

Corporate Parenting

ESCC looks after around 460 children

Council as a whole is the corporate parent

All members should:

- Accept responsibility for these children
- Make their needs a priority
- Seek for them the same outcomes any good parent would want for their own children
- Make it their business to find out who and where these children are and make sure the council is doing its very best to help them

Corporate Parenting

How is it exercised?

Director of Children's Services has statutory responsibility

Each looked after child (LAC) has a social worker, who exercises parental responsibility;

- Builds a relationship with the child
- Implements care plan
- Reviews progress
- Ensures child is well cared for, makes progress at school, gets good health care, has chance to pursue hobbies and interests

Corporate Parenting

Role of elected members

Corporate Parenting Panel – 7 members; meets quarterly

Receives detailed reports on:

- Children's homes
- Fostering service
- Adoption and permanence service
- Education of looked after children
- Health of looked after children
- Progress of care leavers

Corporate Parenting

Corporate Parenting Panel

Meets with / visits

- Foster carer association
- Young people
- Children's homes

Members sit on

- Adoption and permanence panel
- Fostering panel

Corporate Parenting

Role of elected members

Scrutiny Committee

- Overview of outcomes for looked after children

Cabinet

- Lead Members for Children and for Children and Families have statutory accountability for quality of care and for outcomes
- Receives annual detailed report on corporate parenting; submitted to County Council

Green Paper, Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Children and Young People in Care (published October 2006)

All local authorities to develop a pledge that all children in care will receive:

- A choice, made with their social worker, of high quality placements
- 24/7 support from their social worker or an out of hours contact
- A minimum entitlement to sport and leisure activities e.g. 4 hours a week
- A chance to take part in volunteering
- Twice yearly health assessments for under 5's and annual health assessments and twice yearly dental check ups for older children
- An independent advocate
- A choice of when to move on to enter adult life, up to age 18
- The right to have their voice heard and influence the work of the LA through participation in a "Children in Care Council"

Children on the Edge of Care

Aim for smaller population of children in care

- Identify problems earlier and respond quickly (e.g. neglect)
- Bring children into care when necessary to safeguard them
- Support children in families unless against their interests

Key Proposals

- Improve practice in joint working between adult and children's services, in response to needs of vulnerable parents (learning difficulties, mentally ill, substance misuse)
- Promote use of family group conferences (effective in East Sussex)
- Implement models of intensive family therapy to keep families together, where possible
- Develop medium term vision to support children in their families, where possible (e.g. kinship care)

Role of the corporate parent

Reiterates that all LA staff and councillors should demand no less for each child in care than they would for their own children

Children's social workers will normally carry 'lead professional' role, as day to day corporate parents

But... staff turnover, inconsistency, lack of autonomy

Key proposals

- Pilot model of social care practices; groups of social workers, wholly independent of LAs
- Pilot budget holding by social workers as lead professional for children in care
- Build on existing independent visitor scheme to provide independent advocates to act as mentors and advocates for children in care

Ensuring children are in right placements

Aim for

- Placement stability
- Choice of placements, within LA wherever possible
- Good quality foster and residential care

Key proposals

- Develop treatment foster care (well established in East Sussex)
- Develop tiered model of placement types underpinned by national qualifications framework and fee structure (largely in place in East Sussex)
- Improve recruitment of foster carers through specially tailored recruitment campaigns (very successful in past 2 years)
- Revise assessment processes and support for family and friends carers (in place locally)

A first class education

Aim for

- Improved attainment and achievement by children in care
- Better support in schools
- Stronger relationships between schools, social workers and carers

Key proposals

- Enable carers to access early years support
- Provide LAs with power to direct schools to admit children in care, even when fully subscribed
- Presumption that children in care should not move schools in years 10-11
- Enhanced entitlement to school transport to reduce need to change school if child moves placement
- Personalised budget of around £500 per child per year to support education
- Better support in school to prevent exclusions
- Introduce 'virtual head teacher' to support schools in their work with children in care

Life outside school

Aim

- Children in care are offered all the opportunities any parent would want for their child

Key proposals

- Encourage LAs to provide free access for children in care to facilities such as leisure centres, sports grounds, youth clubs
- Encourage all LAs to use model of excellent physical and mental health services for children in care (Healthy Care Standard adopted locally)
- Offer every child in care a named health professional (access to designated nurses locally)
- Offer a personal adviser to every young woman in care who becomes pregnant
- Introduce screening for substance misuse as routine part of regular health assessments (in place locally)
- Build approaches to managing behaviour based on practice such as restorative justice into framework of training and qualifications for carers (in place in East Sussex)

