



Corporate Parenting Board

25 September 2013

Time 17:30 hours **Public meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Other

Venue Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

Room Committee Room 4 (3rd floor)

Membership

Chair Cllr Val Gibson (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Dr Micheal Hardacre
Cllr Julie Hodgkiss
Cllr Phil Page
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Martin Waite

Conservative

Cllr Mrs Christine Mills
Cllr Mrs Patricia Patten
Cllr Paul Singh

Liberal Democrat

Information for the Public

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Some items are discussed in private because of their confidential or commercial nature. These reports are not available to the public.

Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of interest**
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting (26 June 2013)**
[For approval]
4. **Matters arising**
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes]
5. **Consultation Meeting with Wolverhampton Carers', Residential Workers and Other Carers' – 31 July 2013 – The following Topics were identified as requiring further consideration:**
 - **Improving Communication between Social Workers' and Foster Carers'**
 - **The Role of Foster Carers' in the Development of Skills of the Fostering Service**
 - **Wolverhampton's Learning and Development Programme for Foster Carers' [See Item 6 below]**
 - **Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers' in Wolverhampton**
[The Panel is requested to indicate in which order and at which meeting these issues should be considered]
6. **Wolverhampton Fostering Service Foster Carers' Training**
[To receive a report on the Learning and Development Programme for Foster Carers']
7. **Performance Monitoring – Looked After Children (LAC)**
[To receive a report on Performance Monitoring for Looked After Children] **[TO BE CIRCULATED AT THE MEETING]**
8. **Looked After Children - Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Annual Report**
[To receive the Annual LAC CAMHS Report]
9. **Wolverhampton LAC Transitions Team Annual Report – April 2012 – March 2013**
[To receive an Annual Report on the work undertaken by the LAC Transitions Team]

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

10. **Exclusion of press and public**
[To pass the following resolution:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information on the grounds shown below]

Part 2 – exempt items, closed to the press and public

<i>Item No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Grounds for exemption</i>	<i>Applicable paragraph</i>
11.	Members Visits to Establishments [To receive details of any visits to establishments undertaken since the last meeting]	Information relating to any individual	1



Corporate Parenting Board Minutes – 26 June 2013

Attendance

Members

Cllr Val Gibson (Chair)
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Julie Hodgkiss
Cllr Mrs Christine Mills
Cllr Mrs Patricia Patten
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Martin Waite

Staff

Daphne Atkinson	Fostering Team Manager - Community
Emma Bennett	Head of Looked After Children – Community
Charlotte Johns	Head of Corporate Strategy and Improvement – Chief Executive's Office
Yvonne Nelson – Brown	Operational Services Manager – Children's Residential Services – Community
Mark Taylor	Assistant Director (Finance) – Delivery
Lorna Tull	Corporate Parenting Officer – Community
Carl Craney	Democratic Support Officer - Delivery

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

1. **Apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Philip Page and Paul Singh.

Chair's announcements

The Chair welcomed Councillors and Officers to the meeting including Laura O'Grady who was accompanying Cllr Julie Hodgkiss as part of a Work Experience placement. She invited Councillors and Officers to introduce themselves. Introductions were duly made...

2. **Declarations of interest**

No declarations of interest were made in relation to items under consideration at the meeting.

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting (13 March 2013)**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. **Matters arising**

With reference to Minute No. 42(ii), Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre enquired as to when the report on the analysis of the number of Looked After Children attending good/outstanding schools would be submitted for consideration. Emma Bennett responded that a report on this issue together with a report in connection with "Setting Up Home Supports Grants and Support" (Minute No. 41) would be presented to the meeting scheduled for 25 September 2013.

5. **Strategic Priorities for Corporate Parenting – Delivery Directorate and Office of the Chief Executive**

Charlotte Johns and Mark Taylor presented a report on the developments within the Delivery Directorate and the Office of the Chief Executive that impacted on Looked After Children.

Cllr Julie Hodgkiss commented that during her service on the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Panel she did not believe that a Looked After Child had ever been appointed as a representative of the Youth Council to serve on that Panel. Emma Bennett advised that this was largely as a result of the high competence levels of the Youth Council representatives which rendered it a difficult role for Looked After Children to undertake. To compensate for this gap regular meetings were now held between the Youth Council and the Children in Care Council. Cllr Julie Hodgkiss reported that the C&YP Scrutiny Panel had recently tasked the Youth Council with carrying out various pieces of work on its behalf and suggested that Looked After Children could be encouraged to assist with this work.

Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre queried the differing stances suggested within the report between Work Experience and Apprenticeships. Emma Bennett assured the Board that Looked After Children were guaranteed an interview for any Apprenticeship placements if they fulfilled the necessary criteria.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

6. **Performance Monitoring – Looked After Children**

Emma Bennett circulated Performance Monitoring Information in respect of Looked After Children and explained the current position.

Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre referred to Indicator LAC-09 (Percentage of Looked After Children who attend school for less than 85% of available sessions) and

suggested that this information related to the previous Academic Year as the current years' figures would not yet have been validated by the Department for Education. He also suggested that the figures might not reflect the true situation as pupils were sometimes marked as receiving education even if they were absent from school. Yvonne Nelson Brown advised that attendance figures submitted by schools in respect of Looked After Children were challenged by the Looked After Children in Education Team.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

7. **Update / Review of Children's Homes Managed or Commissioned by Wolverhampton City Council**

Yvonne Nelson Brown presented a report on the current status of Children's Homes managed or commissioned by Wolverhampton City Council. She drew to the attention of the Board the revisions to the Ofsted inspection regime which had resulted in all the homes receiving a poorer rating than at the time of the last inspections. Improvement Plans had been produced for those homes designated with a rating of "Adequate". The report included details of work being undertaken currently by the Looked After Children's Transitions Team in respect of older Looked After Children. She explained the use of the Restorative Justice system as a primary way of addressing and reducing crime together with its benefits in avoiding the criminalisation of Looked After Children. With regard to occupancy rates, currently at 93% overall, she advised that this was partially as a result of the phased transfer of Looked After Children to the newly opened Merridale Street West Home.

