

East Sussex Looked After Children's Services Annual Progress Report 2018/19



Who did we look after? (1)

- On **31 March 2019** there were **600** of our Looked After Children (LAC) in ESCC; this represents a **decrease** of **3 children (0.5%)** as compared to **2017/18** and a rate of 56.9 per 10,000 population. This is just below the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) expected rate (a measure in terms of population profiles and deprivation levels) of 57.2 and below the **2017** England rate of **64.0**.
- The LAC data only ever gives a snapshot of our children moving in and out of the system at a fixed date each month/year and considerable activity sits beneath it. The data below is referred to as 'churn'. This cohort of children will come in and out of the system within the year, or some may come in and stay whilst others leave. It has been calculated that **the churn figure** for 2018/19 is 188 which, when added to the total number of LAC, equates to **the service working with 788 children**. This total figure is higher than last year (756 children), and the churn rate is also higher than for the previous years (153 for 2017/18, 175 for 2016/17).

Who came in and out of care?

- There was a **decrease** in children coming into care from **212** during **2017/18** to **195** during **2018/19**.
- The number of **0-5 year olds** admitted to care during **2018/19** **decreased** to **87** (from **104** in **2017/18**).
- The number of **6-12 year olds** admitted to care during **2018/19** **decreased** to **38** (from **50** in **2017/18**).
- The number of **children aged 13+** **increased** from **58** for **2017/18** to **70** in **2018/19**.
- At year end there was an **increase in the number of our LAC leaving care, from 164 in 2017/18 to 197 in 2018/19**.
- The number of **0-12 year olds leaving care** **increased slightly to 90 during 18/19 from 89 in 17/18**. This was made up of 70 0-5 year olds and 20 were 6-12 year olds.
- There was an **increase in the 13+ age group from 75 of our young people leaving care in 2017/18 to 107 in 2018/19**

The trend for this year is showing, for the first time, a slight decrease in our LAC numbers as compared to the previous 3 years. During 18/19 there was a reduction in children coming into care in the 0- 12 year olds but an increase in the 13 plus age group. This increase was largely related to the changes in policy and practice, both locally and nationally, in relation to children who suffer neglect, sexual and criminal exploitation and also a more rigorous application of the Southwark Judgement, whereby teenagers can be offered section 20 accommodation and hence become LAC rather than being viewed as homeless. Although there were higher numbers of children leaving care across all age ranges, the overall 'churn figure' indicates not only greater numbers of our LAC worked with throughout the year, but that many of these children presented with greater levels of complexity particularly in the 13 plus age cohort.

Who did we look after? (2)

Children with disabilities who are looked after

- The number of our Looked After children with disabilities remains similar in 2018/19 to 2017/18.
- At 31 March 2019 there were 31 children with disabilities who were looked after of whom 9 were aged 16-19. This compares with 34 children of whom 14 were aged 16-19 in 2017/18.
- The reasons remain broadly similar with 10 children placed in residential schools of whom 7 are jointly funded with health. These children together represent all of the children with disabilities placed out of county. Other LAC children are placed in agency or in house foster care within East Sussex or in our own residential units. One child is placed in the only independent children's home in East Sussex.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

- At 31 March 2019 ESCC was caring for **36** UASC, **16** more than the previous year.
- These young people were mainly male and over 16, with an additional **27** having ongoing support needs as care leavers.
- In the last year, 5 children have come via The Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme and the remainder have been spontaneous arrivals, found either by the Police or at Newhaven Port.

Looked after young people who offend

- The Youth Offending Team (YOT) worked with 48 of our young people. This accounted for 12.7% of the total young people worked with by the YOT throughout the year. Our looked after children aged 10-17, is less than 1% of the population of young people aged 10-17 living in East Sussex and so LAC are still over-represented in the YOT cohort despite an agreed protocol to decriminalize them where possible.

Where children are living (end of year snapshot data)

*Agency refers to mainstream schools

Placement type	2018/19	2017/18
With foster carer	473	470
Of these; in house carers	327	331
Kinship carers	49	46
Agency carers	97	93
Placed for adoption	21	26
In supported lodgings	33	27
ESCC children's homes	18	21
Agency children's homes	27	29
Agency special schools	1	0
Placed with parents	23	20
Independent living	0	4
Youth custody/secure unit	2	5
Hospital/NHS establishment	2	1
Absconded	0	0

How well did we do? (1)

Indicator Ref	Description	2018/19 Value	2017/18 Eng	2017/18 Value	2016/17 Eng	2016/17 Value	2015/16 Eng	2015/16 Value
NI 58	Emotional & Behavioural Health of children in care	14.3 ↑	14.2	14.4 ↓	14.1	14.1 ↓	14.0	13.5 ↑
Adoption Scorecard 1	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted. (3 year average)	420 days ↑	486 days	454 days ↑	520 days	479 days ↑	558 days	516 days ↑
Adoption Scorecard 2	Average time between an LA receiving court authority to place a child and the LA deciding on a match with an adoptive family (3 year average)	197 days ↑	201 days	220 days ↓	220 days	212 days ↑	226 days	222 days ↓
Adoption Scorecard 3	% of children who wait less than 14 months between entering care & moving in with their adoptive family (3 year average)	57% ↓	56%	64% ↑	53%	61% ↑	47%	53% ↓

