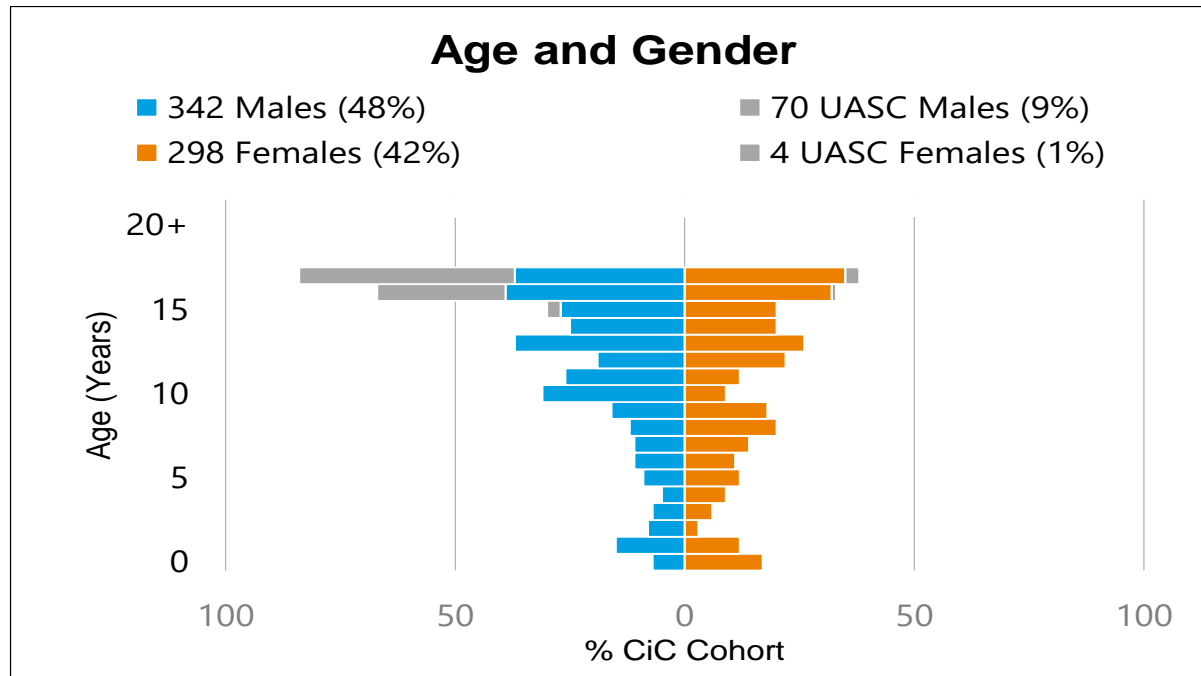
Children in Care

As of 31st March 2020, Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for caring for and looking after 714 Children in Care (excluding children in respite care), a decrease when compared to the 772 children in Care at the end of March 2019. Between April and July 2019 there was a significant increase in the numbers of children, which slowly went down during the year.

The rise in the numbers of children during April and July was also reflected in the increased number of unaccompanied children and young people seeking asylum who arrived in Cambridgeshire during the summer months, with numbers of spontaneous arrivals decreasing over the latter part of the year.

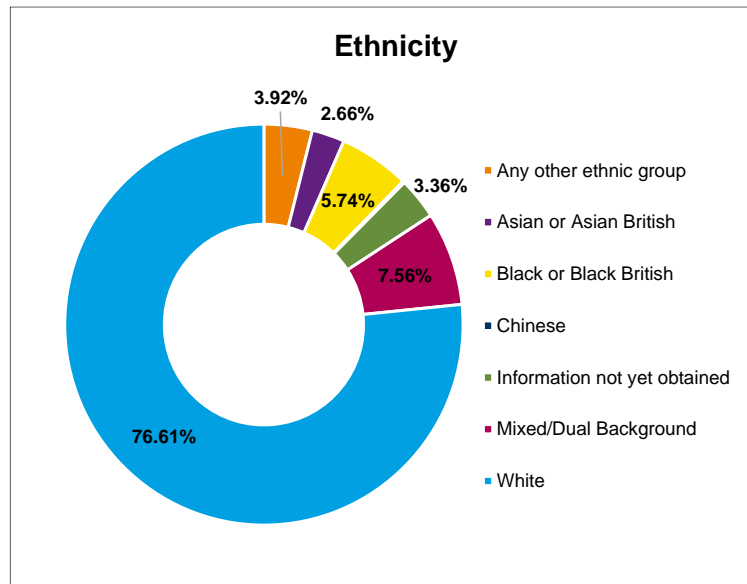
The vast majority of these children will have experienced frightening and distressing experiences during their journey to the UK and in order to ensure social workers had the capacity to respond to these children's complex needs, it was agreed with the Eastern Region Network that Cambridgeshire would be exempt from receiving children from other Local Authorities via the National Transfer Scheme for a short period in late summer.

The chart below shows the age and gender of Cambridgeshire's Children in Care as of 31st March 2020. Unaccompanied asylum seeking children made up 10% of the care population and all but four children are male.

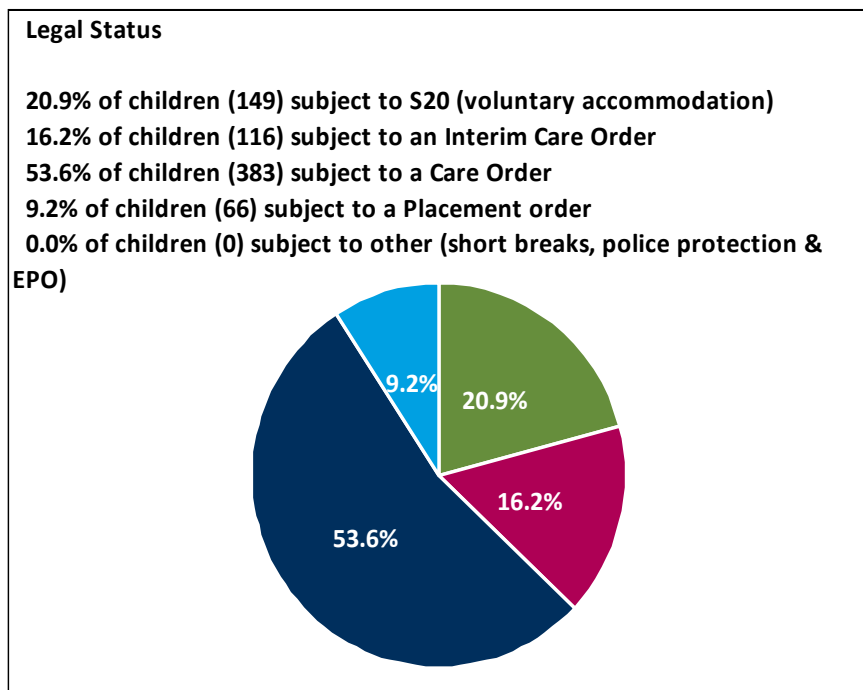


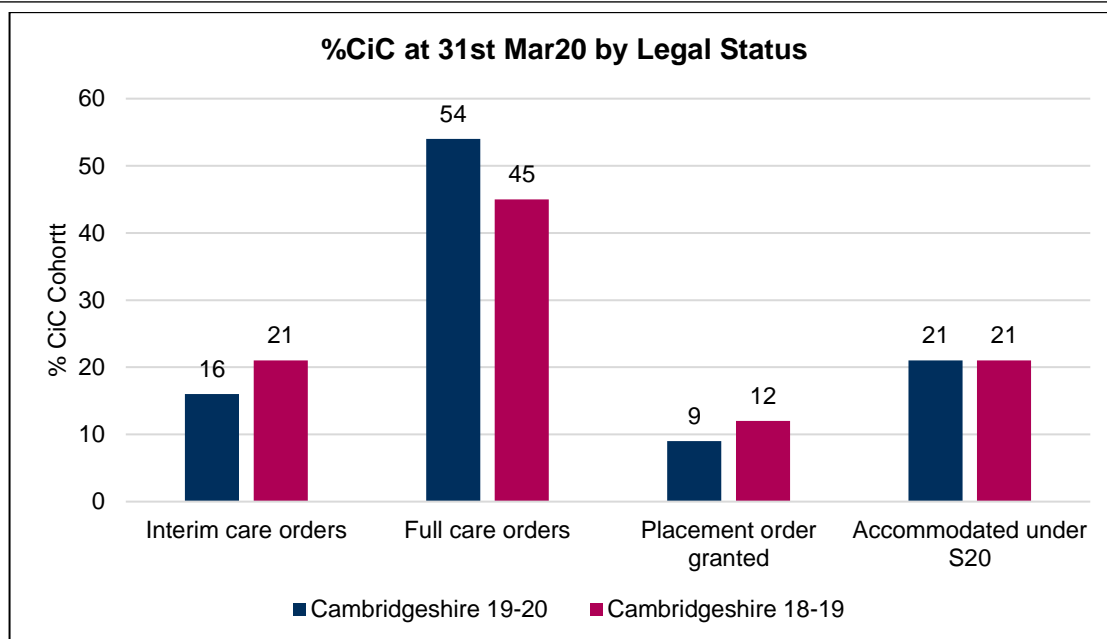
At the end of the year there are 65 children in care with a recorded disability, representing 9% of the care population. Of these the most prominent disabilities recorded are Learning Difficulties (26.9%) and Autism and Asperger Syndrome (17.6%).

The chart below shows the ethnicity of Children in Care as of the 31st March 2020.



The chart below provides a breakdown of the legal status of children as of the 31st March 2020. The numbers in brackets represent the numbers of children.





Care Leavers

As of the 31st March 2020 the leaving care population consists of 416 young people, compared to 360 children at the end of 2019. We do recognise that the care leaving cohort will continue to rise in the coming years as a result of legislation extending the support of Personal Advisors to all care leavers up to the age of 25 years (Children and Social Work Act 2017).

To support this activity, capacity in the specialist Leaving Care Teams has been increased through additional Personal Advisor posts and Personal Advisor posts within the Children in Care Teams who have a focus on transition planning for children moving into adulthood. To further support our care leavers, specialist posts have also been created: a Local Offer Personal Advisor, an Education, Employment and Training Coordinator and a Homelessness Reduction Personal Advisor.

26 Care Leavers (6.3%) have a recorded disability and of these the most common conditions recorded are Autism or Asperger Syndrome (46%), Behavioural Difficulties (23%), and Learning Difficulties (19%).