Cllr Rita Potter enquired as to whether a positive outcome was expected from use of the Restorative Justice system. Yvonne Nelson Brown advised that this was the outcome with approximately 80% of cases. In the event of the Police being called to attend an incident the attempts to make use of the Restorative Justice system would be questioned. Staff received regular training in relation to appropriate use of the system.

Cllr Julie Hodgkiss commented that there were many more interventions and approaches made to support and improve outcomes for children than was realised and enquired if further reports and information in relation to these could be presented to future meetings. Emma Bennett advised that Cllrs would be made more aware of the range and scale of interventions during the visits to establishments where the opportunity to discuss these with both staff and children would be available.

Cllr Mrs Patricia Patten enquired as to the number of Out of City placements funded currently. Emma Bennett advised that, at the present time, there were approximately 20 such placements, a substantial reduction from the position

some 4/5 years ago and that some were as a direct result of either where there was no other option, due to, for example, Police bail conditions, or specialist care requirements of particular children.

Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre referred to the overall financial cost of placements and emphasised the need for strong working relationships between Social Workers and schools, given that schools were under pressure to address the needs of groups, in terms of particular classes and/or year groups / whole school groups rather than particular individuals. Emma Bennett advised that the Looked After Children Education (LACE) Team worked closely with schools to improve the outcomes for Looked After Children and enjoyed a close working relationship. She drew to the attention of the Board that some placements were funded through Pooled Budget arrangements with Health and education.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

8. **Adoption Scorecard**

Emma Bennett presented a report which detailed an analysis of Adoption Scorecard information.

Cllr Martin Waite commented that he supported the approach adopted in continuing to secure placements for those children who were hard to place rather than concentrating on the easier to place children to the detriment of the former group. Emma Bennett acknowledged the comments and expanded that this approach was being developed further through the use of concurrent placements, where a foster family would go on to adopt the child(ren) and with improvements in the relevant processes. Cllr Rita Potter opined that that it was more important to concentrate on selecting the most suitable adoptive parents rather than achieving target times and rates. Emma Bennett responded that the aim of the service was to achieve as many suitable adoption placements as possible. Whilst acknowledging the improvements in the service Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre commented that a situation whereby children remained in care for a period of 18 months was not beneficial to society as a whole and that efforts should be made to improve further.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

9. **Fostering Service Annual Report – April 2012 – March 2013**

Daphne Atkinson presented a report on the work of the Wolverhampton Fostering Service from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

In response to a question from Cllr Julie Hodgkiss, Daphne Atkinson clarified that City Direct took initial calls from prospective foster parents but that the

screening was undertaken by Fostering staff.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted and referred to Cabinet for consideration.

10. **Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2012/13 and 2013/14**

Lorna Tull presented a report which detailed the progress made against each of the agreed actions together with those not achieved, which would be carried over into the current year in respect of the Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2012/13 and which set out the proposed Action Plan for 2013/14.

Resolved:

1. That the Corporate Parenting Action Plan for 2012/13 be received and noted and those Key Actions not achieved be rolled over to the 2013/14 Action Plan;
2. That the Corporate Parenting Action Plan for 2013/14 be approved.

11. **Protocols and Procedures for Undertaking Visits to Residential Establishments – Presentation**

The Board received a PowerPoint presentation from Lorna Tull in relation to the protocols and procedures to be followed when undertaking visits to residential establishments. She undertook to contact individual Members in order to arrange a rota of visits to be undertaken during the current Municipal Year. She advised that the Managers of the residential establishments would assist Members in relation to their respective visits and also provide support in respect of the compilation of the report on the visit.

Following a question from the Chair, Cllr Val Gibson, Emma Bennett undertook to ensure that prior to each visit the relevant Members would be provided with the latest available copy of the Regulation 33 visit report. In response to a question from Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre, Emma Bennett advised on those Officers who would have received training in relation to physical restraint training. She explained the Risk Assessment procedures which were in place to supplement the training provided.

Resolved:

That the presentation be received and noted.



Corporate Parenting Board

25th September 2013

Report Title	Wolverhampton Fostering Service Foster Carer's Training report	
Classification	Public	
Cabinet Member with Lead Responsibility	Councillor Val Gibson Children and Families	
Wards Affected	All	
Accountable Strategic Director	Sarah Norman, Community	
Originating service	Children & Family Support/Looked After Children	
Accountable officer(s)	Daphne Atkinson	Fostering Team Manager (01902 – 553070) Daphne.atkinson@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Recommendations for noting: The Corporate Parenting Board has been asked to note and receive a Fostering training report.

1. PURPOSE

To enable the Corporate Parenting Board to have a clear understanding of the training and development of Wolverhampton Foster Carers.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The report is in reference to consultation held between Corporate Parenting Board and Wolverhampton Foster Carers on 31st July 2013.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The total approved revenue budget for 2013/14 for the training of foster carer's is £148,000.

- 3.2 Any cost that may arise as a result of implementing the current training plan will be met from within this allocation.

[NM/17092013/D]

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Fostering Service, in accordance with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, delivers the Council's statutory functions under the Children Act 1989, particularly with regard to the requirement under Regulation 17 to ensure that Foster Carers are provided with training, development and support. [FD/18092013/N]

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The work of the Fostering Service helps to support the outcomes of some of Wolverhampton city's most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people. There is a clear duty placed upon Wolverhampton City Council to contribute towards improving and enhancing the lives of looked after children.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no known environmental implications

7.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no known Human Resources implications

8.0 SCHEDULE OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Wolverhampton's Training and Development Programme for Foster Carers

BACKGROUND

Wolverhampton City Council considers its foster carers as essential to the success of its Fostering Service.