Where performance has improved/increased it is shown with a ↑ and where it has dipped with a ↓

How well did we do? (2)

Indicator Ref	Description	2018/ 19 Value	2017/1 8 Eng	2017/ 18 Value	2016/1 7 Eng	2016/ 17 Value	2015/1 6 Eng	2015/ 16 Value
NI62 Placements 1	Number of children looked after with 3 or more placements during the year	12.0% ↓	10.0%	11.1% ↑	10.0%	13.8% ↓	10.0%	10.8% ↓
NI63 Placements 2	% of LAC under 16 who've been lac for 2.5 years or more & in the same placement for 2 years or placed for adoption	70.1% ↓	70.0%	70.2% ↓	70.0%	70.7% ↑	68.0%	65.0% ↑
Placements 3	% of LAC at 31 st March placed outside LA boundary and more than 20 miles from where they used to live	11.5% ↓	15.0%	10.3% ↓	13.0%	8.4% ↑	13.0%	9.4% ↑
Leaving Care 2 * see note below	% of former relevant young people aged 19-21 who were in education, employment or training	52.1% ↑	51.0%	51.9% ↓	50.0%	53.0% ↓	49.0%	61.0% ↑

Where performance has improved/increased it is shown with a ↑ and where it has dipped with a ↓

How well did we do? (3)

Indicator Ref	Description	2018/ 19 Value	2017/ 18 Eng	2017/ 18 Value	2016/ 17 Eng	2016/ 17 Value	2015/ 16 Eng	2015/ 16 Value
Leaving Care 3 * see note below	% of former relevant young people aged 19-21 who were in suitable accommodation	79.9% ↑	84.0%	77.3% ↑	84.0%	76.5% ↓	83.0%	81.7% ↑
Thrive PI 9	Rate of Children looked after per 10,000 population aged under 18	56.6% ↑	64.0	56.9 ↓	62.0	53.0 ↓	60.0	51.7 ↔
PAF C19	Average of the % of children looked after who had been looked after continuously for at least 12 months who had an annual assessment and their teeth checked by a dentist during the previous 12 months.	87.8% ↓	86.0%	88.2% ↓	86.0%	90.3% ↓	87.0%	92.8% ↑
PAF C81	Final warnings, reprimands and convictions of lac	2.0% ↑	4.0%	2.3% ↑	4.0%	3.4% ↑	5.0%	3.8% ↔

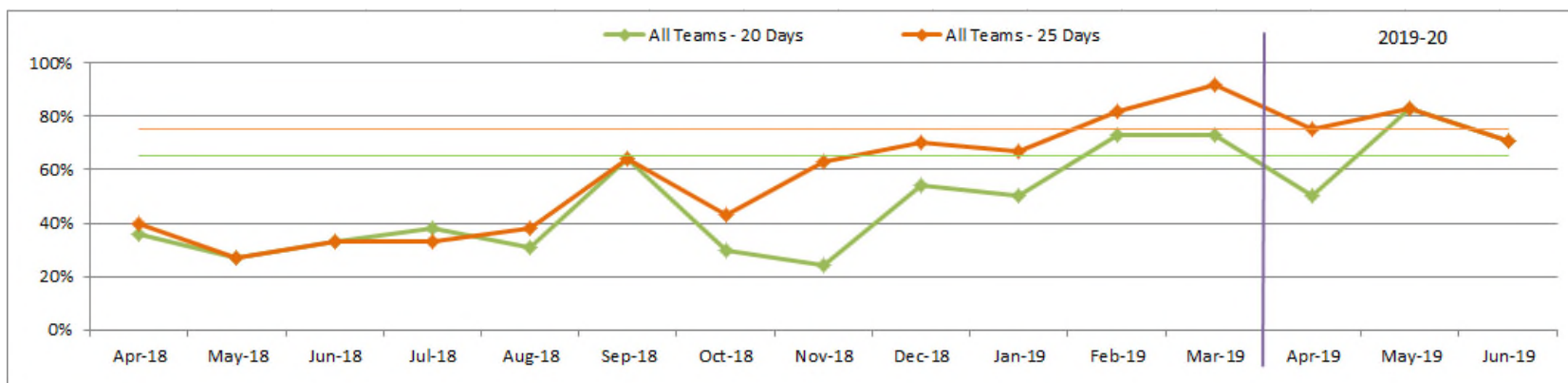
Where performance has improved/increased it is shown with a ↑ and where it has dipped with a ↓

So, in summary

- Although performance is set out in the grid above, **the 2018/19 national data**, has not yet been published by the DfE.
- **The rate** of our LAC per 10,000 **has remained fairly constant.**
- There **continues** to be improvement in performance in relation to Adoption timeliness with good performance being maintained in the majority of other areas.
- The figures for care leavers are snapshot data. The other indicators in relation to **employability** of older LAC and care leavers remain above the South East and national average.