Whilst these demographics are important to help us understand who are children are, we need to take into account that each one of these figures is an individual child or young person with their own unique life experiences, aspirations and asks of their Corporate Parent

Corporate Parenting Priorities 2019/2020

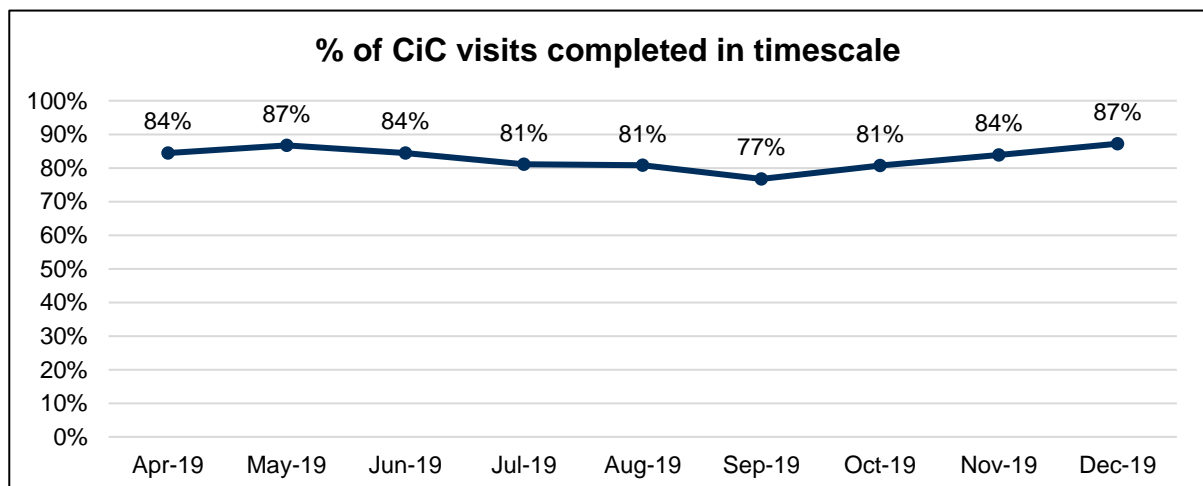
Being and Feeling Safe

- To ensure all children in care receive a timely visit from their social worker and have the opportunity to build meaningful relationships
- To have consistent oversight of children in care who are at risk of exploitation
- To continue to improve workforce recruitment, retention and agency rates so children and young people benefit from consistent relationships

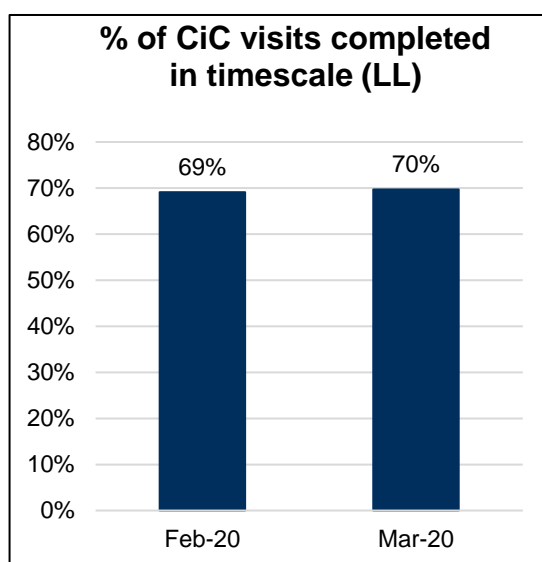
A key indicator for this priority is the percentage of children in care receiving regular visits from their social worker.

In January 2020, Cambridgeshire Children's Services moved its case management system to a new system (Liquid Logic). As part of this move there were a number of changes to reporting which included a change in the definition of how visits were reported. Therefore, the data pre- and post-January is not comparable, so is reported separately.

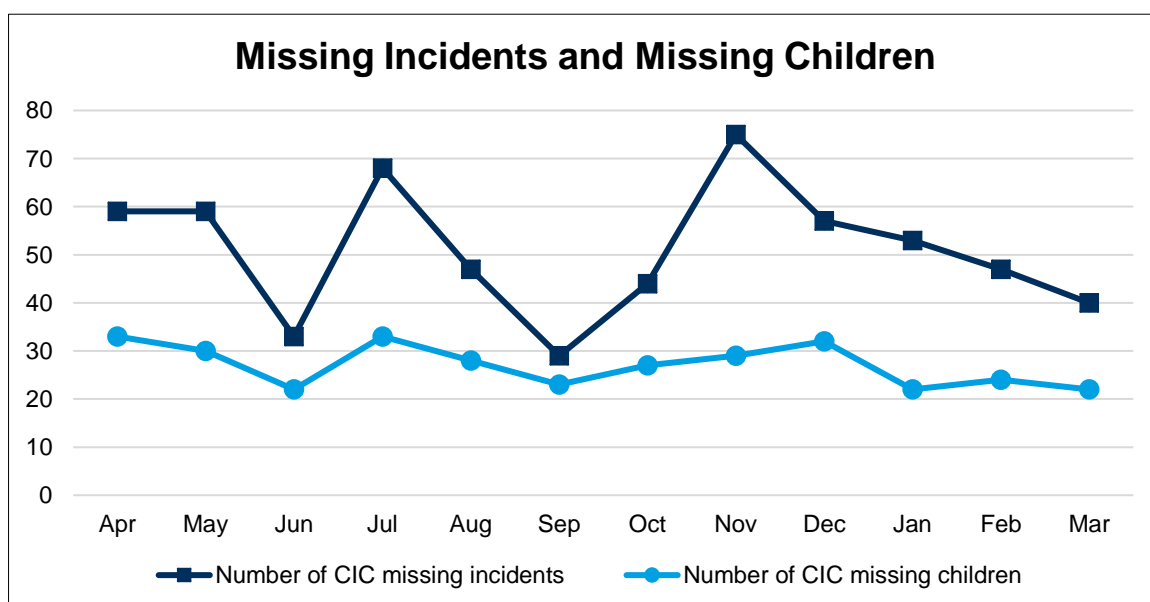
This graph shows the percentage of visits completed in each month that were in timescale. Whilst performance improved slightly from April to December 2019 it remains below our target of 95% of visits in timescale.



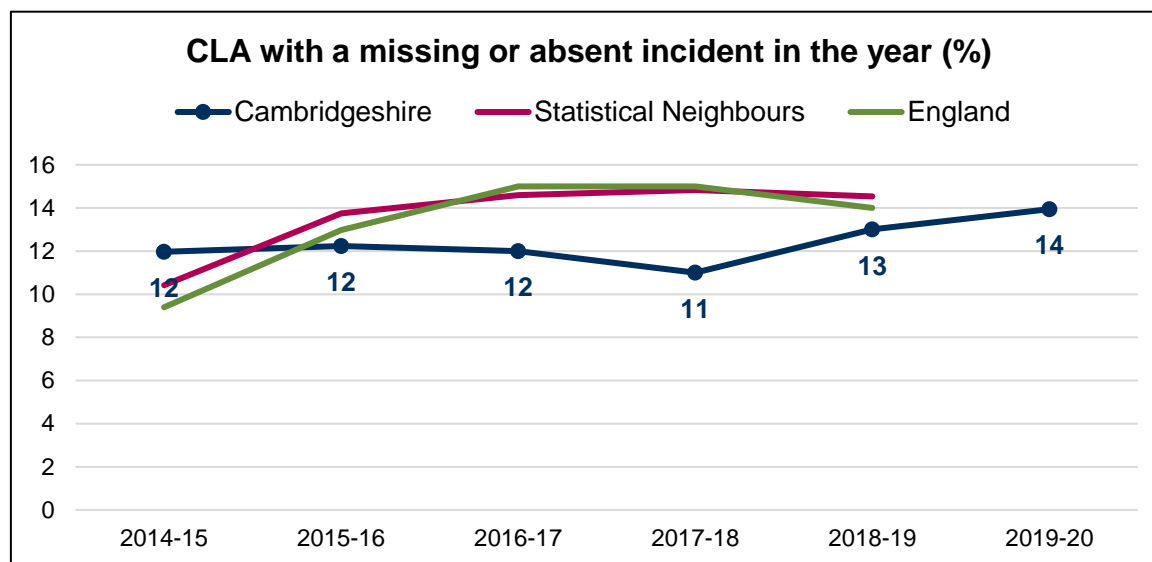
This second graph shows the percentage of children in care who had a visit in the last 6 weeks (standard visit pattern) at month end. Figures are not available for January due to the move onto the new Liquid Logic system. This definition is currently under review as it does not take into account children who are on a 3 monthly visit pattern (usually children in settled and longer term care arrangements), which accounts for the significant drop in the percentage of children visiting within timescale from December onwards. If these children were included, the percentage on visits carried out on time would be higher.



Another key indicator relating to this priority is the number of children who are reported missing and how many times they have been reported as missing. The graph below captures these figures and show that a small number of children will have been reported missing on a number of occasions. These children and their plans are monitored carefully with increased oversight from the social work teams alongside our partner agencies such as the police.



The graph below details the comparative data up to 2018/19 which showed that Cambridgeshire has previously reported less Children in Care as missing than our statistical neighbours. The comparative data for Cambridgeshire's statistical neighbours and the national picture for 2019/20 is not yet available.



Note: Cambridgeshire do not record absent incidents, but rather report all these as missing incidents. They have been added together in this graph for comparisons to Statistical Neighbours and England.

The number and timeliness of Return Home interviews (RHI's) with children and young people who have been reported missing is another key indicator relating to this priority. In Cambridgeshire the RHI's are conducted by specialist staff within the Missing, Exploited and Trafficked HUB (MET HUB). The MET HUB sits within the Integrated Front Door which enables timely access to key information about children and families from across partner agencies.

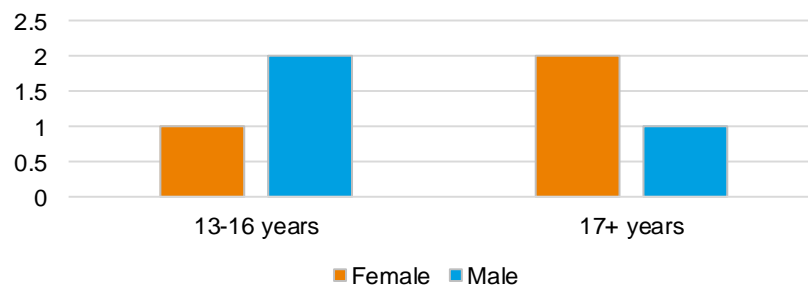
The target timeframe to conduct return interviews is 72 hours from the point the child is found and returns to their care accommodation. For Children in Care, 583 RHI's were required during the year with 491 being completed. Some RHI's will not be completed as the young person refuses to engage with the interview

The following two graphs show the number of children assessed as at risk and under what category at the end of March 2020.

Child Sexual Exploitation

In March there were 6 CIC who were identified as at mild/emerging or moderate risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

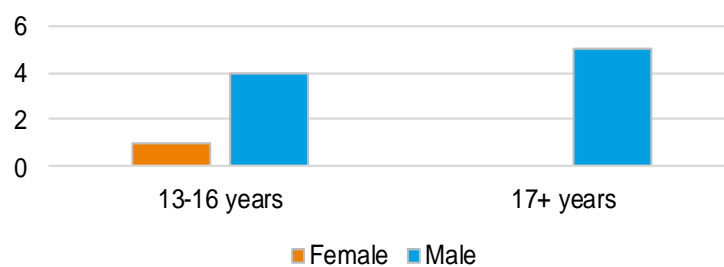
CIC CSE by Age & Gender



Child Criminal Exploitation

In March there were 10 CIC who were identified as at mild/emerging, moderate & significant Child Criminal Exploitation

CIC Criminal exploitation by Age & Gender



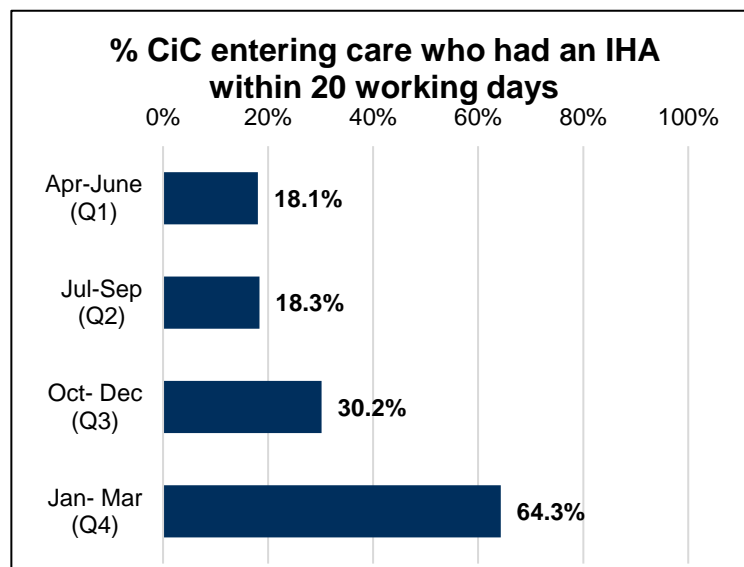
**Being and Feeling Safe
Ofsted told us in February:**