The Children's Act 1989 states that Fostering Services must ensure foster carers have the skill to promote children's well-being and know how to care for them safely, this is embodied in the Fostering National Minimum Standards and Regulations (2011).

Standard 20 – Foster Carers must receive the training and development they need to carry out their role effectively. Therefore the structure of all training programme is built around the five outcomes of The 'Every Child Matters' agenda, and the Local Authority Corporate Parent role.

Being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle;

Staying safe: being protected from harm and neglect;

Enjoying and achieving: getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood

Making a positive contribution: being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour;

Achieving economic well-being: not being prevented by economic poverty from achieving their full potential in life.

Additionally, all foster carers must evidence that they meet the relevant Children's Workforce Development, Training and Support Standards within the set timescales.

The standards have been designed to support foster care by providing a framework for foster carer's training and professional development which will mean they receive the best possible training, information and knowledge to truly make a difference to the lives of the children they care for.

The Standards cover the main areas of the foster care role and set out what foster carers should know, understand and be able to do:

Standard 1: understand the principles and values, essential for fostering children and young people.

Standard 2: understand your role as a foster carer

Standard 3: understand health and safety, and healthy caring.

Standard 4: know how to communicate effectively.

Standard 5: understand the development of children and young people.

Standard 6: safeguard children and young people (keep them safe from harm).

Standard 7: develop yourself.

The Fostering Service in Wolverhampton offers a very varied and comprehensive range of external and internal training and development for all foster carers. There is a rolling programme of training courses and in addition we access training and expertise provided by other teams such as Workforce Development and Safeguarding as well as courses offered via other agencies e.g. Education, Health to ensure that our carers and their support network have the opportunities to develop their skill base and knowledge to enable them to manage difficult behaviours and the development needs of children and young people.

All foster carers have a yearly Personal Development Plan. (PDP). This is a live open document which can be updated and amended to suit the carer's individual training requirements, skill base and developmental needs. Most importantly it identifies training that is needed in specific areas to provide our foster carers with the confidence, skills and knowledge to fully support and manage the individual needs of each child or young person in their care. The courses and types of learning identified are decided upon between the Supervising Social Worker and the carers themselves, dependent upon the challenges that they may face caring for our Looked after children.

Brief overview of the Take up Rate of Training

Since 2010 we have seen a great increase in foster carers participating in training and development.

2010-2011

65%% of all eligible foster carers accessed training and 60% of those completed 100% of all their identified training.

2011-2012

Only 9 of eligible foster carers did not access any training and of those that did 75% of those completed 100% of all their identified training.

2012-2013

90% of eligible carers accessed and completed 100% of their identified training.

The last 2 years has also seen an increase in Friends and Family carers and private foster carers participating in training.

All foster carers are expected to complete all of the pre-approval training and mandatory courses before embarking on further training in more specialised topics.

Skills to Foster (Pre -Approval Training)

The aim of this course is to lay the basic foundations of the skills and knowledge needed as prospective foster carers. The course forms a part of the assessment process. It is run over three days and consists of six sessions. Some of the topics included are “Transitions”, “Identity and Heritage”, “Understanding Behaviours” and “Working in Partnership”..

We run a separate course exclusively for prospective Family and Friends foster carers. It is run based on the same principle and format but catered to meet the needs and differences for those that will be caring for children of their family or friends as often they are faced with different issues especially around the child’s birth family that mainstream foster carers are unlikely to experience.

Mandatory Courses

All approved foster carers are expected to complete all of these in their first 24 months of approval. These include topics such as Safer caring, Child Development, Supporting Looked after Children in Education. First Aid and Values and Diversity.

Additional Specific and Specialised Courses

Over recent years we have offered foster carers access to approximately 60 courses on individual topics these include

Understanding Sexual Abuse

The aim of this course is to help foster carers understand the effects childhood sexual abuse has on a child’s all round development and their emotional well-being. The course looks at ways that foster carers can help the child to heal in a safe environment and to be able to identify behaviours displayed by a child in order to cope with their experiences.

Impact of Neglect

The aim of this course is to explore the notions and definitions and extent of neglect. As well as identifying the factors which contribute to the neglect of children by parents/birth family and its effects on areas of the child’s development. Foster

carers are given an understanding of the effects of neglect and skills to enable them to manage and nurture the young person.

Working with Children and Young People with Disabilities

The aim of this course is to enable foster carers to be able to fully understand the vulnerabilities of children with disabilities within our society and to give carers the skills and knowledge base to ensure safety, minimise risk of harm and understand the important role of communication with these disabled children, both verbal and non-verbal.

Preparation for Adult Life.

The aim of this course is to ensure foster carers are aware of the issues that young people growing up in care face and, give them the appropriate information that is required to support looked after children and care leavers as they make the transition to adulthood. Carers are given ways of equipping young people with the range of skills needed for adult life and living independently.

Gangs and Gang Related activities

The aim of this course is to raise carer's awareness of the issues involving young people and youth violence and gangs in Wolverhampton and to give them the skills to identify if a young person is at risk of or already involved, and to give carers techniques to help these young people.

Attachment Theory and Separation and Loss.

The aim of this course is to give foster carers an understanding of the impact of trauma, due to the separation and loss from their birth family that can affect children's development and ability to form relationships. Carers are given skills to enable them to help a child form positive and healthy attachments and relationships.

Moving On for Adoption.

The aim of the course is to give carers an understanding of the anxieties a child may experience when moving to an adoptive placement and how best to manage this with good preparation, communication. It includes practical ways they can assist in making this transition a positive experience for the child. Carers are given clarity on the importance of their role throughout introductions with the adopters.

Online training

This has proven to be an invaluable resource over the last 3 years. It has enabled carers who have previously found it difficult to attend training courses either due to distance or other various commitments to develop their skills and knowledge.