The physical health of our children

Initial Health Assessment (IHA) Monthly Performance Summary 2018-19 and 2019-20 Q1



Steps taken to improve performance in Initial Health Assessments (IHA)

- **Full review and relaunch of the process** by key social care and health personnel starting in Spring 2018
- Robust IHA tracking system developed in collaboration with East Sussex Healthcare Trust colleagues which provides a clearer picture of where delays occur
- and an ability to track all IHAs that were due for children entering care in any given month.
- From September 2018 onwards there has been consistent improvement in performance which has continued into 2019/20
- Greater responsibility for timely completion of necessary paperwork by social work staff, and clarification for parental consent where required
- Better communication on both operational and strategic level between social care and health staff
- **43% of IHAs were completed within 20 days** against a target of 65% and **61% within 25 days** against a target of 75% in 2018-19. (This target has been met in the first quarter of 2019/20 with 71% completed within 20 days, and 76% completed within 25 days, demonstrating sustained improvement which has been embedded into practice).
- **294 Review Health Assessments (RHA)** were completed by East Sussex Healthcare Trust for East Sussex LAC in 2018/19

Areas for improvement 2019/20

- **Exceed target for IHAs within statutory timescales**
- **Improve timeliness and reporting of RHAs**
- **Improve quality of health passports for care leavers**
- **Improve pathways to mental health services for LAC and Care Leavers**

The mental health of our children (1)

LAC Mental Health Service (LACMHS)

- **LACMHS) received 50 new non-urgent referrals during 2018/19**, all but 3 of which (due to not meeting LACMHS criteria) were accepted and an initial consultation was offered.
- **An additional 35 of our children and young people were also seen urgently** due to the severity of the symptoms they presented with, such as suicidal thoughts and/or serious self-harm, depression or psychotic symptoms.
- In addition, there was **also a cohort of between 81 and 84 LAC** (at any one time) **in receipt of on-going therapeutic support** such as individual therapy, dyadic therapy (child and carer together), systemic therapy and/or consultation to the foster carer and network. LACMHS also provided:
 - One Therapeutic Parenting Group (working with 10 carers of 8 young people, their social workers and supervising social workers)
 - Weekly consultation to staff at Homefield, Brodrick House and Hazel Lodge.
 - Weekly consultation to the Through Care Team
 - Monthly 'drop in' consultation surgeries to the Fostering Service and each of the three LAC teams
- LACMHS continued to work in close collaboration with its partner agencies to provide a service for our children with a care plan of permanent placement away from their birth family.
- The response to new and urgent referrals continued to be prompt (e.g. a risk assessment being provided within one week) and ongoing therapeutic work was highly valued by all partners and deemed to be a significant contributor to Outstanding OFSTED inspections.

The mental health of our children (2)

Areas for development in 2019/20 for LACMHS

- LACMHS has developed a number of strategies for reducing the waiting time for on-going therapeutic work which have been approved by both Health and Children's Services Managers during this year, and which will be implemented and reviewed over the coming year.

Our approach is informed by the voice of children and young people

12,166 local votes in Make Your Mark 2018 from 17 schools which equals 21% of young people aged 13 – 18 in East Sussex.

The Youth Cabinet and CICC and other local youth voice groups have developed their campaigns on the top priorities which are:

- End Knife Crime
- Mental Health
- Homelessness



In October 2018, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex met with 50 young people from youth groups around the county. They discussed the issue of mental health with the young people and what can be done to promote good mental health.

November 2018, over 50 young people took part in East Sussex Annual Takeover Day to discuss mental health and emotional wellbeing.



The Education of our children

- **The Virtual School caseworkers continued to support the education of all ESCC LAC including care leavers** and developed their role of providing advice and guidance for children adopted from care, subject to special guardianship orders and child arrangement orders.
- The Virtual School funded and worked with the Placement Support Team to facilitate the Coram Bright Spots Survey which gathered the thoughts of looked after children (4-18 years) . A feedback event and a range of service meetings have given children and staff an opportunity to hear about the survey outcomes and discuss how these findings can inform practice across the authority.
- The Virtual School bank of casual intervention teachers has increased and partnership working with Alternative Education providers has developed to enable high quality short term intervention. The team continues to work closely with ESCC and external services on an operational level and a strategic level, contributing to the development of whole school practice. The Virtual School Head has sat on strategic groups re: Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing and on Special Educational Needs, both areas which have a significant impact on our LAC.
- **At Key Stage 2 there was an improvement in progress in reading and Maths and a very slight decrease in writing and teacher training has been put in place in response to this.**
- **At Key Stage 4, progress and attainment scores fell** but individual data showed that a small number of young people did not achieve any qualifications and as such had a significant impact on average scores. These are often our young people who came into care as teenagers. This is likely to remain an issue and reflects the national picture. **Interventions have been put in place to engage our LAC who may be at risk of poor outcomes and to ensure that they have a pathway into post 16 education.**
- In relation to our care leavers, as of **March 2019**, of the children who were in continuous care for at least 12 months before sitting their GCSE examinations, **86.1% of 16 — 17 year olds (year 12) were in education, training and employment (EET)**. This exceeded the target of 80% but is a reduction of 4 % on last year's data. **87% of 17 -18 year olds (year 13) were EET**, exceeding a target of 70% and matching last year's data. **10% of Care Leavers accessed University**; this matches the 10% target.

