

Committee: Corporate Parenting Panel
Date: 27 July 2018
Title of Report: Looked After Children (LAC) Statistics
By: Director of Children's Services
Purpose of Report: To update the Panel on changes in the last quarter

Recommendations: The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to comment on and note the report.

1. Background and supporting information

1.2 Services for LAC are predominantly funded from the Children's Services base budget with some additional smaller funding streams supporting specific activity eg Virtual School activity from the Pupil Premium Grant.

1.3 The past quarter has continued to see sustained pressure on the system and at the end of June, ESCC had 606 children in care. Work has taken place to drill down into the underlying reasons for the steady rise over a number of months, with the conclusion that while the number of children entering the system over the past year has remained fairly stable, children are staying longer in placement in the context of the following factors:

- Older children who are being exploited both criminally and sexually
- Improved practice on neglect identifying larger family groups with a spread of children of different ages
- Courts being increasingly reluctant to approve adoption for some young children and also protracted legal challenges to plans for adoption delaying the permanence process.

1.4 The rate in East Sussex is now 57.2 and closer to but still below the IDACI expected rate of 59 (which would equate to 625 children). A total of 425 children were in foster care at the end of June, with 85 of those children in agency placements, a rise of 8 over the quarter. In addition we have 50 young people in supported housing options, homes or hostels. 23 children were placed for adoption. 6 children were placed with foster carers who are also approved adopters under the Fostering for Adoption pathway.

1.5 The number of children with kinship carers now stands at 45, some of whom have been placed with family members at the direction of a judge.

1.6 The number of children placed at home with their parents whilst subject to a legal order has reduced by 4 to 17. Planning for placements of this sort is always monitored rigorously in order to mitigate any risk factors and agreement to begin or end a placement with parents is given at a senior level. However some of these children remain placed with parents on interim legal orders during ongoing proceedings and hence they are not subject to internal Placement with Parent processes.

1.7 At the end of the quarter 33 children were placed in agency residential placements, a rise of 6 over the period. Budget pressure has been mitigated to some extent but not eradicated by a step down from residential placement to Supported Housing, a return home etc.

1.8 At the end of the quarter 1 ESCC child remained secured at Lansdowne; the same young woman who was reported as secured at the last meeting of the CPP. Her behaviour is still very troubled. It had been hoped that she would leave Lansdowne within this quarter however staff applied in June for her Secure Order to be extended by a Court and the search for a suitable placement to enable her to leave Lansdowne continues. This will be a very delicate piece of work with few options being identified given her complexity.

1.9 We have had no new remands to custody during this quarter and, at the end of June, there were no young people still on remand and awaiting sentencing.

1.10 Overall the numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people has remained stable because, although ESCC has continued to accept transfer of young people via the dispersal scheme when it is possible to allocate social work staff, some of our young people have turned 18 and become care leavers. As far as possible new young people already placed in or close to East Sussex continue to be prioritised for transfer to ESCC to facilitate staff contact etc.

1.11 There numbers of children subject to Child Arrangement/Residence Orders has risen by 1 to 331 and 439 children were subject to Special Guardianship Orders, a rise of 2. Sadly a number of children have become LAC due to a breakdown in SGO placements for them.

1.12 During Q1 of 2018/19 1 complaint was received from a young person in one of our Children's Homes who was complaining that she felt that a member of staff was singling her out and making false allegations of assault and trying to get her arrested. An internal investigation was carried out and it was found that the assault was witnessed by a third party and reported to the Police, which was considered appropriate. The young person was warned by staff about her behaviour and offered a further meeting if she so wished. The complaint was therefore not upheld.

2. Conclusion

2.1 Pressure on the system continues, driven by the numbers of and costs for children and continued close oversight will be maintained.

2.2 1 complaint was received and investigated fully but not upheld.

Stuart Gallimore

Director of Children's Services

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Local Members

All

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Children's Services LAC Summary between 01/07/2017 and 30/06/18

Background documents

None

Children's Services LAC Summary between 01/07/2017 and 30/06/2018

Placement Type	Jul 17	Aug 17	Sep 17	Oct 17	Nov 17	Dec 17	Jan 18	Feb 18	Mar 18	Apr 18	May 18	Jun 18
A3 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) with current foster carer	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2
A4 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	19	17	17	12	9	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
A5 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) with current foster carer	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
A6 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	4	5	7	8	8	8	10	13	13	15	14	14
H5 - Residential accommodation	16	17	17	21	20	18	16	24	25	28	26	30
K1 - Secure unit	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
K2 - Homes and Hostels	47	45	44	46	46	47	49	50	50	49	49	50
P1 - Placed with own parents	18	20	20	20	20	20	19	19	21	21	20	17
P2 - Independent living	2	4	4	5	6	5	5	5	4	4	4	3
R2 - NHS/Health Trust	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
R5 - Young Offender Institution or prison	5	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	2	2	1
S1 - All Residential schools	13	12	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	10	9
U1 - Foster placement with relative or friend- long term fostering	29	36	35	32	34	31	39	36	35	36	32	36
U3 - Foster placement with relative or friend- not long term or FFA	124	121	120	118	116	117	116	114	114	113	113	113
U4 - Placement with other foster carer- long term fostering	2	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	7	7	6	6
U5 - Placement with other foster carer who is also an approved adopter- FFA	273	276	279	282	276	277	287	291	306	306	318	312
U6 - Placement with other foster carer - not long term or FFA	561	569	571	571	566	562	576	590	605	607	610	606
Total												

Appendix A

Immigration Status	Jul 17	Aug 17	Sep 17	Oct 17	Nov 17	Dec 17	Jan 18	Feb 18	Mar 18	Apr 18	May 18	Jun 18
Asylum Seeker	1	1	1	1	1							
British Citizen	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK (ILR)	1	1	1	1	1							
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child	22	22	21	23	22	23	21	21	20	22	24	20
Legal Status												
Child Arrangements Order/Residence Order	331	332	331	331	331	331	331	331	333	333	333	334
S8(1)CA 89	425	430	432	432	433	433	433	436	437	438	438	439
Special Guardianship Order S14A CA 89												

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