Strengths	Areas for development
<p>Decisions that children should come into care are appropriate and are appropriately escalated into Court</p>	<p>Greater focus is needed on planning before children are born, specifically when older siblings are no longer living with their parents or birth families</p>
<p>Most children in care have social workers who regularly visit and build meaningful relationships with them, often going the extra mile to ensure children are well supported</p>	<p>Whilst there has been increased focus by workers and carers on helping children to understand their family history and make sense of why they are in care, life story work needs to be given continual focus and be shared and discussed with children in a way that they will understand</p>
<p>Investment and success with attracting new staff to Cambridgeshire has increased capacity and reduced caseloads allowing social workers more time to conduct direct work with children and promote greater stability in their lives</p>	<p>Whilst this has promoted stability in many teams, further improvement is needed in some teams to ensure children are able to maintain meaningful relationships with their worker</p>
<p>Every Cambridgeshire child who goes missing is offered a return home interview and risk assessment tools are completed to a high standard leading to effective plans that help keep children safe</p>	<p>More work is needed to show that arrangements and plans for monitoring and protecting children at risk of exploitation are making a difference to children and communities, for example planned activity to disrupt adults who are involved in targeting children to become involved in criminality</p>

Being Healthy and Leading a Healthy Lifestyle

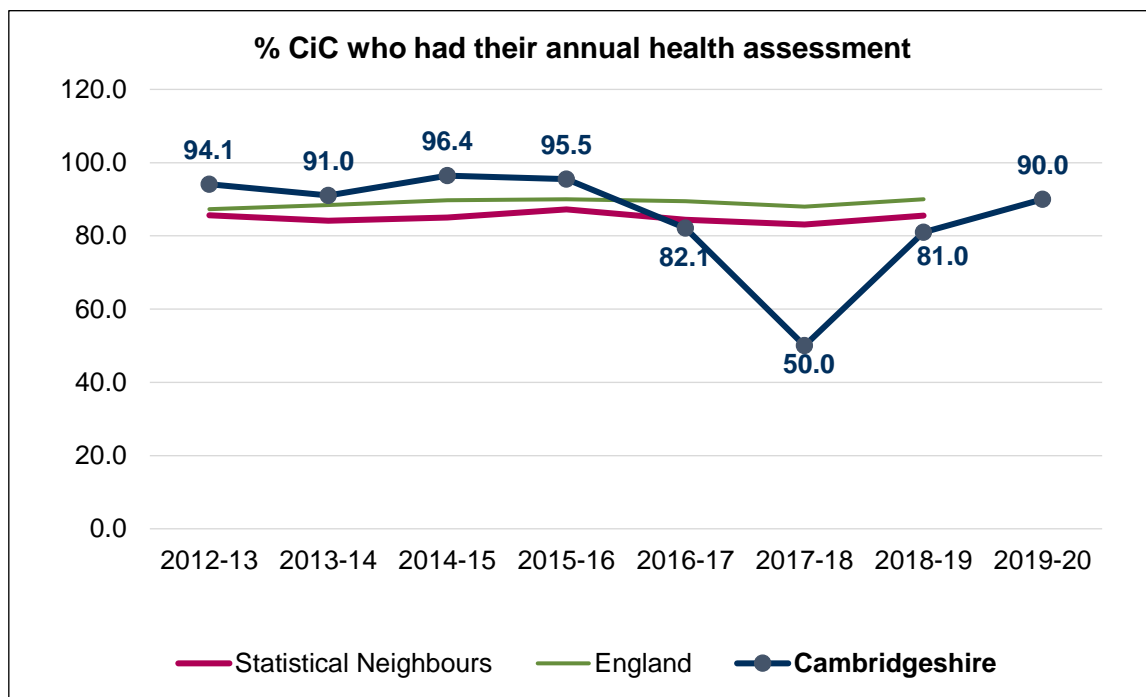
- To ensure improvement in the timeliness of initial and review health assessments
- To ensure that all children and young people are registered with a dentist and have regular check ups

The graph below shows that whilst we have seen steady improvement throughout the year, we still need to significantly improve on our performance to make sure that the initial health needs of children in care are responded to in a timely way. Initial Health Assessments can be delayed for a number of reasons such as obtaining consent which allows referrals to be made to health, delayed clinic appointments and non-attendance at clinic appointments. There are also different arrangements that apply to children who live in Cambridgeshire and those who live outside of Cambridgeshire that affect how other health authorities prioritise Cambridgeshire children.

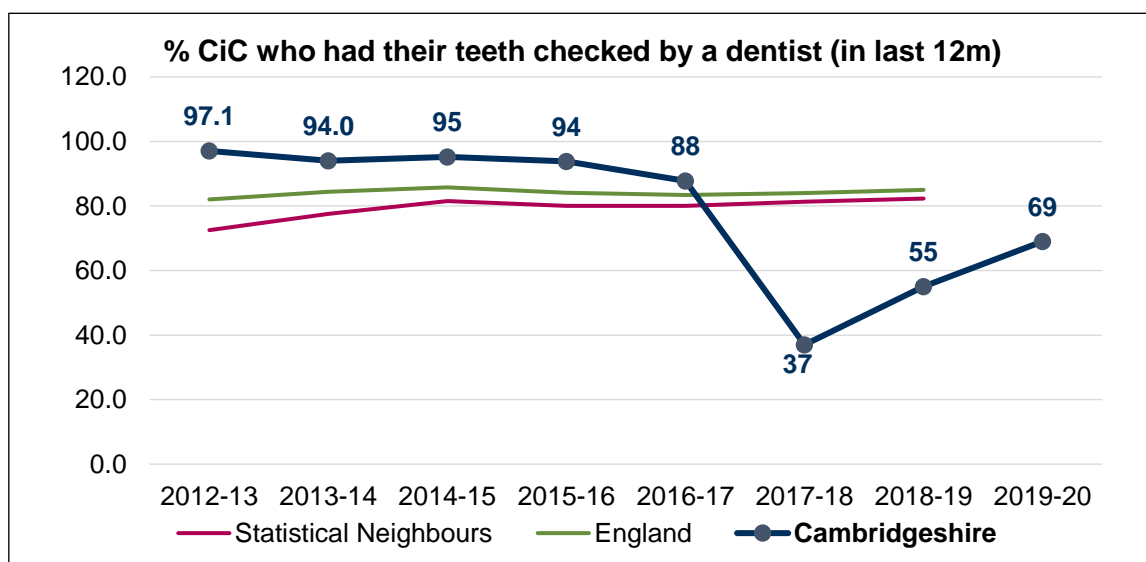


A joint working group completed a great deal of activity around health assessments during this reporting year and now that the new case management system is in place, requests for assessments are triggered automatically when children come into care and a health questionnaire within the system pre-populates information to ensure that health colleagues have all the information they need in order to be able to carry out effective medicals. Whilst there has been an understandable delay due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these new processes are now live within the Liquid Logic system. Ensuring improvement and scrutinising this activity will remain a priority for the Sub-Committee next year.

The chart below shows the percentage of children who received their annual health assessment, this is the cohort of children on the 31st March who have been in care continuously for over 12 months and received their health assessment within the last 12 months (or 6 months for under 5 year olds). Cambridgeshire has seen a 9% improvement as compared to 2018/19.



The chart below shows the percentage of children who had been in care continuously for over 12 months on 31st March 2020 and had a dental check in the last 12 months. Again performance for Cambridgeshire's Children in Care improved in 2019-2020, however there is room for further significant improvement.



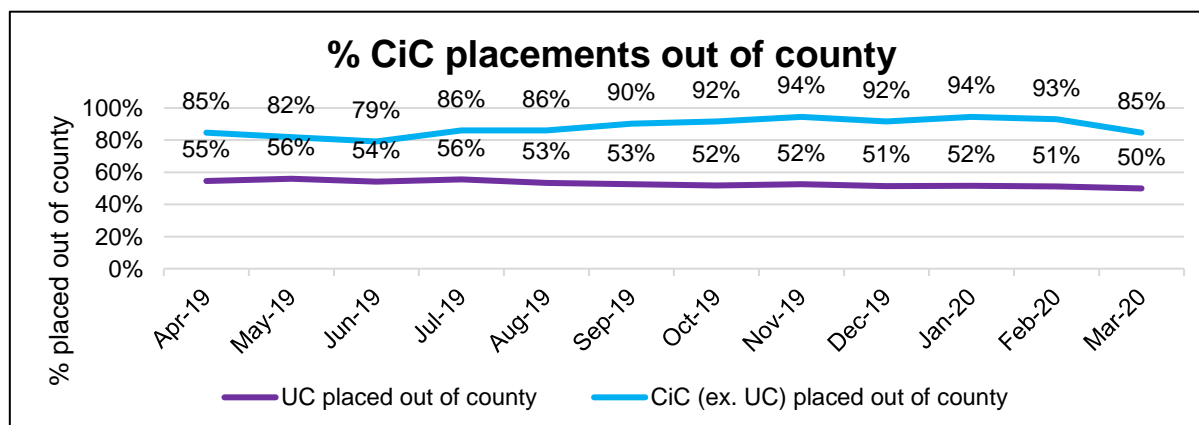
Being Healthy and Leading a Healthy Lifestyle Ofsted told us in February:

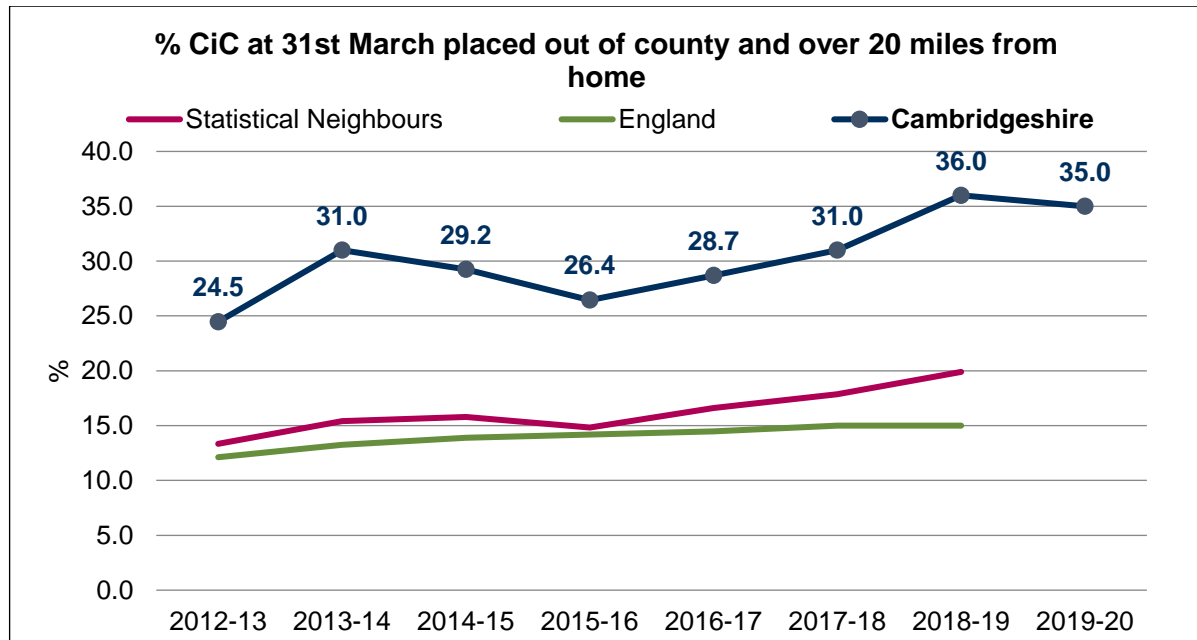
Strengths	Areas for development
<p>Senior leaders recognise that mental health and emotional well-being services are fragmented and the restructure of the corporate parenting service's clinical team will support this activity</p> <p>There has been some recent improvement in children accessing timely health assessments</p>	<p>Waiting times need to be reduced and pathways clarified in order to make sure that children in care and care leavers can access the right help and support when they need it</p> <p>Some children when they come into care are still not getting timely health assessments, Local authority leaders are discussing this with health strategic leads but substantial progress is yet to be made</p> <p>Challenges remain in accessing timely health assessments for children living outside of Cambridgeshire</p>

Achieving stability and permanence

- To support the increase in the number, quality and range of local foster carers and placement provision
- To ensure improvement around placement stability
- To increase the number and timeliness of permanent care arrangements