Children in Foster Placements

- On **31st March 2018** there were **585 of our LAC in foster care. 450 of these children were placed within in-house foster carers as compared to 392 in the previous year.** This includes in-house 'parent and child' placements, children subject to Special Guardianship Orders placed with their former foster carers and those older young people remaining in their 'Staying Put' fostering placements through to independence .
- The commissioning of external independent IFA placements remains at a similar level to that of 2017/18 with the total figure of mainstream LAC agency foster placements at 80.
- The Fostering Duty team is an extremely busy service providing a centralised service for the placement and commissioning of all placements for our LAC. In 2018/19 the team:
 - Received 532 referrals for children needing placements.
 - Worked on a total of 608 placements (121 of which were not required).
 - Made 487 placements with 398 placements made with our in-house foster carers.
- The service often has to respond to emergency duty and same day placements (immediate safeguarding concerns), placing children subject to care proceedings as well as responding to the disruption of existing placements with very complex children and young people presenting with very challenging behaviours.
- The duty team are involved in the matching of children, quality assuring all independent fostering and residential placements and often sensitive negotiations regarding costs. In 2018/19:
 - 21 fostering households offering 36 placements were approved compared to 19 fostering households offering 37 placements in 2017/18
 - a further 14 assessments of prospective foster carers were allocated for assessment and booked for presentation to the Fostering Panel that unfortunately did not progress.
 - there were 9 fostering family assessments still in progress at year end.
 - the number of existing foster carers who retired stabilised (compared to 2017-18 where 22 foster carers retired) the service only lost 10 carers and 21 new fostering households were approved and so The Fostering Service saw a net increase in its resources. Given the challenges experienced nationally for the recruitment of foster carers, a net gain of resources is evidence of effective recruitment and retention strategies.
- On 1st April 2019 all foster carer allowances were given a 3% uplift by East Sussex County Council.

Children in Supported Lodgings

Supported Lodgings

- April 2018-March 2019, **40 of our young people have been newly accommodated in Supported Lodging's placements**; this being a mixture of LAC and young people presenting as homeless.
- **Currently 57 young people are accommodated through this project.**
- Supported Lodging's providers/carers have been encouraged to extend their approval potential to take more parent and child and more Emergency Duty placements. The scheme has also utilised experienced carers in providing accommodation and support to a number of young people under the age of 16, with robust risk assessments in place. This has resulted in two supported lodging's carers seeking fostering status and becoming 'hybrid' carers. Focused support and training is being developed to help providers offer placements to young people with more complex needs, thereby expanding local support and pathway options.
- As of 31 March 2019 there were **48 Supported Lodging's households providing a total of 73 placements across the county.**

In the year 2018/19

- **There has been 10 new Supported Lodging's approvals, providing 13 additional placements.** Although this is an increase on the 2017/18 figures, recruiting in East Sussex remains challenging because of the competitive nature of this market.
- **The Supported Lodgings team received 129 referrals requesting placements for young people.** 51 of which were for care leavers, 31 were for young people presenting as homeless and 47 were older children requiring foster placements. **Of the 129 referrals, 53 were closed, 76 young people were placed and 0 referrals remained open.**
- **Please see the relevant link at the close of this report.**



Dong with his supported lodgings family, who help young people gain independence



Dame Jacqueline Wilson launching the new fostering information van which will help to recruit more foster carers

Adoption and Permanence key facts

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Number of children adopted	45	38	29	27 (AOs)
Number of adoption matches (children)	32	38	30	39
Number of permanent fostering matches (children)	10	14	5	4
Number of East Sussex adoptive matches (children)	26	30	30	33
Number of ASE adoptive matches (children)	0	0	0	2
Number of inter-agency matches (children):				
Permanence:	2	0	1	1
Adoption:	6	8	6	4
Number of prospective adopters approved (households)	41	30	25	33 (of which 4 2 nd time)
Number of permanent carers approved (households)	2	1	3	3
Number of children approved for adoption up to 31st March 2017 (including 2 re approvals)	53	52	69	43
Number of children approved for permanence up to 31st March 2019	14	32	24	22 (of which 10 change of Care Plan from adoption to perm)
Number of approved adopters waiting to be matched	22	20	12	14 (from the 33 approved this year)
Number of disruptions presented to Panel pre Order:				
Permanence:	0	0	0	0
Adoptions:	1	0	1	1

Children needing Adoption or Permanence

- In line with the national picture **the number of our children with a plan for adoption has decreased from 69 children in 2017-2018 to 43 children in 2018/2019** and 2 re-approvals.
- **39 children of our children were matched during 2018/2019** which was a slight increase on the previous year. Whilst overall the number of children approved decreased during this period, the levels of complexity and uncertainties re: health and development remained high.
- **The ethnic profile of children approved reflects the local population**; 6 of the total number approved were from other ethnic groups including Guyanese, Sri Lankan, White/African Caribbean and Iranian.
- The **number of birth parents seeking leave to revoke Placement Orders continued to remain steady**. This at times resulted in the a significant delay in the Adoption Orders being placed.
- There were **27 Adoption Orders granted in 2018/2019**.
- During 2018/2019 **88 households attended information events and 37 households registered their interest to adopt**. The conversion rate from information event to registration remained high and **33 adopters were approved** by the year end, **an increase of 8 compared to 2017/2018**.
- The Government's **regionalisation agenda** gained significant momentum. ESCC has worked for the past 4 years with the Adoption South East partnership to form a regional adoption service. The work across four local authorities is developing common practice and shared events in all areas of adoption service delivery. It was recently agreed that **ESCC will host the management and coordination of the new regional service, anticipating implementation and 'go live' in April 2020**.
- There were **56 new referrals for post adoption support assessments** over the past year with the majority resulting in the provision of packages of support. The adoption CAMHS service, **ADCAMHS, continued to offer a dedicated consultation and therapy service**
- **ADCAMHS was commissioned to support 40 families but consistently provided a service to over 60 families**. Adoptive families very much valued ADCAMHS, as the clinical work has been proven to strengthen family relationships and increase placement stability. Feedback from adopters indicated that they appreciated the support and a key contact for 'the longer journey'.
- **Please see the relevant link at the close of this report.**