Some examples of the types of courses available via on-line training modules include

Self-harming behaviours

The aim of this course is to enable foster carers to understand why young people develop maladaptive behaviours such as self-harm, eating disorders and substance misuse and how best as carers they can work effectively and more safely with these children and young people.

Children and Domestic Violence

The aim of this course is to enable foster carers to understand the key issues facing children and young people who have been affected by domestic violence and to provide foster carers with the skills to help these children and young people develop resilience to enable them to grow towards a healthy and positive adult life.

Promoting Positive Contact

The aim of this course is help foster carers understand the complexity of the issues involved in planning and managing contact with looked after children and their birth families.

Men in Foster Care Training and Support Group

For several years we have offered specific training in foster care just for men. It is recognised that our male carers are often seen as the secondary carer and experience different issues, worries and relationships within their role as carers.

Three well – established and experienced male foster carers have just completed an 8 week commissioned course whereby they were assessed by independent practice teachers and trainers. Our aim is for these carers to start their own independent topic based training and support group which will be offered to all male carers. The men have some very positive and innovative ideas of how to carry this forward.

KEEP Programme

This programme was introduced in Wolverhampton 18 months ago. It is one of a series of evidence based intervention model, The national figure indicates that this programme has a proven 99% record of stabilising and maintaining placements. To date we have trained 27 carer's households. There has been 1 reported placement disruptions.

Pillars of Parenting Programme.

This has been a well-established programme in Wolverhampton for over 4 years. It is facilitated by a Senior Educational Physiologist, and offers structured therapeutic support for carers who have children that experience challenges in attachment and trauma.

Care and Control / Therapeutic Crisis Intervention.

This is a 6 day intensive course with an annual 2 day refresher course required. It is based on a holistic approach to challenging behaviours in adolescence. Foster carers who have used this model have recorded a marked improvement in the behaviours and stability of placements.

Accredited courses

10 foster carers have completed the Train the Trainers course which enables foster carers to act as co-trainers and deliver training courses.

National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Childcare.

There has been the opportunity for carers to do National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Childcare. Since 2003, approximately 15 carers have completed and obtained their qualification.

The Fostering Services Regulations (2011) makes it clear that, *'fostering services providers may wish to make full use of talents, skills and experience of foster carers and members of their fostering households for example, in delivering training or mentoring or otherwise supporting other foster carers.'*

Wolverhampton Foster carers are very much an integral part in the support of the fostering services in the following ways:.

- Recruitment of foster carers. They do this by volunteering to support recruitment stands, supporting information days, leaflets drops. There are five core members who are currently working with our Marketing and Communication officer to lead the new marketing and recruitment campaign in Wolverhampton.
- Retention. By acting as trained buddies/ mentors to newly approved foster carers or foster cares who might be experiencing issues or concerns with child care.
- Named foster carers run the 24 hour helpline which is an invaluable service offering support, guidance and advice to foster carers that might be experiencing a difficulty with their placement or just providing information.
- Foster carers facilitate and deliver various training sessions including the pre-approval, Skills to Foster Training, in conjunction with a fostering social worker.
- Foster carers facilitate CWDC support groups to assist new carers complete their standards workbook
- Foster carers facilitate a number of support groups through Heantun support services.

Future Development for Foster Carers

We wish to explore further opportunities for our foster carers to develop their training and development and their individual career pathway

We are in the process of accessing more details of the new partnership arrangement between the Open University and The Fostering Network. The scheme will support foster carers with their professional development by providing access to a range of courses and opportunities to enable carers to attain formal qualifications.

The Open University approach to learning will hopefully remove some of the barriers to professional development that foster carers have previously faced. Therefore it will make it easier for foster carers to access formal academic training and gain

qualifications. This in turn can only help our carers develop their skills and abilities in caring for vulnerable children as well as giving carers the confidence to obtain recognised professional qualifications.

Examples of the types of qualifications being offered via this programme include,

BA/BSc (Hons) in Health and Social Care, Certificate in Higher Education, Certificate in Early Years Practice, BA (Hons) in Social Work

We have recently experienced an increase of carers requesting support and funding to complete either National vocational Qualification in Social Care, access to degree courses and other similar qualifications. Whilst it is acknowledged that this might be part of individual foster carer's career progression, consideration would need to be given to the implication of such an initiative for the future retention of foster carers.

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Tracy Finley

Daphne Atkinson

Training Coordinator

Team Manager

September 2013

Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust
Child and Family Service (CAMHS)
Looked after Children Team (LAC)

Subject Mental Health Team Report April 2012 – March 2013

For the attention of Looked after Children Health Steering Group

Submitted by Dr. Roberta Fry, Consultant Clinical Psychologist

Period Covered April 2012 – March 2013

Date 23rd May 2013

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

The LAC team provides a therapeutic service to children and young people both looked after and adopted. Typically these children will have suffered considerable trauma and will present as being insecurely attached. Wolverhampton CAMHS in conjunction with the social services and education department have resolved to provide a service of quality to looked after and adopted children as described in The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (2003) and Every Child Matters (2003).

The report will first give statistical information followed by a qualitative update of current activity and will be presented in a similar format at all future LAC Health Steering Group Meetings. The next report will bring bi-monthly statistical information up to date in line with LAC Health Steering Group Meetings.

The current open cases in total for the LAC team (in March 2013) is 92. During the period April 2012 to March 2013, 67 new referrals were received and processed. The following data gives a breakdown on the 67 referrals received.