Transition to adult life

Aim

- To increase the proportion of care leavers (aged 16-19) in education, employment and training by extending the time they remain in care

Key proposals

- Pilot veto for young people in care over any decision about legally leaving care before they turn 18, and pilot allowing young people to continue to live with foster families up to 21
- Improve housing options for young people e.g. dedicated supported accommodation
- Introduce national bursary of £2,000 for each young person in care who goes on to higher education
- Targeting young people in care to ensure they are encouraged to attend open days at higher education institutions and take part in summer schools (in place locally)
- LAs encouraged to offer work related placements to their own care leavers

Making the system work

Key proposals

- Require Ofsted to carry out regular inspection of how each LA is meeting educational needs of children in its care
- Introduce annual national stock take of outcomes of children in care, led by Ministers and reporting to Parliament
- Make clear in statutory guidance the responsibilities of DCS and Lead Member to children in care
- Expect every LA to set up a 'Children in Care Council'

Summary

Overall, very positive and East Sussex well placed to implement many proposals

Reservations

- Independent social care practices
- Budget holding lead professional

Financial implications

- Increased fostering allowances
- Young people staying in care up to 21
- Personalised education bursaries
- School transport
- Expansion of advocacy service

Implications for Children's Trust partners

- Improved health care
- Free access to leisure facilities
- Housing options for care leavers

LAC GREEN PAPER, CARE MATTERS: TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Number of children with care orders or voluntary arrangements at 31st March 2006

East Sussex Figures

As At 31/03/06	Number	Percentage
Care Orders	356	78%
Voluntary Arrangements	90	20%
Other Orders	11	2%
All Children	457	100%

2005 National figures

Number	Percentage
39,400	65%
18,800	31%
2,600	4%
60,900	100%

Age of children in care at 31st March 2006

East Sussex Figures

As At 31/03/06	Number	Percentage
Aged Under 1	36	8%
Aged 1-4	59	13%
Aged 5-9	97	21%
Aged 10-15	204	45%
Aged 16 and over	61	13%
Total	457	100%

2005 National Figures

Number	Percentage
2800	5%
8700	14%
12100	20%
26500	44%
10800	18%
60900	100%

Race/ethnicity of children in care at 31st March 2006

East Sussex Figures

As At 31/03/06	Number	Percentage
White	398	87%
Mixed	39	9%
Black	8	2%
Asian	0	0%
Other	12	3%
Total	457	100%

2005 National Figures

Number	Percentage
48100	79%
5000	8%
4900	8%
1800	3%
1100	2%
60900	100%

**Primary reason for coming into care: children in care at
31st March 2006**

East Sussex Figures

As At 31/03/06	Number	Percentage
Abuse or Neglect	318	70%
Child's Disability	35	8%
Family in Acute Stress	35	8%
Family Dysfunction	36	8%
Parental Illness or Disability	13	3%
Absent Parenting	11	2%
Socially unacceptable behaviour	8	2%
Low Income	1	0%
Total	457	100%

2005 National Figures

Number	Percentage
38100	63%
2400	4%
4400	7%
6100	10%
3300	5%
4900	8%
1500	2%
200	0.3%
60900	100%

Proportion of children in care by type of placement, 31st March 2006

East Sussex Figures

As At 31/03/06	Number	Percentage
Foster placements	356	78%
Living independently or in residential employment	5	1%
Secure units, homes, hostels and schools	35	8%
Placed for adoption	27	6%
Placement with parents	33	7%
Other accommodation	1	0%
Total	457	100%

2005 National Figures

Number	Percentage
41700	68%
1400	2%
8100	13%
3100	5%
5700	9%
900	1%
60900	100%

Children with 3 or more placements during the year ending 31st March 2006 by age

East Sussex Figures

As At 31/03/06	Number	% of lac age group
Aged Under 1	6	17%
Aged 1	2	8%
Aged 2-4	3	
Aged 5-9	4	4%
Aged 10-15	26	13%
Aged 16 and over	8	13%
Total	49	10.7%