Our children's homes (1)

Broderick Road continues to care for a very challenging group of our young people with differing presentations and very complex needs. The home is currently waiting for work to commence on updating the bathrooms.

Lansdowne Secure Children's Home has had a challenging 12 months. This is partly due to the impact of the building work for the extension to create 5 additional beds, due to finish in the spring of 2020. Because of this the number of rooms available has fallen from 7 to 6. The majority of our young people placed over the last six months have been from ESCC which has impacted on revenue income. In addition one of our most complex East Sussex young people has required 2 rooms in an area away from other young people further decreasing the availability of rooms to 5. There remains considerable challenges in recruiting new staff to the home.

Acorns, in Bexhill, provided regular overnight respite care for some of our severely disabled young people aged 7-19 utilizing 7 beds. There were, however, 2 full-time accommodated young people who remained throughout this period to avoid a change of placement close to their 19th birthdays. There was also a full-time emergency placement made available.

Homefield Cottage has now changed its registration to include boys from the ages of 11-18 years. To date only girls have been placed, but the RHM would consider accommodating boys if the match was appropriate when a vacancy occurs.

Hazel Lodge continues, as the other home, to practice 'Staying Close'. One of their longer term residents had a successful transition to Supported Lodgings with the help of staff, and they are currently preparing another young woman towards the same outcome.

The Bungalow, in Eastbourne, is registered for 7 children aged 7-19 and has provided full-time accommodation to some of our disabled children who are unable to live in a family setting. They all attended local schools and all maintained contact with their families, facilitated on site. One young person moved onto to a permanent adult placement and another young person was admitted.

Our children's homes (2)

All our homes are externally inspected by Ofsted

- **Acorns** received an Ofsted judgement of '**Good**' in **August 2017** but **Requiring Improvement in August 2018**.
- **Broderick Road** continued to maintain its '**Outstanding**' rating.
- **The Bungalow** received a judgement of '**Good**' in **October 2018** but had **declined in Effectiveness in February 2019**.
- **Hazel Lodge** also achieved a well-deserved first '**Outstanding**' from its full inspection.
- **Lansdowne Secure Children's Home** also received '**Improved Effectiveness**' for its Ofsted interim inspection in March 2019. Their next full inspection will include Education and for the first time CQC to inspect health services within the home.

Looking after our older children (1)



The Through Care Team (TCT) – What we have achieved

- **The Local Offer** has been updated by the Through Care Team (TCT) and **is now published on line**
 - Through Art Workshops, our young people will be designing a ‘young person friendly’ format for the Local Offer and we will embed the offer with other agencies.
 - The Virtual School worked with the TCT to complete **The Coram Voice Bright spots survey with care leavers**. These findings will extend the offer over this coming year.
- There has been a **focus on reducing isolation for our 21 – 25 year olds** and provide support with practical matters, e.g. tenancy support. Other supports include: individual support by named Personal Advisors and Placements Support Workers, access to weekly drop in sessions and involvement in social activities including Christmas parties, picnics and cinema trips.
- **At March 31 2019** the team was **working with 351 young people**, compared to 277 in 2018/19. A significant proportion of these young people had highly complex behaviours with a range of challenging safeguarding issues.



Age	2018/19	2017/18
Under 16	41	12
Age 16 - 17	102	94
Age 18-24	208	171

- The team is picking up work with some complex young people at the age of 14 and this **Through Care model** is now **embedded and working well**. **All young people are allocated a PA by the time they reach 17 ½**, with a number of young people with complex needs, receiving this additional support much earlier on. This joint working has enhanced the offer to these young people through **relationship based practice resulting in improved progress and outcomes for our young people**.

Looking after our older children (2)

- The Virtual School has employed a **participation worker** to work with the TCT to **improve engagement of our young people in their own education and future pathways. There has been improved attendance at our drop-in centres for our young people to improve their employability. Transition planning for LAC who are the most complex in terms of disability** will continue to receive a service from ASC and is managed by a specialist Transitions Team within Adult Social Care.
- **Accommodation** - During 2018-19 neither our older looked after children or 16 or 17 year olds presenting as homeless have been placed in bed and breakfast accommodation. This was possible only because of the additional investment provided by the ESCC transformation fund to improve the accommodation offer for our vulnerable young people.

The Housing Project has focused on:

- Our vulnerable young care leavers and homeless young people.
- Increasing the numbers of Supported Lodging's providers.
- Developing the market and commissioning supported accommodation provision to extend the housing and accommodation pathway and providing high risk emergency accommodation to mitigate the use of bed and breakfast accommodation.