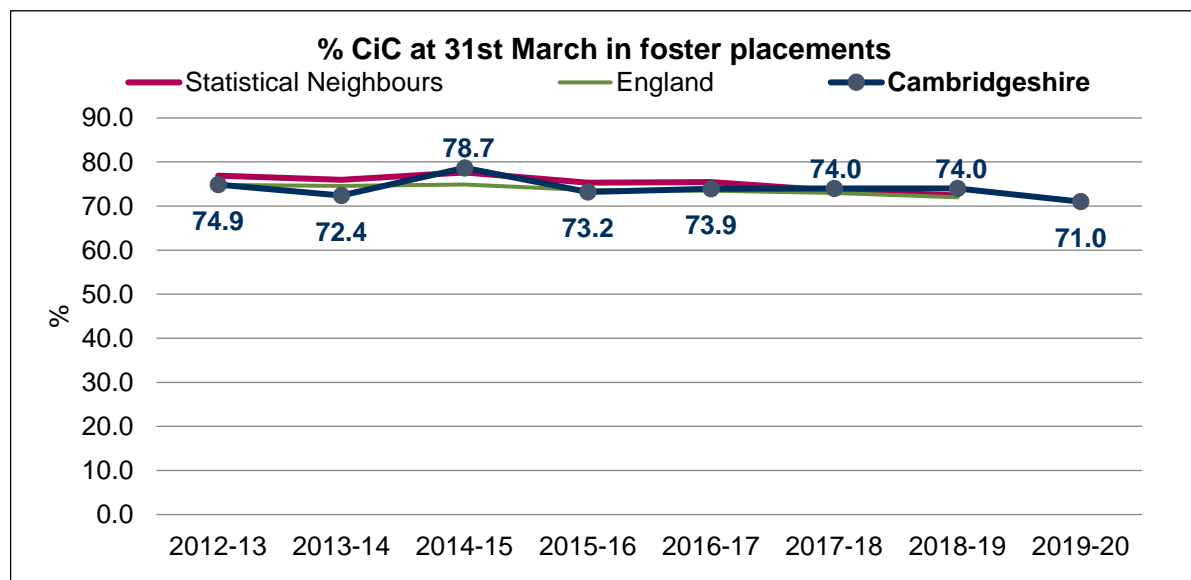
The graphs below show the percentage of children living out of county and those living out of county and over 20 miles from their home with 35% of the total children in care cohort living further than 20 miles outside of Cambridgeshire's borders. The number of children living outside of Cambridgeshire (excluding unaccompanied children) rose by 9.0% by November 2019 before decreasing to 85% in March 2020, the same as at the start of the year. It must be noted that unaccompanied young people are often supported to live in communities outside of Cambridgeshire that better meet their religious and cultural needs.





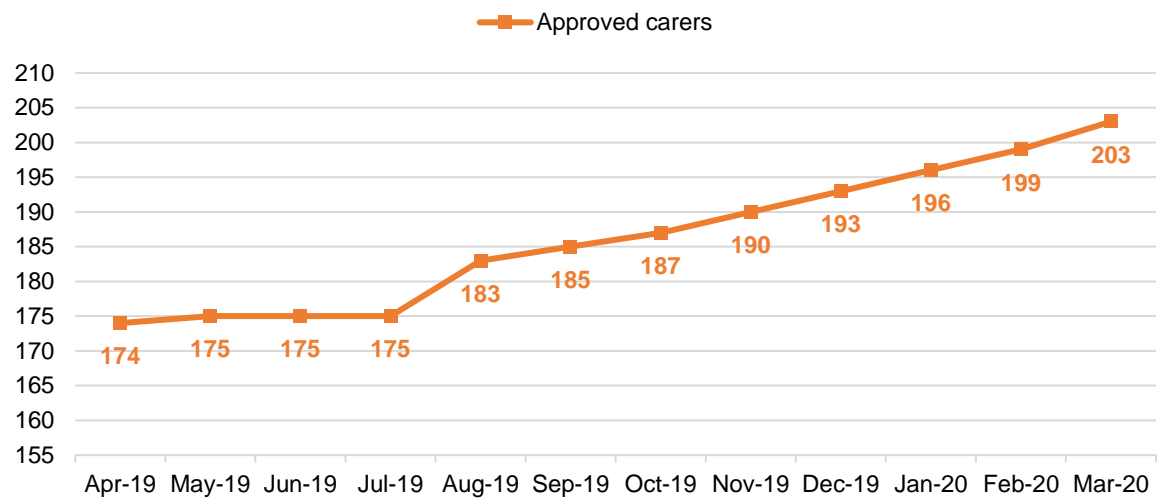
Fostering

The number of children living in a foster care arrangement (both Cambridgeshire County Council foster carers and agency foster carers) decreased to 71% of the overall children in care cohort, a decrease of 3% compared to previous year.

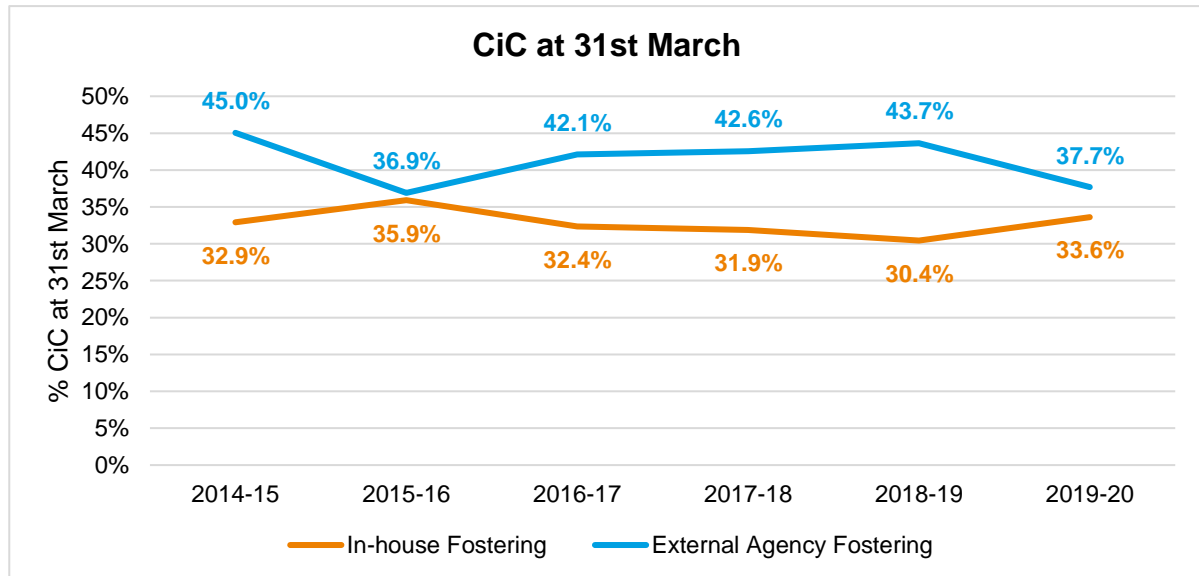


The number of approved Cambridgeshire fostering households increased throughout the year in 2019/20 by 29 fostering families compared to an increase of 12 fostering families during 2018/19. This is inclusive of all types of approved foster carers.

Number of In-house fostering carers

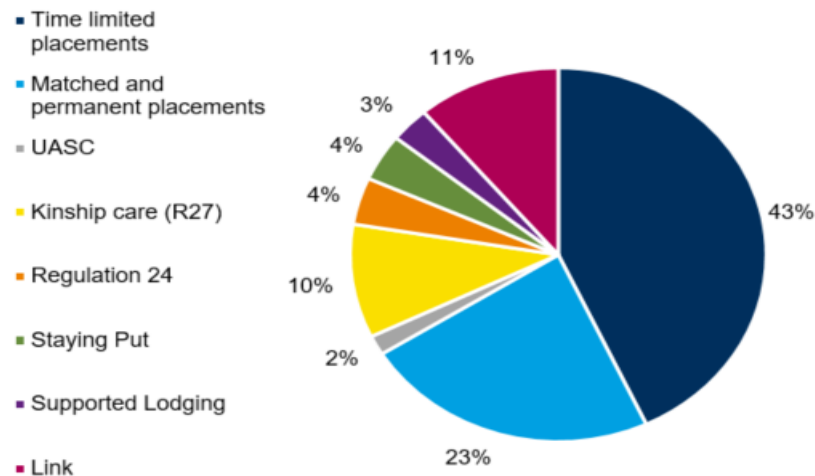


The graph below details the percentage of children living with Cambridgeshire foster carers and those living with agency foster carers. The number of children living with in-house foster carers has increased to 33.6% whereas the number of children living with agency foster carers has fallen to 37.7%.

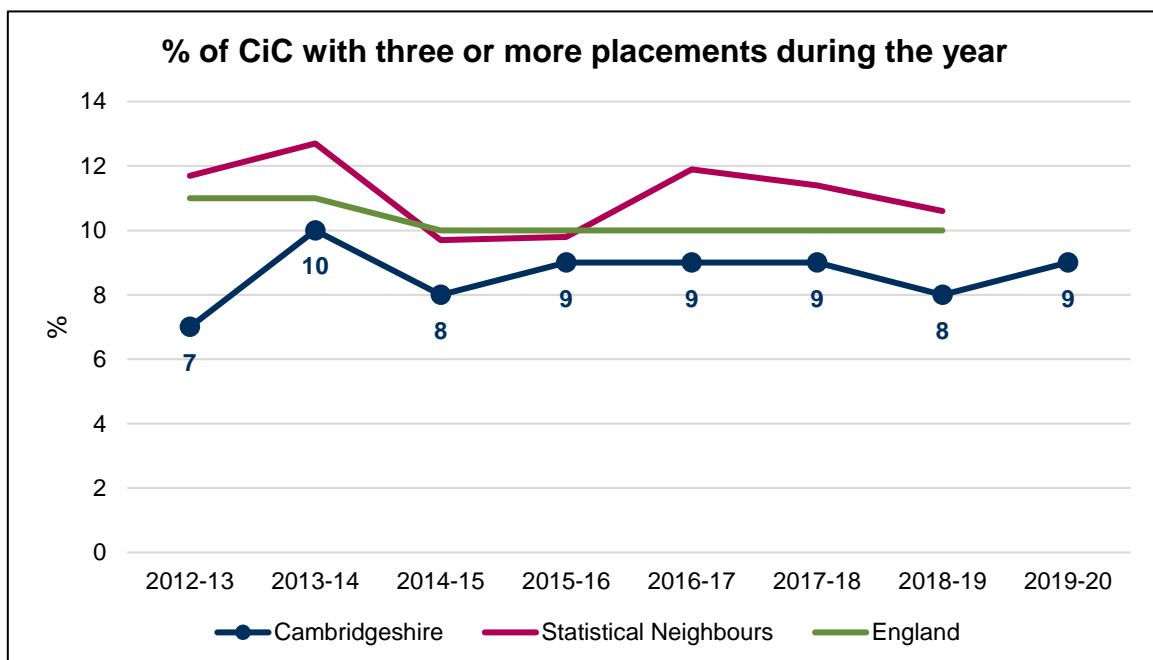


The chart below shows the type of in-house care arrangements that children and young people were living in as of the 31st March 2019 with Cambridgeshire foster carers, former foster carers and supported lodgings carers.

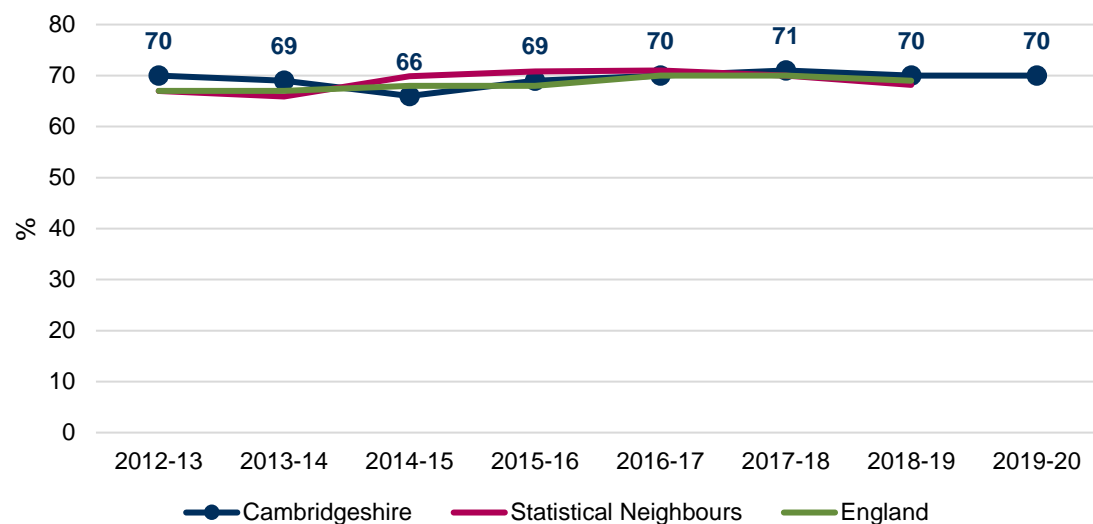
In March 2019 there were a total of 295 children placed in in-house fostering placements (including staying put & link).