Figure 1 Number of Referrals Referred According to Professional Group

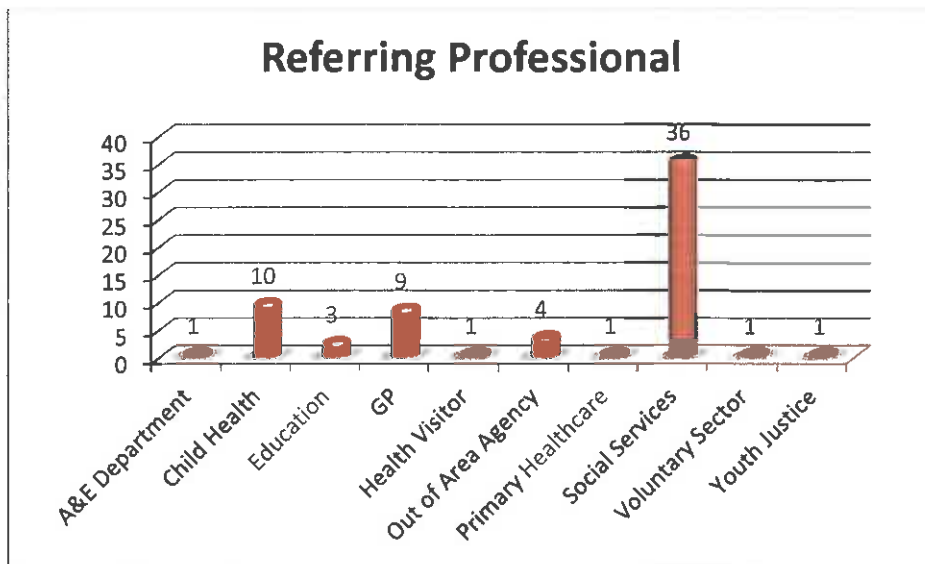


Figure 2 Number of Referrals Received each Month

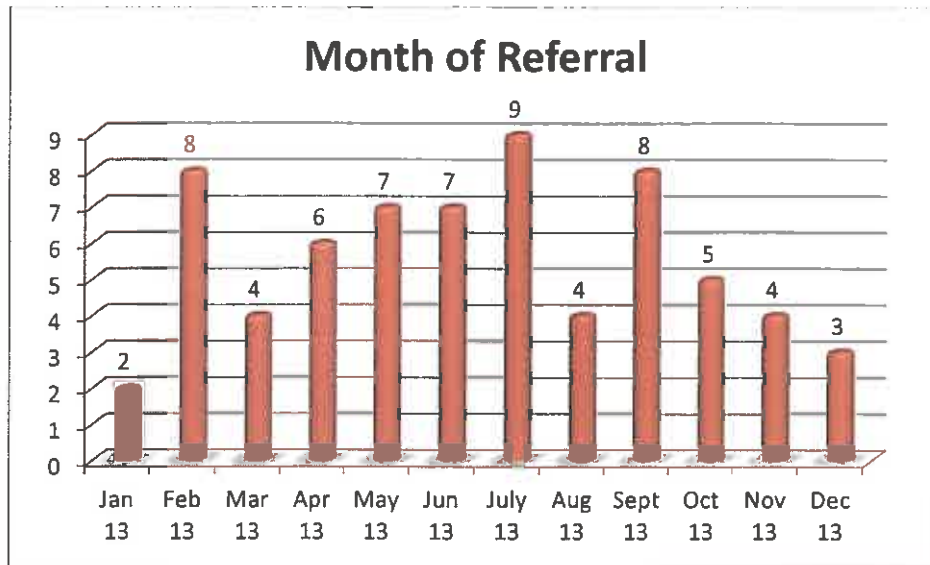
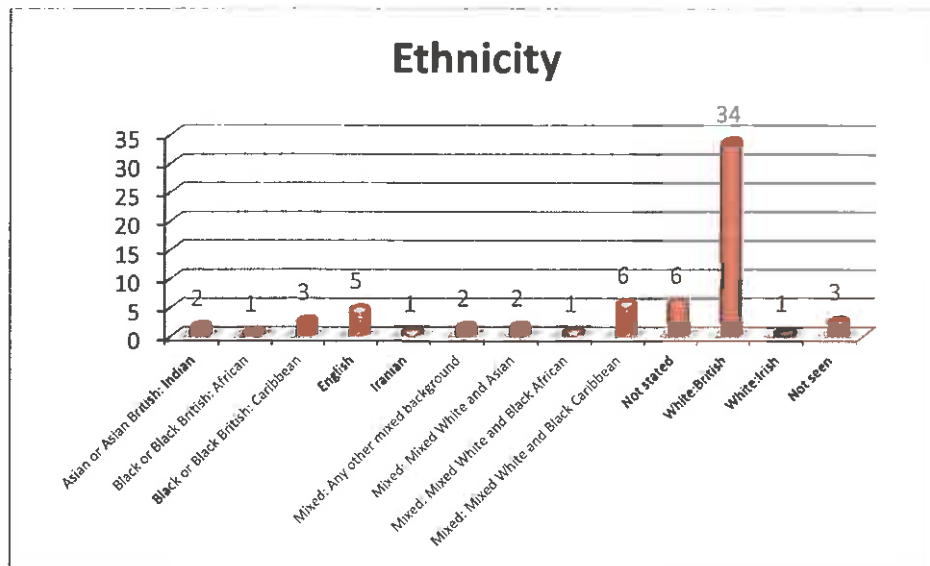


Figure 3 Ethnicity of the Referred Child/Young Person



The graph shows that the majority of children/young people referred are white British, however there are 3 children/young people where ethnicity is not recorded. There could be various reasons for this; some of these referrals did not fit the criteria for the team and so were not accepted and therefore no further data was collected, some referrals may have been only recently received and so not yet fully processed and assessed, some referrals may be relate to 'Pillars of Parenting' consultations where full data sets are not collected. These reasons may also apply to other incomplete data sets.