Our Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

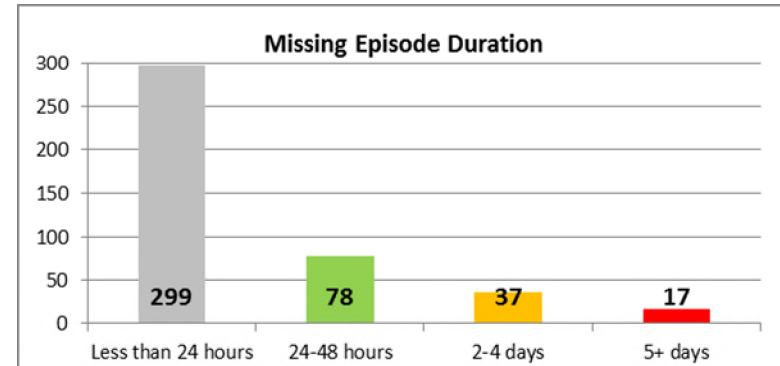
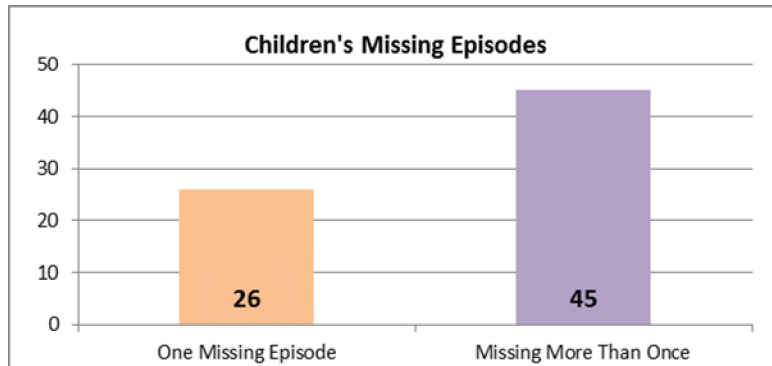
What we have achieved

- A **full time Personal Advisor has been recruited**, who is the specialist Virtual School case worker responsible for **developing opportunities and links** for our **UASC including access to vocational courses and work experience**
- **The Service has recruited an additional social worker which brings the current total to 3.**
- **Continuing development of staff** includes training on Age Assessments, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery and recognising and working with Trauma.
- The Through Care Team are **providing specialist training for our foster carers in regard to working with our UASC.**
- The Virtual School has also employed a **specialist education placement adviser to work with our UASC team** who is working with education providers to develop English as an additional language as well as other educational pathways provision. As a result **92% of our UASC are now in education.**

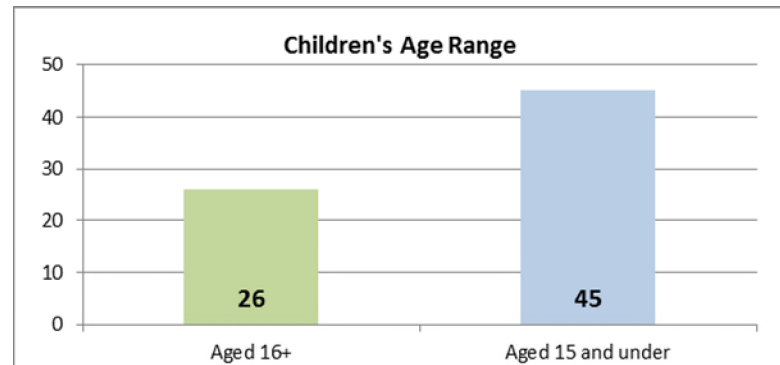
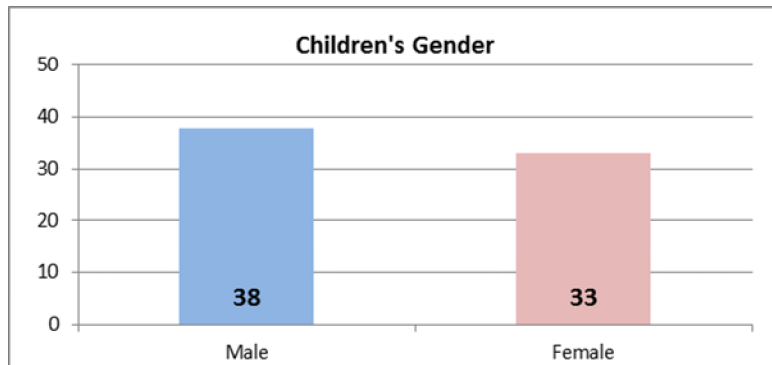
Future developments

- **Improving links with adult services for ongoing support needs.**
- **Improving links with CAMHS** including developing trauma screening tools.
- **Developing better “introduction” tools for our newly arrived young people** includes showing videos of young people’s experiences we have already looked after and the cultural and language challenges they may face. The largest group of our UASC is Vietnamese, with other groups including Eritrean, Albanian, Iranian and Kurdish.
- **Developing mentoring** for our new UASC by young people who we already look after.
- **Developed a UASC specific drop-in** for our young people to allow them to **meet socially and also with professionals** to discuss issues such as sex and relationships, the law in the UK, CSE and recognising and managing mental health.