Performance in relation to the stability of care arrangements for Cambridgeshire's children in care remains better than our statistical neighbours reported last year, with less children experiencing three or more moves during the year and more children being cared for by the same carers for at least 2 years.



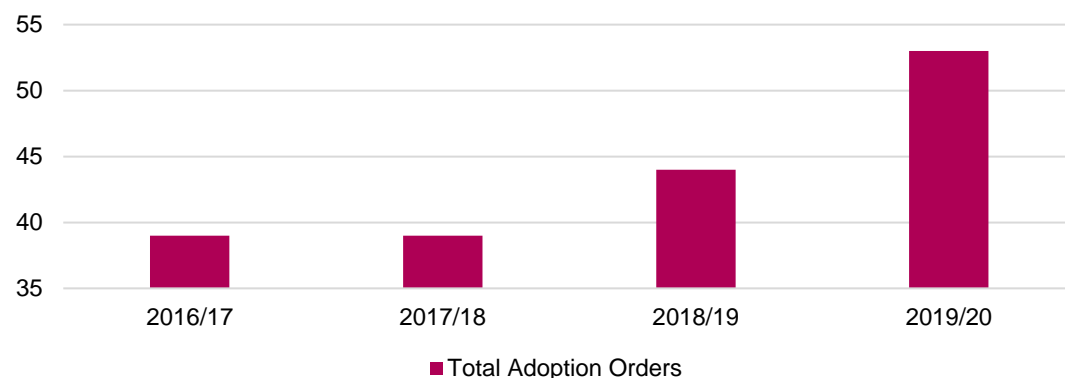
Children in care for at least 2.5 years and aged under 16 who have been in the same placement for at least 2 years

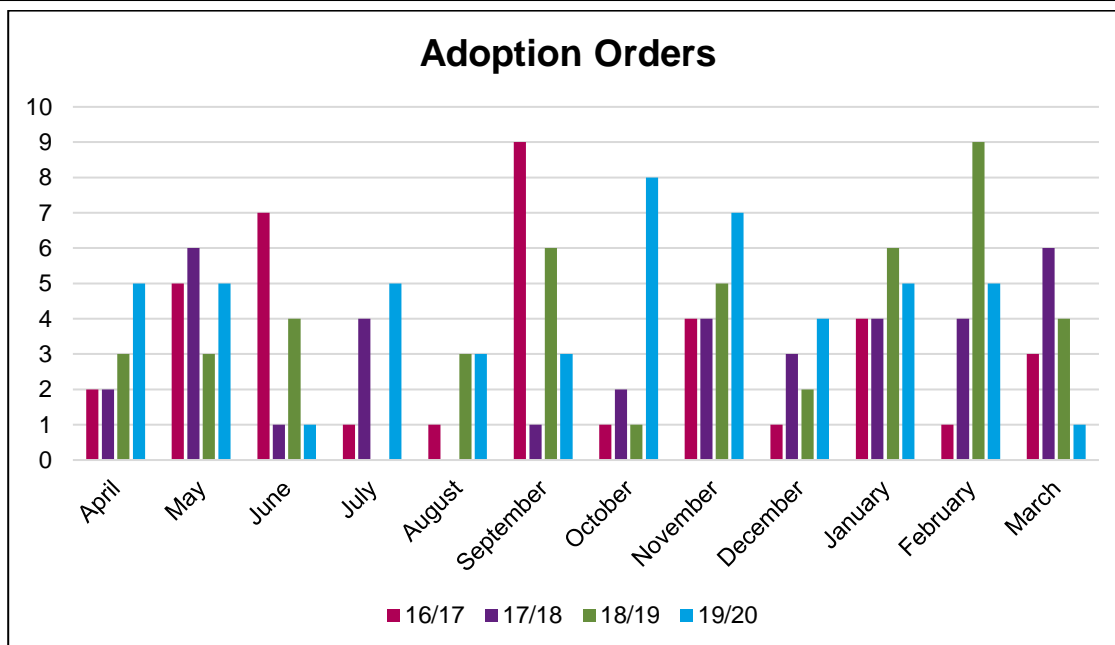


Adoption

The graph below shows a steady increase over the last two years in the number of Cambridgeshire children who have been adopted. 52 Adoption Orders were granted in Court during 2019/20 which is an increase of 15% compared to the number of Adoption Orders granted in 2018/19.

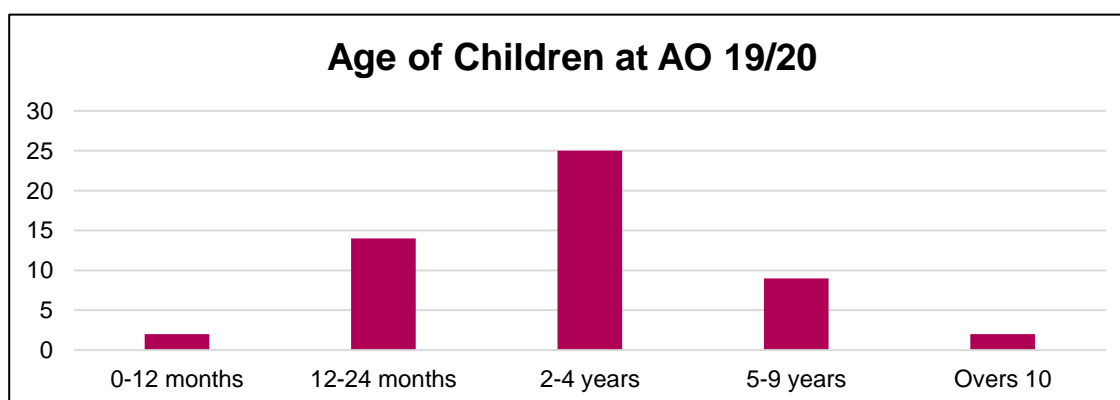
Total Adoption Orders



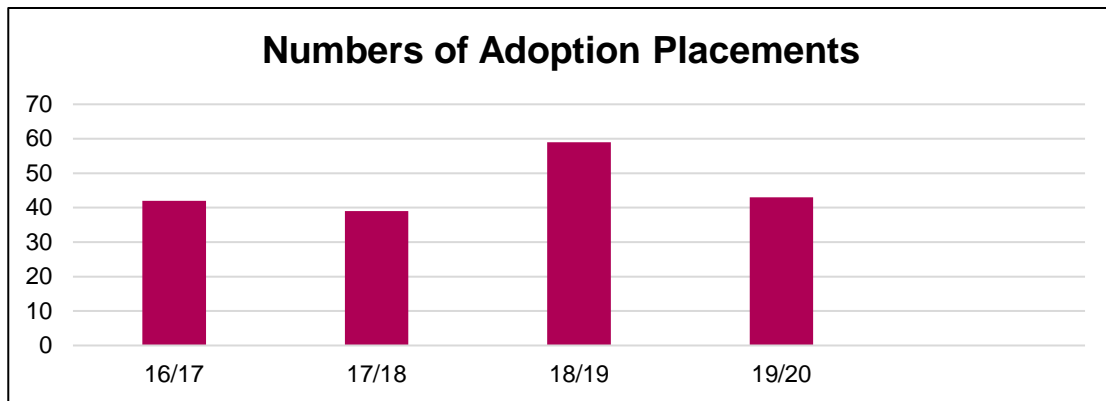


In total 17.9% of children who left care in 2019/20 were adopted and 24 (46%) of these children belonged to a sibling group. Three children (6%) moved to their Early Permanence carers shortly after their birth and Care and Placement Orders were granted for all these children, so this prevented additional moves for them.

The graph below shows the age range of children at the point their Adoption Orders were granted, ages ranged from 10 months to over 12 years. The average age for children moving in with their pre adoptive families was 3 years and 3 months in 2019/20.



On average 79% of children moved to live with their adoptive family within 12 months of the decision being made that they will be adoptive. The average time between a child becoming looked after and being adopted was 458 days in 2019/20. Whilst this is an increase on the previous year, some children had complex histories and vulnerabilities which led to delays in decision making in Court. 43 children moved to live with their adoptive families during 2019/20, which is a decrease in number when compared to the previous year which saw 59 children moving to live with their adoptive families. This is largely due to the substantial increase in the number of Care Proceedings in 2018/19 as can be seen in the graph below.



In 2019/20, 31 children moved to live with Cambridgeshire adopters and 12 children moved to live with adopters from external adoption agencies. This is a significant decrease in the use of external agency adopters compared to the previous year.

This year, 27 children met the 'harder to place' definition as defined by the DFE, these children included children from a Black Minority Ethnic background, children with a diagnosed disability and children from large sibling groups.



Adoption changes futures

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/adoption
adoptionenquiries@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

0300 123 1093


Cambridgeshire
County Council

Achieving Stability and Permanence
Ofsted told us in February:

Strengths	Areas for development
<p>Most children live in good quality care arrangements, with carers who meet their needs and make a positive difference in their lives</p> <p>Recent recruitment activity has successfully increased the number of in house carers</p> <p>Efforts are made to manage and minimise the impact of out of area care arrangements, with additional support to maintain school placements and investment in meaningful family time</p> <p>The number of children being helped to achieve permanence with matched foster carers and families is steadily increasing</p> <p>The local Authority recognises the importance of children understanding whether they can remain with their carers throughout their childhood and beyond and leaders have strengthened systems and processes to monitor and track arrangements to secure permanence</p> <p>The work of the relatively new permanence workers now provides children and their carer's with the best possible chance of successfully achieving permanence</p> <p>For new entrants to care, work now continues at pace to ensure plans progress for children to either return home or to secure permanence through care</p> <p>Where it is possible that children can return home to the care of their birth families, this is supported well and skilfully coordinated</p>	<p>Cambridgeshire needs foster carers with the right skills, knowledge, experience and cultural match to meet children's presenting needs</p> <p>Greater availability of foster to adopt (early permanence) care arrangements would help to avoid placement moves for very young children</p> <p>Still too many Cambridgeshire children in care live outside of the county and a long way from family and friends</p> <p>For some children, a lack of translating plans into practice means that they are left waiting too long for these arrangements to be confirmed</p>

Preparing for Adulthood

- To close the gap between the educational outcomes for Children in Care and all children
- To ensure Cambridgeshire Children in Care do at least as well as Children in Care nationally
- To continue to monitor the use and impact of the Pupil Premium
- To continue to improve the engagement of older children in care and care leavers in positive employment, education or training activities
- To ensure suitable housing options for care leavers are in place
- To continue to develop the Leaving Care Offer

The Virtual School

In May 2020, there were 716 Children in Care on the Virtual School roll compared to 706 children in May 2019 and 376 of these children had been looked after by Cambridgeshire for a year or more on the 31st March 2019. The Virtual School identify these children as the 'qualifying cohort' for reporting purposes. Of these 376 children 51% were living in Cambridgeshire. The table below shows where these children were living.