Figure 5 Breakdown of Age of the Children/Young People Referred

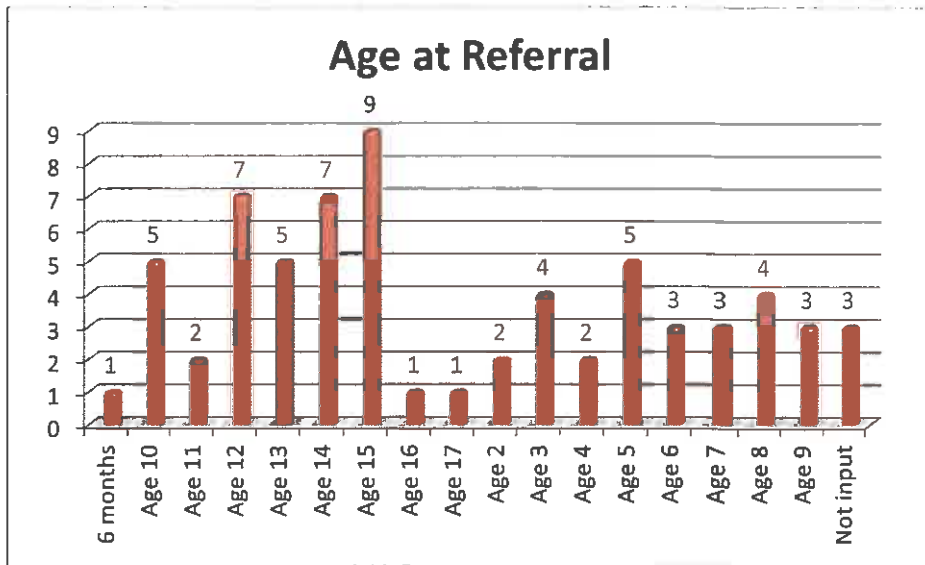


Figure 4 Breakdown of Gender of the Children/Young People Referred

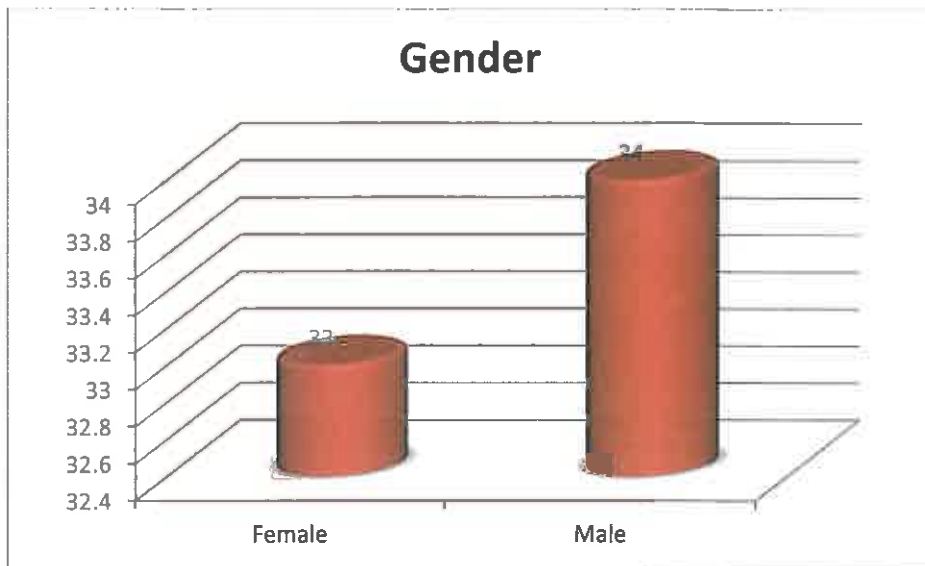
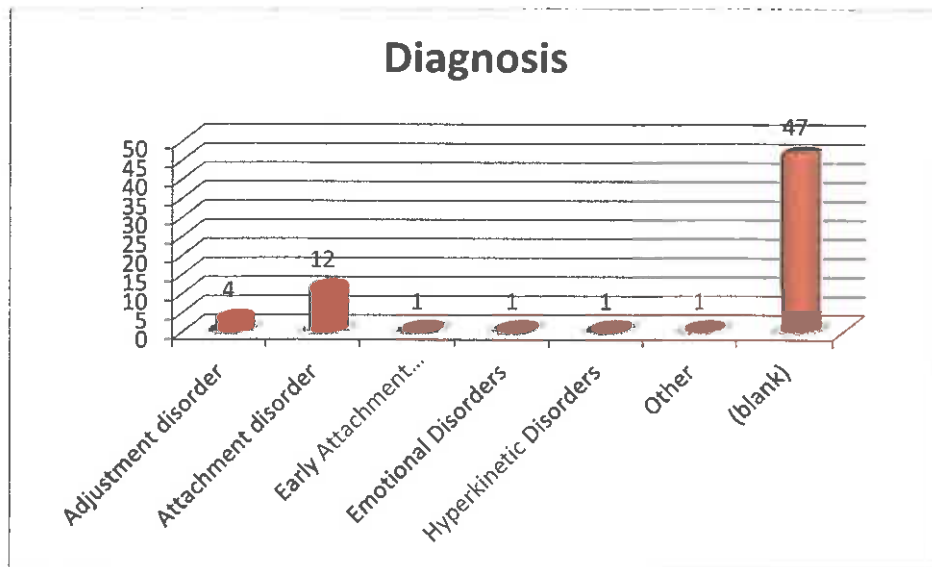
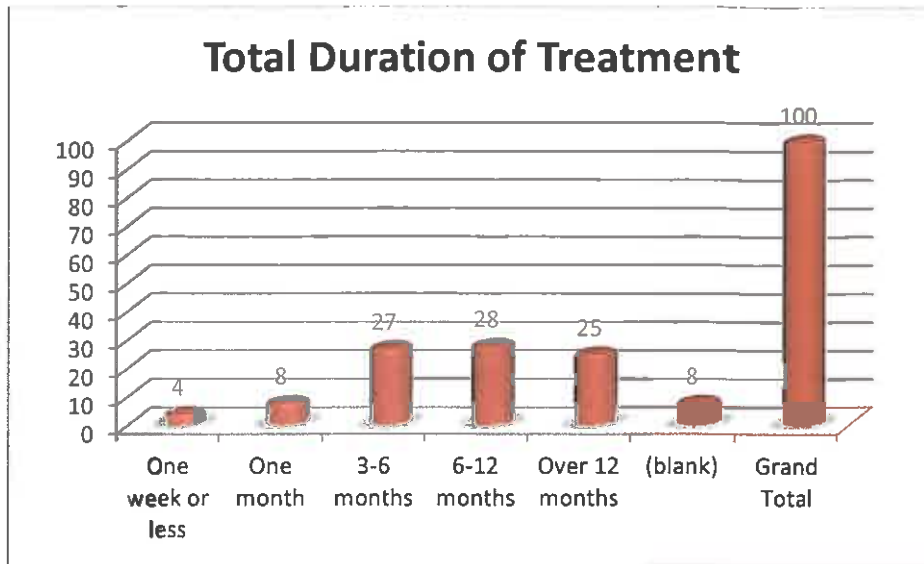