2005 National Figures

Number	% of lac age group
300	11%
410	13%
680	
960	8%
4000	15%
1700	16%
8050	13%

Age breakdown of children in care placed for adoption at 31st March 2006

East Sussex Figures

As At 31/03/06	Number	Percentage
Aged Under 1	2	7%
Aged 1-4	15	56%
Aged 5-9	10	37%
Aged 10-15	0	0%
Aged 16 and over	0	0%
Total	27	100%

2005 National Figures

Number	Percentage
220	7%
1700	54%
1000	32%
190	6%
10	0%
3120	100%

Percentage of children in care in Year 11 and all children aged 15 sitting at least one GCSE or GNVQ examination

East Sussex Figures

Sat at least 1 exam	2003	2004	2005	2006
Children in Care	67%	81%	74%	81%
All Children	99.8%	99.7%	99.8%	99.8%

2005 National Figures

2005
64%
98%

Percentage of children in care in Year 11 and all children aged 15 achieving at least 1 GCSE or GNVQ examination

East Sussex Figures

2005 National Figures

% achieving at least 1 GCSE/GNVQ	2003	2004	2005	2006
Children in Care	67%	81%	65%	78%
All Children	95%	96%	97%	97%

2005
60%
96%

Percentage of children in care in Year 11 and all children aged 15 achieving at least 5 GCSE or GNVQ examinations at grades A*-G

East Sussex Figures

2005 National Figures

% achieving at least 5 GCSE's/GNVQ's A*-G	2003	2004	2005	2006
Children in Care	37%	48%	47%	59%
All Children	88%	89%	89%	90%

2005
41%
89%

Percentage of children in care in Year 11 and all children aged 15 achieving at least 5 GCSE or GNVQ examinations at grades A*-C

East Sussex Figures

2005 National Figures

% achieving at least 5 GCSE's/GNVQ's A*-C	2003	2004	2005	2006
Children in Care	4%	11%	15%	22%
All Children	53%	54%	55%	55%

2005
11%
56%

GCSE attainment by type of placement for children in care as at 30th September 2006

East Sussex Figures

OC2 Data for September 2006	Foster placements	Children's Homes	Living independently	Placement with parents	Other accommodation
1+ GCSE/GNVQ at A*-G	76%	8%	4%	12%	0%
5+ GCSE/GNVQ at A*-C	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%

2005 National Figures

Foster placements	Children's Homes	Living independently	Placement with parents	Other accommodation
56%	18%	16%	7%	3%
69%	12%	11%	5%	2%

Percentage of children permanently excluded from school, 2003-2006

East Sussex Figures

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Children in Care	0.4%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%
All Children	0.1%	0.1%		

2005 National Figures

2005
0.9%
0.1%

Health care of children in care, twelve months ending 30th September 2003 to 2006

East Sussex Figures

Percentage	2003	2004	2005	2006
Immunisations up to date	96%	95%	97%	
Teeth checked by dentist	87%	93%	93%	
Had an annual health assessment	86%	89%	85%	

2005 National Figures

2005
77%
82%
80%

Proportion of children receiving a warning, reprimand or conviction, 2003 to 2006

East Sussex Figures

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Children in Care	8%	10%	9%	10%
All Children	2%	3%	3%	

2005 National Figures

2005
9%
4%

Proportion of care leavers leaving at ages 16, 17 and 18 year ending 31st March 2002-2006

East Sussex Figures

	2004		2005		2006	
Age 16	13	33%	11	27%	14	33%
Age 17	5	13%	1	2%	8	19%
Age 18	22	55%	29	71%	21	49%
	40	100%	41	100%	43	100%

2005 National Figures

Number	Percentage
2100	28%
1400	19%
4000	53%
7500	100%

Comparison between care leavers aged 19 and all young people at age 19, not in education, employment or training between 2004 and 2006

East Sussex Figures

	2004		2005		2006	
Care leavers not in education, training or employment	18	46%	5	17%	8	24%
Care leavers not in touch	0	0%	5	14%	1	3%
All young people in education, training or employment	86%		90%		85%	

2005 National Figures

2005	Percentage
1600	31%
560	11%
86%	

Participation of care leavers, aged 19, in education between 2002 and 2006

East Sussex Figures

2005 National Figures

	2002		2003		2004		2005		2006	
Higher Education (beyond A level)	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%	2	7%	2	6%
Other Education	0	0%	2	7%	9	23%	11	37%	12	35%
Care Leavers in Touch with Dept	35		28		39		30		34	

2005	Percentage
310	7%
970	21%
4640	