Placement Region for Cambridgeshire Children in Care	% of Cohort	Number
East	73.7%	277
South West	1.1%	4
South East	4.5%	17
North West	0.8%	3
East Midlands	13.0%	49
London	4.3%	16
West Midlands	1.6%	6
North East	1.1%	4
Total	100.0%	376

As 49% of this cohort of children were living outside of Cambridgeshire, the Virtual School has introduced measures to support schools and these children. These measures include:

- Researching OFSTED ratings for school and seeking advice from the Virtual School and SEND service where appropriate in the area
- Support and training for out of county schools with Cambridgeshire's PEP process
- The Virtual School supports all children in care from two years old (if attending an early years provision) to eighteen years old (until the end of year 13 if in education), eliciting support to navigate other local authority systems where necessary
- The offer of advisory meetings is according to need rather than location
- Working closely with the Admissions Team within Cambridgeshire to support with identifying out of county schools for children in care and where this is likely to be delayed, the Virtual School will identify and fund a tuition package

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The percentage of Cambridgeshire's children and young people in care reported as having a categorisation of SEN Support remains broadly the same as last year and slightly below the national figure, whereas those being supported by an EHCP remains above the national level. This reflects the complexities of this cohort of children as depicted in the table below.

	SEN Support			EHCP		
	2018	2019		2018	2019	
	% of Cohort		Difference 2018 to 2019	% of Cohort		Difference 2018 to 2019
National - ALL Pupils	11.6%	11.7%	0.1%	2.9%	3.1%	0.2%
Cambridgeshire - All Pupils	11.1%	10.7%	-0.4%	3.0%	3.2%	0.2%
National - CiC	29.6%	29.0%	-0.6%	26.5%	27.2%	0.7%
Cambridgeshire - CiC	25.8%	22.6%	-3.2%	30.8%	29.3%	-1.5%

Early Year's Attainment

GLD refers to Good Level of Development. This is the national benchmark for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (aged 5). Children are deemed to have met GLD if they have achieved the Early Learning Goals in the curriculum areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Communication and Language Development, Literacy and Mathematics.

There are only 8 children in the Early Year's qualifying cohort, last year there were 12 children. As there is such a small number of children, this makes comparing Cambridgeshire against the national picture misleading.

The table below shows that Cambridgeshire is 10% below the figure for children in care nationally in relation to meeting the requirements of GLD (less than one child).

Good Level of Development (GLD)	RECEPTION (EYFSP)			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cambridgeshire - CiC Number in Cohort	x	x	12	8
Cambridgeshire - CiC	x	x	42%	38%
National - CiC	x	x	47%	48%
Cambridgeshire - All Pupils	70%	71%	71%	71%
National - All Pupils	69%	71%	72%	72%

Key Stage One and Two attainment

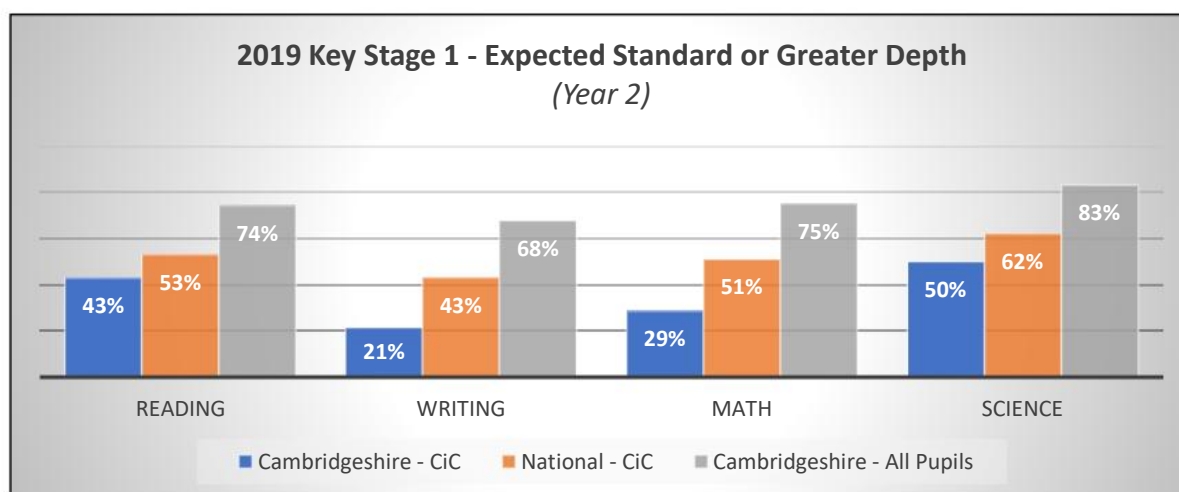
At the end of Key Stage 1 (aged 7) and Key Stage 2 (aged 11), children are assessed as:
Working towards the expected standard: not yet reaching the standard expected for their school year

Working at expected standard: at the level expected for their year group

Working at greater depth: working more deeply with the expectations for their year

Key Stage One

Of the 14 children (16 the previous year) in this cohort, the graph below shows that the percentage of children in care achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths has fallen. As a result, the Virtual School has put in place greater scrutiny through advisory visits and PEP quality assurance processes, with a specific focus on how to use the Pupil Premium to maximise progress.



Cambridgeshire Virtual School

Key Stage Two

There are 26 Cambridgeshire Children in Care in this cohort (29 the previous year). The table below shows that Cambridgeshire's children in care are achieving better than the national children in care picture for writing and maths and broadly in line for grammar, punctuation and spelling. Cambridgeshire compares favourably with its statistical neighbours (11 authorities), with Cambridgeshire being ranked the highest in writing, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Cambridgeshire is ranked 6th for reading.

ALL Subjects - 2019 (Expected Standard or Greater Depth Standard)					
Expected or Better	KEY STAGE 2				
	Reading	Writing	Maths	GPS	RWM Combined
Cambridgeshire – Number in CiC Cohort	26				
Cambridgeshire - CiC	35%	52%	54%	50%	28%
National - CiC	50%	51%	52%	53%	37%
Cambridgeshire - All Pupils	73%	75%	76%	76%	63%
National - All Pupils	73%	78%	79%	78%	65%

The table below shows the progress made by children from their Key Stage 1 results to their Key Stage 2 results. This shows that children have made less progress in reading but have made above expected progress in writing and maths, making better progress than all children in Cambridgeshire and all children nationally.

Progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2	KEY STAGE 2		
	Reading	Writing	Maths
Cambridgeshire - CiC	-1.05	0.83	0.43
National - CiC	-0.22	-0.77	-0.95
Cambridgeshire - All Pupils	0.16	-0.80	-0.30
National - All Pupils	0.03	0.01	0.04

Key Stage Four Attainment

Unlike last year, all GCSEs are now graded 9-1, with 9 being the highest grade and 1 the lowest. It is important to note that the new GCSE content is recognised as more challenging. Grades 4 and 5 are equivalent to what was a 'C' in the old GCSE grades. Grade 5 is known as a strong pass and grade 4 as a standard pass. Students that do not achieve at least a 4, will be expected to re-sit the GCSE (unless there are specific circumstances, for example SEND).

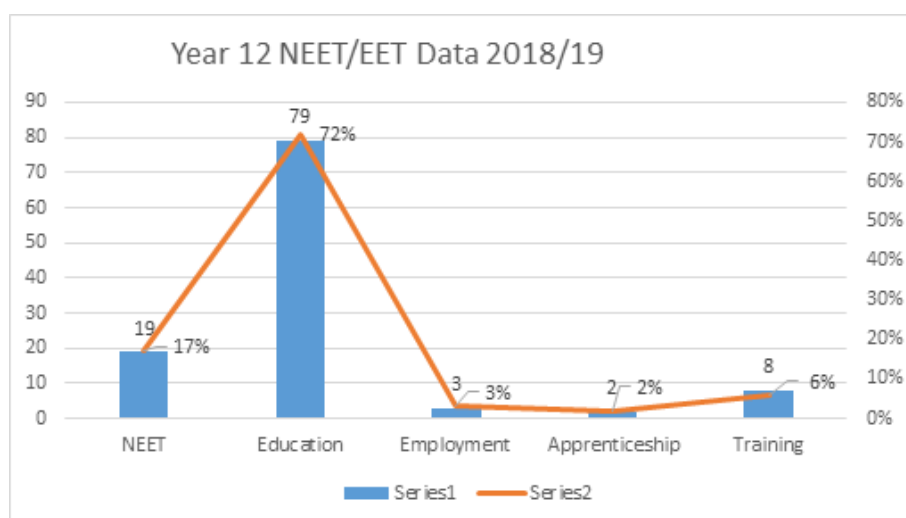
There are 64 children in total in this cohort. The number of Cambridgeshire Children in Care achieving a standard pass is 5% below the nation figure for children in care but within 2% for a strong pass.

Achieved Basics	KEY STAGE 4					
	2017		2018		2019	
	Standard (9-4)	Strong (9-5)	Standard (9-4)	Strong (9-5)	Standard (9-4)	Strong (9-5)
Cambridgeshire - CiC Cohort	43		55		64	
Cambridgeshire - CiC	12%	7%	15%	7%	13%	5%
National - CiC	17%	7%	17%	8%	18%	7%
Cambridgeshire - All Pupils	67%	47%	67%	46%	57%	43%
National - All Pupils	x	43%	64%	43%	56%	40%

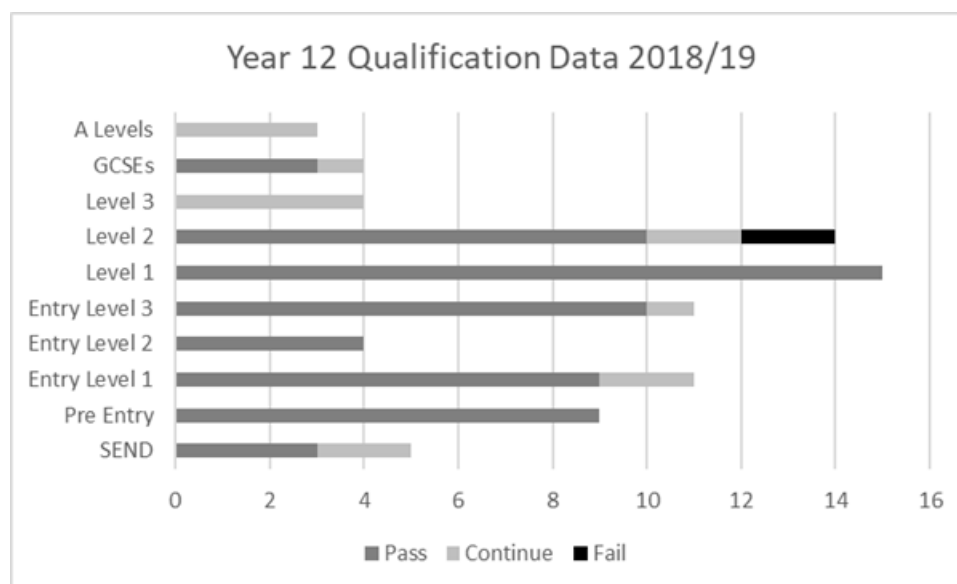
Post 16 Attainment

Year 12

Of the 111 children in care within this cohort, 19 are not in education, employment or training as shown in the table below.

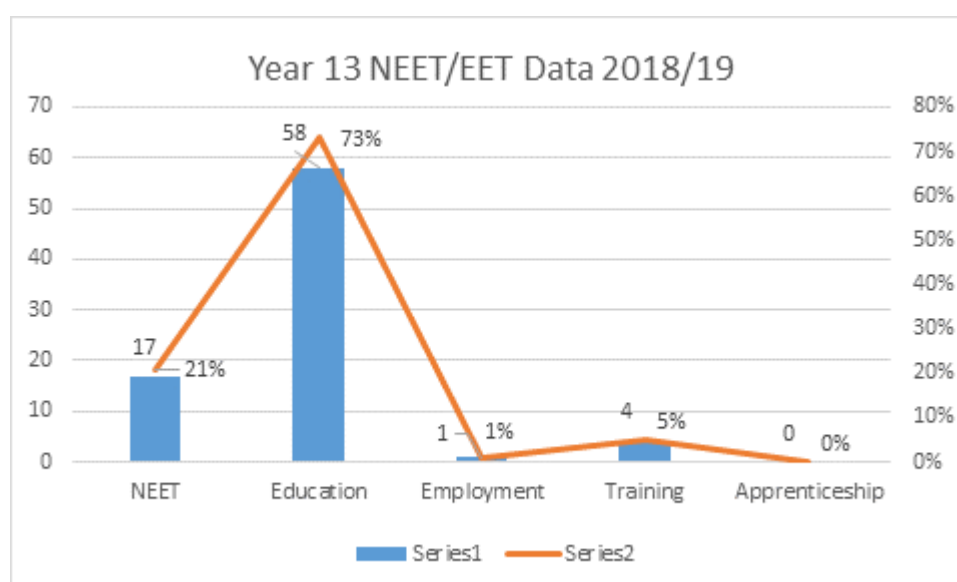


Of the 79 children who continued in education, at the end of year 12 the following qualifications were achieved as outlined in the graph below. 47 of these children are unaccompanied Children in Care arriving in Cambridgeshire, which accounts for the high number of Pre Entry – Entry 3 figures. 'A' level and level 3 studies are two year courses which is why all of these students are continuing and not completing in year 12.