Figure 5 Recorded Diagnosis of Children/Young People Referred



All diagnosis are entered on a nationally developed CAMHS database. This has led to a number previously unforeseen hurdles in recording diagnosis. The database is designed to reflect the diagnostic structure set out in ICD-10 and therefore has a medical model overtone. Many of the children we see present with a co-morbidity of disorders and arrange of complex needs that are more fitting with the developing thinking around developmental trauma disorder. Therefore the database does not give an accurate recording of the diagnosing problems. We have recently added to the database 'attachment disorder' and will review how this fits as a diagnosis for children we work with. This therefore offers an explanation as to why there are a number of diagnosis recorded as 'blank' or 'other'.

Figure 6 Number of Discharges Showing Duration of Treatment between the period of April 2012 and March 2013



There were 100 cases discharged during the period April 2012 to March 2013. The graph illustrates the length of therapeutic involvement and clearly shows that quite a few of the cases required over 12 months of intervention. This correlates with the highly complex needs that research suggests looked after children will have given the considerable trauma they have suffered

Update of Current Activity

- Ongoing clinical Work

Our clinical interventions aim to integrate attachment, systemic, cognitive, psychodynamic and psychoanalytical traditions into our practice.

Our work includes:

- Working with the child individually
- Working with the child and carer simultaneously
- Working with child and carer separately
- Working with carer and/or professional system only

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

- Pillars of Parenting Consultations to residential Units

We offer an average fortnightly consultation using the 'Pillars of Parenting' model to the following Residential Units:

- Upper Pendeford Farm (Local Authority)
- Red Gables (Local Authority)
- Stafford Road (Advanced Childcare)
- Brooklands Parade (Advanced Childcare)
- The Wergs (Advanced Childcare)
- Merridale Street (Advanced Childcare)

Each unit has a named practitioner who consults with staff on site. Where possible, cases of children residing at the unit are brought by staff/staff groups for discussion.

All referrals to the Child and Family Service (CAMHS) for children in Residential Units are in the first instance discussed within the unit using the consultation model.

- Consultation to Social Work Teams

LAC-CAMHS has recently developed consultation surgeries for the following teams at Beldray Building (Social Services)

- Looked after Children Team 1
- Looked after Children Team 2
- Adoption Support Team and Fostering Team
- Transition Team 14+

Consultation is an activity in which one practitioner helps another through a process of joint enquiry and exploration. The work discussed remains the responsibility of the consultee, who retains control of its direction, decision making and methodologies. Consultation emphasizes mutuality, requiring the consultant to adopt a 'collaborative' position with the consultee, rather than an expert one.

The advantage of consultations to Social Work teams is that:

- It is a mutual learning process
- It can contribute to the development of skills and knowledge of social work colleagues with a view to being more psychologically minded
- The skills developed are across a group of professionals rather than one individual
- It can prevent on-going referrals, enabling the person or family to stay with their original 'front line' practitioner where appropriate
- It can speed up the process of accessing specialist services where appropriate
- It is an activity that helps build relationships between individual, areas of service and agencies

Consultation is important because it:

- Enables us to offer timely support
- Helps prevent inappropriate referrals
- Can help reduce waiting times
- Helps develop across agency relationships
- Supports Social Workers in holding cases where children/young people refuse to access/attend CAMHS services
- Helps Social Workers to start to think differently about mental health
- Helps Social Workers to become aware, understand and manage their own professional anxieties

- Staffing

Dr Roberta Fry is now active lead for the LAC Team since October 2010.

Dr Brigid Duffy, Clinical Psychologist in the Community Learning Disability Team for Children and Adolescents (CLDT-CA) in CAMHS works with looked after children who have learning disabilities. She also consults to one of the Residential Units. Dr Duffy has been on maternity leave since April 2013. Dr Helen Dorey, Clinical Psychologist, offers consultation to The Wergs

➤ Sarah Bosworth	Counselling Psychologist	0.6 wte
➤ Dr Rebecca Mount	Clinical Psychologist (on maternity leave since October 2012)	0.48 wte
➤ Joginder Shoker-Kang	Social Worker	1 wte
➤ Mark Fallon	Child Psychotherapist	1 wte
➤ Dr Tracey Grandfield	Clinical Psychologist (Fixed term post 20 hours to cover Rebecca Mount's maternity leave)	

The team is supported by Deborah Camplin who is the team secretary.

General

Developed agreed tariff for out of area cases.

Bi-annual meeting with colleagues from cross agencies who also work in looked after children field.

Member of the team will attend CIC Council Meeting and awards evening.