Our children who are Missing and who are at risk of Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation (CSE/CE) (1)



- **In 2018/19 71 LAC went missing, 45 of whom were missing more than once.** There were also 18 LAC who were absent (i.e. not where they should be), and 5 of these were absent more than once.
- **In 2018/19 there were 431 missing episodes, of these, 299 episodes of children being missing for less than 24 hours, 78 episodes when they were missing between 24--48 hours, 37 episodes when they were missing between 2 and 4 days and 17 episodes when they were missing for 5 days or more.** All these children were actively tracked by Sussex Police and by Children Services staff. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed on high profile children who go missing and, where necessary, formal multi agency strategy discussions are held in line with Safeguarding Procedures.



- **Of the 71 LAC that went missing, 38 were male and 33 were female.** 26 of this cohort were aged 16 and above, 45 were aged 15 and under.

Our Children who are Missing and who are at risk of Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation (CSE/CE) (2)

- The MACE structure remains in place and MACE Bronze Operational Group continues to meet monthly on each side of the county to consider the situation of all exploited children identified in East Sussex who are deemed to be at highest risk. MACE Silver Operational Group meets bi-monthly to consider the strategic issues that are raised in relation to trying to safeguard this group of children. The criminal exploitation of children connected to 'County Lines' activity remains a significant issue within East Sussex both for locally based children and those who have been brought to the area from London. An annual audit of MACE Bronze casework is scheduled.
- As of March 2019 there were 27 children subject to East Sussex MACE Bronze panel oversight and therefore categorised as being at high risk of exploitation. 5 of these children were East Sussex LAC (3 male and 2 female). There was 1 other local authority child in this group.

The MACE Action Plan has been updated for 2019-20

- It continues to be reported at the LSCB.
- The main themes for this year include improving school based responses to criminal exploitation, a better level of Police intelligence gathering from schools, continuing oversight on ensuring agencies are taking forward effective disruption activity, for exploitation locally and that the response to our children who are missing remains consistent.

Our Children who are Missing and who are at risk of Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation (CSE/CE) (3)

- Since 24 July 2018 the provision of Return Home Interviews (RHI) for all East Sussex children who go missing locally has been provided by East Sussex Children's Social Care. The provision of this service by 'Missing People' charity ended on 24 July 2018 when the service was not recommissioned by any of the three Sussex Local Authorities.
- All of our East Sussex LAC have their RHI completed by their allocated social worker or trusted professional.
- Notifications of our missing children are received and screened by MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) and are then shared with the relevant allocated social workers and Practice Manager if they have an existing allocated social worker.
- There is an established performance dashboard that measures all key data for our children who go missing. This performance dashboard is presented bi-monthly to MACE Silver Operational Group which is overseen in turn by the LSCB Steering Group.

Independent Reviewing Officer Service (1)

The Independent Reviewing Office Service (IRO) is managed off line and is independent of the operational service for LAC and Care Leavers.

IMPACT

- All children who become looked after by ESCC are allocated an IRO within statutory timescales and the majority of these maintain a stable relationship with that same IRO throughout their time in our care. The Unit has a relatively established staff complement which further ensures these long-term relationships. IROs demonstrate a strong commitment to children, resisting reallocation and working creatively to manage challenges caused by caseloads or location.
- 784 children have been accommodated by ESCC throughout or for some part of 2018/19 with 610 LAC at year end. Each of these were required to have a review within the first 28 days of becoming accommodated; a second review within three months and thereafter a review no less than every six months. Supplementary reviews should take place if there have been, or if there are proposed significant changes to the placement, education, legal status etc.

PARTICIPATION

- **86% of children aged 4+ attended or actively contributed to their LAC review.**
- Children are encouraged to Chair their own reviews and there is an enhanced focus on ensuring that they are consulted about who attends their meeting, where it takes place and what is discussed. The **revised LAC Review documentation** will place the child's participation at the center of the process and ensure that all decisions are recorded in an accessible, child focused manner

Thank you for all your kindness and understanding; for being the one who has been there from the beginning. C aged 18

I love my reviews, I get to talk - yes its good - I love them.

