

Committee: Corporate Parenting Panel

Date: 28 October 2022

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

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

1. Background and supporting information

1.1 Services for Looked After Children are predominantly funded from the Children's Services base budget with some additional smaller funding streams supporting specific activity e.g. Virtual School activity from the Pupil Premium Grant.

1.2 Data is drawn as a snapshot on the last day of each month, is scrutinised and cleansed where necessary. There were 630 children who were looked after at the end of September, which was a decrease of 8 from the previous quarter. This was largely due to a cohort of children who either left care or turned 18. The service was very busy and the sufficiency of any placements either in-house, or in the independent sector, was, and remains, extremely challenging. This is a reflection of a national issue across the UK.

1.3 A total of 352 children were living in foster care at the end of September which was a decrease of 13. Of that number 255 were living with ESCC carers and a further 97 children were living with agency carers. In addition, 70 young people were living in supported housing options, homes or hostels, this figure remained the same as the previous quarter. 19 children were placed for adoption; 7 of whom were placed with foster carers, who were also approved adopters, as part of the Fostering for Adoption pathway.

1.4 At the end of the quarter 88 children were living with kinship foster carers, 1 more than in the previous period.

1.5 The number of children living at home with their parents (PWP) whilst remaining subject to a care order to ESCC, remained at 21. Planning for placements of this sort is monitored rigorously to mitigate any risk factors. Agreement and authorisation for PWP placements is given at a senior level unless it is court mandated.

1.6 At the end of September, the number of children living in residential children's homes decreased by 1 to 77. Of that figure 18 children were living in ESCC children's homes and 59 were placed in external homes. Our staff work strenuously to place children in our in-house provision before they seek agreement from a senior manager for an agency placement. Robust negotiations on both quality and price are a feature of every external placement search. An additional ESCC children's home has now been registered and has a number of children in placement.

1.7 At the end of September we had 2 ESCC children placed in the Secure Children's Home at Lansdowne, and 1 other child was in an external secure unit.

1.8 There were no children remanded into youth detention accommodation in this quarter.

1.9 ESCC remained an active participant in the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). The number of UASC was 64 at the end of September. In addition, there were 92 UASC who were Care Leavers during this period.

1.10 The number of children subject to Child Arrangement/Residence Orders decreased slightly to 340, and those children subject to a Special Guardianship Order increased to 478.

2. Conclusion

2.1 There were significant pressures in the Looked After Children's system during this period. This was not just driven by the numbers of children coming into care but compounded by the complexity of the children's presentations and challenging behaviours. This in turn, with the national shortage of care placements, has proved very challenging for the service.

3. Recommendations

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

ALISON JEFFERY
Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer:

Kathy Marriott, Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care

Tel: 01273 481274

Local Members:

All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

Children's Services LAC Summary between 01/10/2021 and 30/09/2022

Placement Type	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22
A4 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A5 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) with current foster carer	1	1	3	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6
A6 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	16	16	13	14	11	11	11	11	11	12	12	12
H5 - Residential accommodation	57	61	60	59	56	62	64	65	71	72	65	70
K1 - Secure unit	2	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	3
K2 - Homes and Hostels	75	72	73	72	74	73	75	77	77	76	77	76
P1 - Placed with own parents	30	23	20	21	26	22	22	23	23	22	21	21
P2 - Independent living	2	2	2	1								
R1 - Residential care home	1											
R2 - NHS/Health Trust			1								1	
R5 - Young Offender Institution or prison		1			1	1	2	2	1			
S1 - All Residential schools	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
U1 - Foster placement with relative or friend- long term fostering	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	12	12	12	12
U3 - Foster placement with relative or friend- not long term or FFA	69	70	74	73	68	73	74	72	72	77	78	76
U4 - Placement with other foster carer- long term fostering	171	171	169	167	160	157	154	149	146	142	141	135
U5 - Placement with other foster carer who is also an approved adopter- FFA	3	8	6	4	4	5	5	6	7	7	7	7
U6 - Placement with other foster carer - not long term or FFA	172	173	174	182	186	202	200	201	202	205	210	210
Total	611	614	610	614	606	626	626	626	632	635	634	630

Immigration Status	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22
Adult Asylum Seeker	1	1										
British Citizen	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7
Discretionary Leave to Remain in the UK to 18 (DLR)	1	1										
Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK (ILR)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
Refugee Status	24	23	21	16	15	15	14	13	13	12	11	11
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child	30	31	34	35	36	44	47	47	49	49	51	52

Legal Status	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22
Child Arrangements Order/Residence Order S8(1)CA'89	343	343	343	342	342	342	342	342	342	342	341	340
Special Guardianship Order S14A CA 89	466	470	471	471	475	476	477	477	478	478	478	478