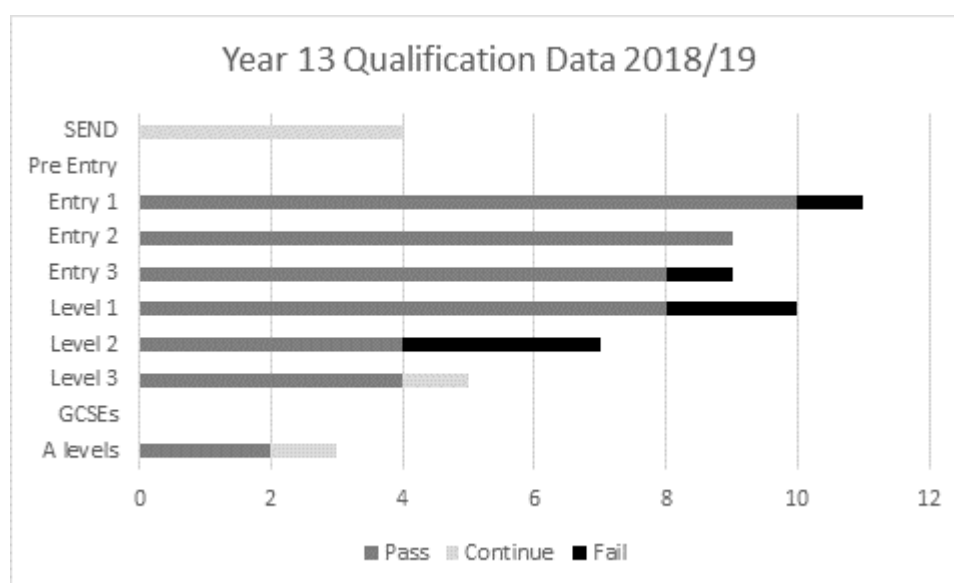


Year 13

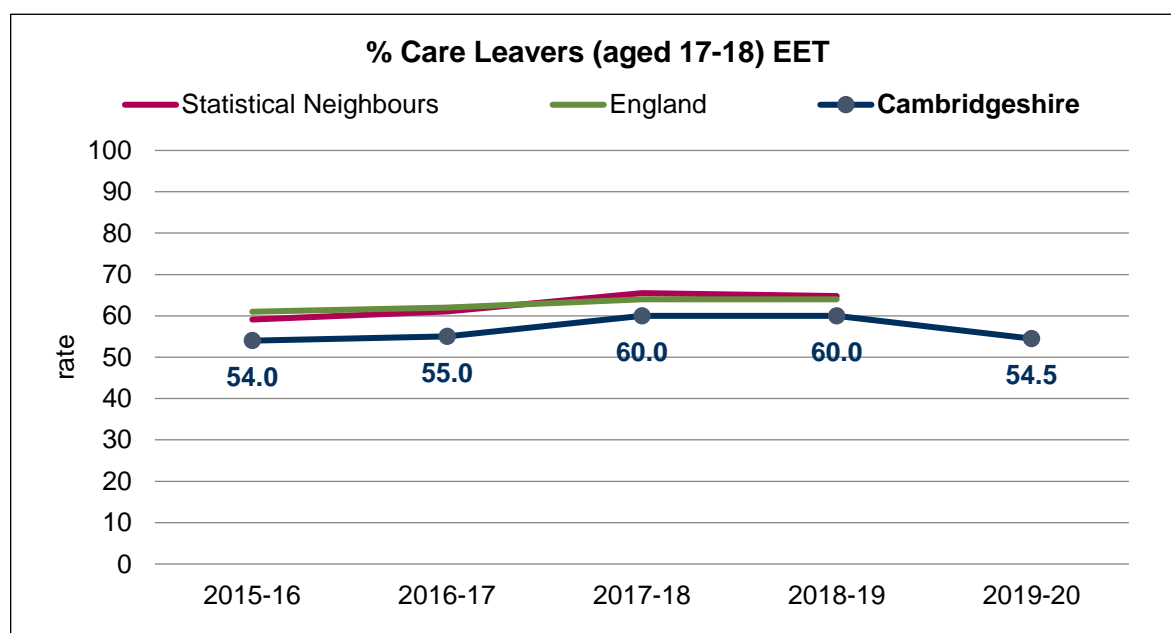
Of the 80 children in care within this cohort, 17 are not in education, employment or training as shown in the table below.

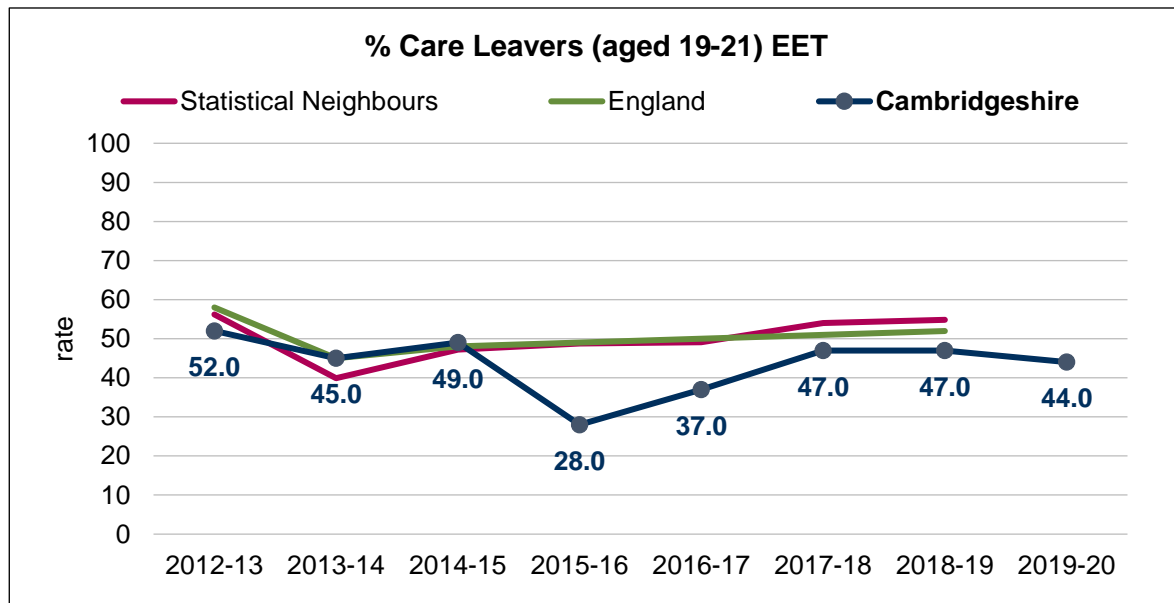


Of the 58 children who continued in education, at the end of year 13, they achieved the following qualifications as outlined in the graph below. 30 of these children are unaccompanied children in care arriving in Cambridgeshire which accounts for the high number of Pre Entry – Entry 3 figures. 76% of these children returned to higher education as they needed to complete further courses to be able to move on to higher education.



As the two graphs below show, the percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training at the ages of 17-18 and 19-21 years respectively, remained static through 2017 to 2019. In 2019/20 performance has fallen in respect of both age ranges.





Another important indicator in Preparing for Adulthood is the percentage of care leavers living in suitable accommodation and the number that the Local Authority maintain a relationship with. In relation to performance in both these areas, in April 2020 Cambridgeshire's performance was showing a similar trend as those in education, employment or training, with

Cambridgeshire performing below the national percentage (for the previous year) across the reported age ranges. Difficulties with the migration of information onto the new case management system (Liquid Logic) at the end of this reporting year will have had an impact on performance figures.

Care Leavers living in suitable accommodation

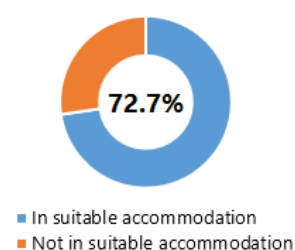
17– 18 year olds: Cambridgeshire- 74%
National - 90% (2018-19)
19- 21 year olds: Cambridgeshire – 72%
National – 89% (2018-19)

Care Leavers in touch with the Local Authority

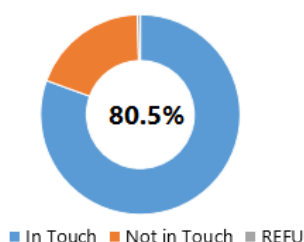
17– 18 year olds: Cambridgeshire-81%
National - 90% (2018-19)
19- 21 year olds: Cambridgeshire – 80%
National – 85% (2018-19)

The pie charts below show Cambridgeshire's performance against key indicators as of the 31st March 2020 in relation to the overall care leaving cohort.

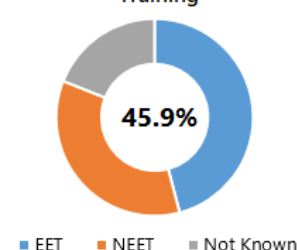
In Suitable Accommodation



In Touch



In Employment, Education or Training



Out of the 594 'eligible', 'relevant' or 'former relevant' young people who were at least 16 years and 3 months old and had an open referral at the end of April 2020, 561 had a Pathway Plan in place. This equates to 94.4% of the entire cohort and very close to our target of 95%. Cambridgeshire is able to show that an increasing number of young people had a Pathway plan over the last year.

Cambridgeshire's published Care Leaving Offer continues to be developed and is monitored by the Specialist Local Offer Personal Advisor. Cambridgeshire has been able to provide a number of new opportunities over the year for care leaving young people which include:

- Establishing a mentoring scheme for Care Leavers to support them to realise their aspirations
- Fully funded Duke of Edinburgh scheme supported by local businesses
- Bicycle scheme for care leavers to support them to access education, employment and training opportunities
- Securing funding for activity days such as theme park tickets to prevent isolation
- Securing funding for driving tuition for care leavers
- Securing outcome based community grants to support care leavers

Preparing for Adulthood Ofsted told us in February:

Strengths	Areas for development
<p>The Virtual School has strengthened its role in ensuring that children are given appropriate support with their education needs</p> <p>Most children live in good quality placements with carers who meet their needs, evidenced in the progress children make in their education and their participation in a range of social and leisure activities, resulting in increased confidence and self-esteem</p>	<p>Care plans are predominantly focussed on rudimentary process issues, rather than on those things that are important to children and that are gathered through consultation exercises and conversations with them</p>



Hearing the Voices of Children and Young People

- Hearing directly from care leavers on the impact of Cambridgeshire's Local Offer and develop their voice and influence
- Closing the loop in acting on young people's feedback to ensure children in care and care leavers experience tangible changes in the areas they think we could do better on
- Continue to raise awareness with the Council services to create opportunities for young people to influence wider services

The Participation Service

Over the year, a number of participation events for children in care and care leavers were held, supported by the Corporate Parenting Sub Committee. Up until COVID and the pandemic 'lock down' these were activity based events for children in care and care leavers, hosted by the participation team, using local resources and amenities to enrich the life experiences and opportunities of children in care and care leavers. All events were designed to support relationship building with Sub Committee members and senior managers of the county council and include consultation and co-production activities. Many events were also delivered in partnership with Cambridge University, the Library service and other partners.

Since the pandemic in March 2020, all participation events moved into a virtual space and supported by regular interactive News Letters for children in care and care leavers.