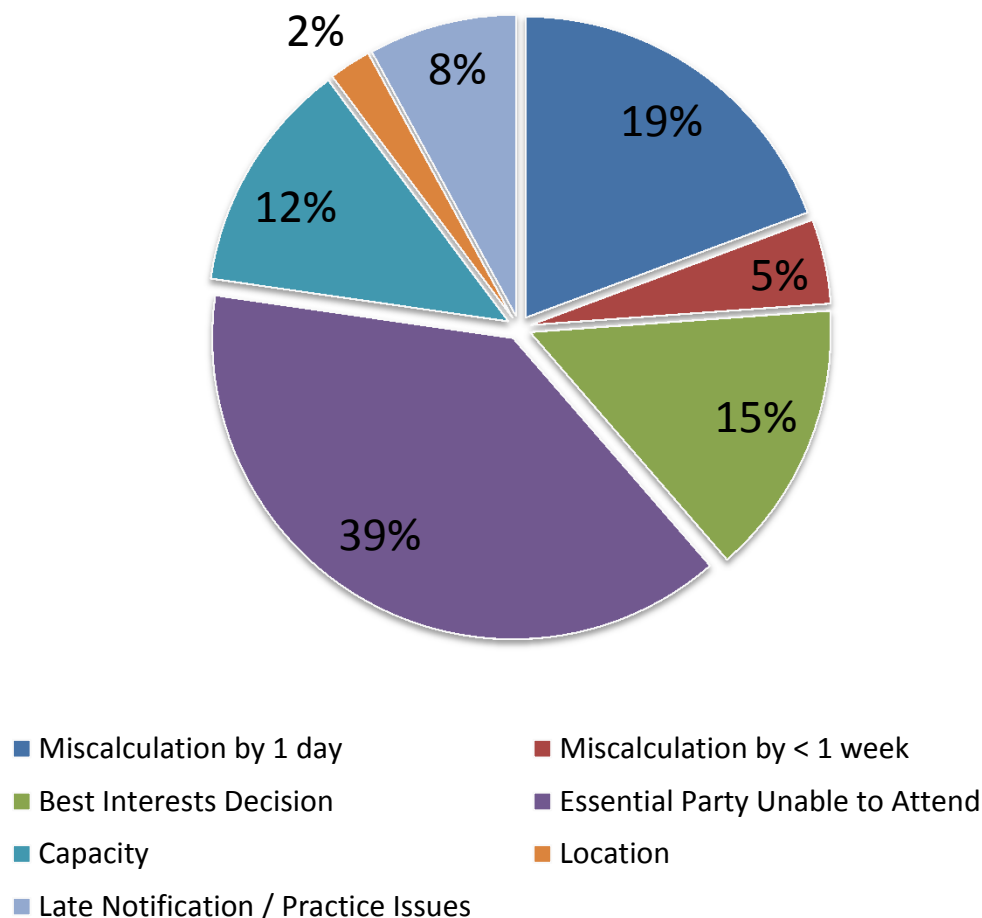
E aged 8

Independent Reviewing Officer Service (2)

Timeliness

- **94.6% of all LAC Reviews were held early or on time in 2018/19.**
- **88 reviews (5.4%) were late.**
- **21 cases were a scheduling miscalculation** of which 17 were miscalculated by just 1 day; 13 reviews were delayed in the best interests of the child, 34 were delayed due to an essential party being unable to attend and 2 were late due to travel requirements. 11 reviews were delayed due to capacity or reallocation within the Unit with 7 reviews late due to practice issues.
- **Please see the relevant link at the close of this report.**

Late Reviews



The role of our elected members

The Corporate Parenting Panel met quarterly during 2018/19 to scrutinize the performance of all services in relation to LAC and Care Leavers, paying particular attention to outcomes. It also received presentations from the Children in Care Council and from the East Sussex Foster Care Association. The reports set out below were presented and considered:

April 2018

- LAC Statistics
- Interim report on Health of LAC
- Vulnerable Young People's House and Accommodation Project
- Ofsted Inspection reports for the following children's homes: - Homefield Cottage, Lansdowne Secure Unit
- Children's Home Regulations 2015, Regulation 44: Inspection reports for December 2017 to February 2018 for the following children's homes: Acorns at Dorset Road, Brodrick House, Hazel Lodge, Homefield Cottage, Lansdowne Secure Unit, The Bungalow, Sorrel Drive

July 2018

- ·Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report 2017/18
- ·Annual progress report of the East Sussex Fostering Service
- ·Annual progress report of the East Sussex Adoption and Permanence Service
- ·LAC Statistics
- Children's Home Regulations 2015, Regulation 44: Inspection reports for March 2019 to June 2017 for the following children's homes:- Acorns at Dorset Road, Brodrick House, Hazel Lodge, Homefield Cottage, Lansdowne Secure Unit, The Bungalow, Sorrel Drive

October 2018

- LAC Annual Report
- LAC Statistics
- KS1, 2 and 4 outcomes for LAC 2017/18
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Update
- Ofsted Inspection reports for the following children's homes: Hazel Lodge, Brodrick House, Homefield Cottage
- Children's Home Regulations, Regulation 44: Inspection reports for June 2018 - September 2018 for the following children's homes: Acorns at Dorset Road, Brodrick House, Hazel Lodge, Homefield Cottage, Lansdowne Secure Unit, The Bungalow, Sorrel Drive

January 2019

- Presentation from the Children In Care Council (C CC)
- East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA)
- LAC Statistics
- ·Ofsted inspection reports for the following children's homes - The Bungalow, Sorrel Drive, Lansdowne Secure Unit

Priorities for 2019/20

Continue to improve the timeliness of RHIs for LAC and Care Leavers

Embed the Core Offer to our Care Leavers and engage our partners with implementation

Improve the mental health pathways for our LAC and Care Leavers

Sufficiency
Extend pool of foster carers and progress Regional South East Adoption agency

Extension of LSU to be progressed

Embed commissioned housing options for our Care Leavers

Continue to improve performance on health assessments for Looked After Children

Learn from Serious Case Reviews and consider development of our Corporate Grandparenting Role

Links to Fostering and Supported Lodgings, Adoption and Independent Reviewing Officers Annual Report 2018-19

➤ **Fostering and Supported Lodgings:**

For the full report, please see Item 9 on the following agenda:

<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=4058&Ver=4>

➤ **Adoption and permanence:**

For the full report, please see Item 10 on the following agenda:

<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=4058&Ver=4>

➤ **Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO):**

For the full report, please see item 11 on the following agenda:

<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=4058&Ver=4>