Face to face participation events included:

- Four activity based meetings of the **Children In Care Council (CiCC)**, attended by a total of 69 children and young people aged 5 – 18 years.
- Five 'Just Us' activity based events for children in care aged 6-12 years.
- The CiCC members designed and planned the Annual Children in Care Awards Ceremony which was due to take place in March 2020 and was deferred because of COVID. Certificates of achievement were sent to all of the children and care leavers who were nominated, with a message from the Director Lou Williams. A celebration event will take place at the earliest opportunity.
- **The Care Leaver Forum** was re-established in October 2019 with a core group of 7 young people attending. The group has been very active, taking part in staff recruitment, as well as contributing to the development of the Health Passport, The Local Offer and 'Care Leavers Finance Document'. 10 care leavers attended the first care leaver Christmas meal.
- The annual summer 'Picnic in the Park' took place and was well attended, with 132 children, young people and their carers coming along. As well as hosting a variety of activities and attractions the event was supported by the 'Connections Bus' the library service and the Cambridge University Realise Team to promote their offer to children in care and care leavers.

- 30 children aged 6 – 11 and their carers attended a 'Make and Take' Christmas Craft Fair hosted by teams from within children's services and the 'children in care health team'.

Enrichment in partnership with other organisations:

- **The National Children's Bureau (NCB)** - we supported children and young people to contribute to a consultation by the NCB on their understanding of children's rights in respect of health care.
- **Cambridge University Enrichment Team** - we supported children, young people and their carers to attend a stargazing event at Cambridge University hosted by the Realise Team. In addition, a number of young people attended a number of other science based events organised by the Realise Team for Children in Care and hosted at the University.
- **The Fitzwilliam Museum** – young people aged 11 years and over attended a four-day bronze arts award event for children in care, and received an accredited award upon completion.
- **The Cambridgeshire Library Service** – in partnership we hosted an even for children in care creating digital art characters and the young people's work was show cased.
- **The Junction Theatre** – donated tickets for their seasonal production and the participation team supported Children in Care Council members to attend the Wind in The Willows performance as a thank you for their contributions to the Children in Care Council.
- **The Regional Film Project** – we supported Children in Care Council members to contribute to a regional film project about children's top tips for social workers in 2019. One member attended the film premier in April 2019. Five Children in Care Council members are now taking part in the Regional Film Project 2020, with the focus on children's journey into and leaving care, their first big meeting and feeling settled in placement. This work has been suspended due to the Pandemic.

Topics and themes where children in care and care leavers have provided feedback, challenge and scrutiny have included for example:

- Advice to workers on terminology and child friendly alternatives to adult language and jargon
- Their experience of the impact of The Promise on their lived experiences around support; seeing the people who are important to them; and support for developing independence skills and leaving care

- Feedback about what is good and not so good about being in care and what advice they would give to other children and workers?
- Care leavers provided feedback and input to the development of the 'Health Passport', the 'Local Offer' and 'Care Leavers Finance Document'.

All feedback, challenge and scrutiny has been communicated through the appropriate channels to impact policy and practice, and feedback given to the Children in Care Council and Care leaver Forum of the impact of their contributions.

Voice of the children in care planning

In line with the national expectation that children's views are sought in an age appropriate manner for their Children in Care reviews, 55% of children in care over the age of four attended their review, 38% conveyed their views via another person or through using the Mind of My Own app or a consultation document. In addition Independent Advocates from NYAS worked with 276 Cambridgeshire children in care put their views across in key meetings and care planning.

Siblings Forever

Siblings Forever is a two night activity trip for brothers and sisters aged 8 to 18 years who have been separated through care. It allows siblings to have extended time together in a safe and fun environment. The year two activity trips took place in May and October 2019, and held again at the Graffham Water Activity Centre. Children give poignant feedback about how much they enjoy this opportunity to spend time with their siblings doing lots of fun things.

"I liked it a lot. All of the activities I enjoyed. And being with my brothers and sisters was good." 9 year old

"I absolutely loved it. It was so nice to spend some time with my siblings and I loved meeting new people." 14 year old

"It was brilliant. Just seeing my brother and sisters was the best thing." 10 year old

For 2020/21, the following areas for development will continue to be monitored, scrutinised and supported by the Corporate Parenting Sub Committee:

Ensuring children and young people (and especially care leavers) have access to assessment and support for their health needs in a flexible and creative way that supports them to understand and prioritise their health

Hearing from young people about their experience of accessing appropriate and tailored health services

Continuing to drive attainment for all children in care to reach their potential and be as close as possible in their achievements to children outside of the care system

Hearing from young people about their experiences of being supported through transitions and into adulthood

Hearing from children and young people of their experience of the care they are provided with in a variety of different care arrangements

Closing the loop in acting on young people's feedback to ensure children in care and care leavers experience tangible changes in the areas they think Cambridgeshire could do better on

Supporting the development and aspirations of Cambridgeshire's Local Offer

Supporting the recruitment and retention of foster carers that are prepared and supported to undertake the role of caring for children with complex needs – local foster families for local children

Encouraging Corporate Parenting partners to be more ambitious in expressing and realising their Corporate Parenting offers. The Corporate Parenting Sub Committee will continue to create a culture of accountability in order to achieve

Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee Workshop and Training Plan 2017/18

Summary

Each committee at the County Council has its own training plan to help its members learn more about the business that the Committee covers. Each training session is listed and a record is kept of which members of the committee attend.

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Priority	Date	Responsibility	Nature of Training	Audience	Attendance by:	% of Elected Members Attending
1.	We are all Corporate Parents	To discuss councillors' role and responsibilities as Corporate Parents.	High	12.01.18	<i>Fiona MacKirdy, Head of County Wide and Looked After Children</i>	Seminar	All county councillors	Cllr Bradnam Cllr Costello Cllr Cuffley Cllr Every Cllr Hay Cllr Joseph Cllr Whitehead (only members and subs of CPSC shown)	80%
2.	Looked After Children and Care Leavers	To brief Members on all areas of the Council's work in relation to looked after children and care leavers	High	11.04.18	<i>Jacqui Barry, Service Development Manager, District Safeguarding Manager</i>	Presentation and discussion	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee members	Cllr Every Cllr Hay Cllr Bradnam Cllr Richards Cllr Cuffley	80%
3.	Safeguarding training and visit to the Multi-	To refresh and update Members'	High	11.04.18	<i>Lou Williams, Service</i>	Presentation, tour of	Children and Young People	Cllr Every Cllr Hay	60%

	Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	safeguarding training and offer them the chance to see first-hand the work being done at the MASH.			<i>Director, Jenny Goodes, Head of Service – Integrated Front Door</i>	facilities and discussions with staff	Committee and Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee members and substitute members	Cllr Bradnam Cllr Cuffley	
4.	Corporate Parenting Strategy refresh	To discuss corporate parenting strategies going forward.	High	12.06.18	Jacqui Barry	Workshop	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee members	Cllr Every Cllr Hay	40%
5.	Fostering	To meet Service Managers and discuss current practice and future developments.	Medium	24.07.18 17.04.19	John Heron, Residential and Placements Provision Manager	Presentation/ workshop	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee members	Cllr Every Cllr Bradnam Cllr Richards	60%
6.	Mental Health	To include developmental trauma and mental health, parent infant mental health, school aged children, adolescence and mental health and resilience	High	22.01.19	Pam Parker, Clinical Psychology Lead	Presentation and Workshop	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee members	Cllrs Bradnam, Costello and Every	60%
7.	The Local Offer for Care Leavers/ Access to Universal Credit and benefits for care leavers	To brief Members on the Local Offer and benefits available to care leavers	Medium	14.06.19	Kate Knight, Lead Corporate Parenting Manager/ DWP officers	Members' Seminar	All Members	Cllrs Ashwood, Bailey, Boden, Bradnam, Bywater, Costello, Count, Criswell,	80%

								Every, French, Gowing, Hay, Hunt, Rogers, Sanderson, Wotherspoon	
8.	Permanence planning for children	To brief Members on the importance of permanence planning for children	High	03.10.19	Kate Knight Lead Corporate Parenting manager/Julie Ann Saunders/John Heron	Training session	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee members	Cllrs Every, Hay and Bradnam	100%
9.	Missing and Exploited Children - Being and Feeling Safe Training Workshop	To brief Members and provide training on missing and exploited children	Medium	19 February 2020 (to link with the March theme of feeling and being Safe)	Dave Sergeant	Workshop	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee	Cllrs Every, Hay, Bradnam, Costello and Meschini	100%
10.	Sub-Committee's new format and working practices	To strengthen relationship with Children in care and review the performance reporting format	High	7.10.20 4pm- 6 pm Or 14.10.20 4pm – 6pm TBC	Nicola Curley Fiona Van Den Hout Anna Slack Sika Smith Kate Knight	Workshop	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee (All Members and Substitutes)		
11.	Care Leavers	Members' Seminar: To brief Members on the Council's progress with the Local Offer for young people leaving care and the activity within the service ensuring young people leaving care are accessing education employment and training and	Medium	02.12.20 4pm – 6pm Or 9.12.20 4pm – 6pm	Pete Goddard/Joe Gilbert Local Offer Personal Advisor/Rebecca McCallum (Education, Employment and Training Co-ordinator) and Phil Turton (Homelessness reduction Personal Advisor)	Members' Seminar	All Members		

		appropriate accommodation							
12.	Children in Care returning to live with their birth families	The Specialist Support Service will deliver Members' training on the work they do to reunify children with their birth families where it is safe to do so. This training will include an overview of interim research findings on the Council's activity in this area which has been commissioned through Cambridge University	Medium	February 2021 TBC (to link with the theme of placements)	Kate Knight/Andie Markham/Jake Langhorn	Training session	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee (All Members and Substitutes)		

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE FORWARD AGENDA PLAN	Published 1 September 2020	Agenda Item No: 11
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Summary

The Forward Agenda Plan shows the dates and times of future meetings, where they will be held and what reports will be considered.

Committee date	Agenda item	Lead officer	Reference if key decision	Deadline for draft reports to Assistant Service Director	Approved reports to Democratic Services by
Wednesday 9 September 2020 – 4.00pm – Virtual Meeting					
	Minutes and Action Log	Democratic Services	Not applicable		
	Young People's Participation (standing item)	S Smith	Not applicable		
	Draft Annual Corporate Parenting Report 2019/20	F van den Hout	Not applicable		
	Sub-Committee Workshop/ Training Plan (standing item)	F van den Hout	Not applicable		
	Virtual School Headteacher's report	C Hiorns	Not applicable		
	Report from the Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association	F Van Den Hout	Not applicable		
	Agenda Plan	Democratic Services	Not applicable		
Wednesday 13 January 2021 - 4.00pm Room 128, Shire Hall, Cambridge Theme: Education					

Committee date	Agenda item	Lead officer	Reference if key decision	Deadline for draft reports to Assistant Service Director	Approved reports to Democratic Services by
	Minutes and Action Log	Democratic Services	Not applicable		
	Young People's Participation (standing item)	S Smith	Not applicable		
	Performance Report (approx. quarterly)	P Goddard	Not applicable		
	Report from the Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association	F Van Den Hout	Not applicable		
	Sub-Committee Workshop/ Training Plan (standing item)	F van den Hout	Not applicable		
	Virtual School: Unvalidated Results	C Hiorns	Not applicable		
	Siblings Forever Annual Report	O Grant	Not applicable		
	Action Plan to support children in care not in education, employment and training	TBC			
	Agenda Plan	Democratic Services	Not applicable		
Wednesday 9 June 2021 – 4.00pm Room 128, Shire Hall, Cambridge Theme: Placement					
	Notification of the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee for 2021/22	Democratic Services	Not applicable		
	Minutes and Action Log	Democratic Services	Not applicable		
	Young People's Participation (standing item)	S Smith	Not applicable		

Committee date	Agenda item	Lead officer	Reference if key decision	Deadline for draft reports to Assistant Service Director	Approved reports to Democratic Services by
	Performance Report <i>(approx. quarterly)</i>	P Goddard	Not applicable		
	Report from the Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association	F Van Den Hout	Not applicable		
	Sub-Committee Workshop/ Training Plan <i>(standing item)</i>	F van den Hout	Not applicable		
	Agenda Plan	Democratic Services	Not applicable		