Member(s) of staff attend LAC conference event.

Regular attendance at bi-monthly LAC Health Meeting.



Corporate Parenting Board

25th September 2013

Report Title	Wolverhampton LAC Transitions Team Annual Report April 2012-March 2013	
Classification	Public	
Cabinet Member with Lead Responsibility	Councillor Val Gibson Children and Families	
Wards Affected	All	
Accountable Strategic Director	Sarah Norman, Community	
Originating service	Children, Young People and Families/Looked After Children	
Accountable officer(s)	Sharon Green Tel Email	Team Manager 01902 553001 Sharon.green@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Recommendations for noting:

The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to note and receive the LAC Transitions Team Annual report for 2012-2013.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To enable the Corporate Parenting Panel to have a clear understanding of the work undertaken by the LAC Transitions Team.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The remit of Aftercare Services has broadened during the period of this Annual Report with the Leaving Care Service being restructured to form the LAC Transitions Team in July 2013. The report details these changes and evidences the progress made during this period in respect of:

- (a) The implementation of the new team

- (b) The performance of the team and
- (c) Outcomes for young people. It also highlights plans for further development.

3.0 Financial implications

- 3.1 The approved budget for 2012/13 for the Leaving Care Service/LAC Transitions Team was £972,160.
- 3.3 Any costs that may arise as a result of this report will be funded from within the approved budget for 2013/14 for the service.

[NM/11092013/A]

4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 The legal requirements in relation to Care Leavers are contained in Regulation 17 the Children (Leaving Care) Regulations 2001 and Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

[FD/16092013/F]

5.0 Equalities implications

- 5.1 The work of the LAC Transitions Team helps support the outcomes of some of the most disadvantaged and deprived children and young people within the city. There is a clear expectation that Wolverhampton City Council will significantly contribute towards improving and enhancing the life changes of LAC, and Care Leavers.

6.0 Environmental implications

- 6.1 There are no identified environmental implications.

7.0 Human resources implications

- 7.1 There are no identified Human resources implications

LAC TRANSITION TEAM

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2012 TO MARCH 2013

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This has been an exciting and busy year for the team with team members enthusiastically and successfully managing the transition from the Leaving Care Service to the LAC Transitions Team whilst still providing a comprehensive service to the young people on their caseloads.

1.2 This transition began implementation in May when two Social Workers and a Practice Manager joined the Leaving Care Service and gained momentum in June when the Team Manager, Senior Housing Worker and a third Social Worker began work. June was also the month when we said goodbye and wished good luck to the former Leaving Care Service manager, Len Kruczek. On 1st July the LAC Transitions Team went live.

1.3 This report details the vision of the LAC Transitions Team, provides some insights into the reasons behind the changes made, details the services we have provided and comments on future goals.

2 LAC TRANSITIONS TEAMS VISION

2.1 The team's vision is informed by legislation, statutory guidance and departmental policy and guidance including The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Children and Young Person's Act 2008, Wolverhampton's Children and Young People's plan 2011 – 2014 and the Corporate Parenting Action Plan.

2.2 Our vision is to improve outcomes for Looked After young people aged 14 – 18 years and Care Leavers in all areas of the Every Child Matters agenda.

We aim to provide a service which:

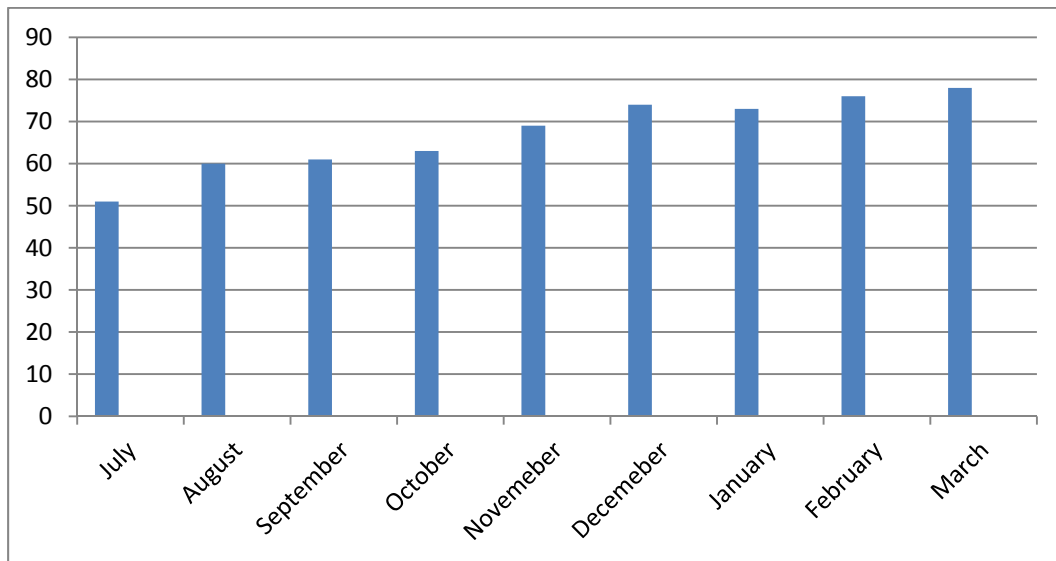
- Is accessible to young people
- Is child focussed
- Encourages young people to reach their potential
- Encourages young people to participate in the development of the service
- Uses resources effectively and efficiently
- Helps young people to prepare for and achieve independence
- Helps young people to avoid crisis and help them to identify and to respond to difficulties as they emerge
- Ensure young people know where to go for help and support
- Ensure young people are well supported by the team and our partner agencies
- Narrow the gaps between Looked After Children and Care Leavers and their peers in the community in all areas where these exist.
- Celebrates the success of young people

Our team plan details how we intend to achieve this.

3 Services Provided

3.1 We are a multi-disciplinary team comprising of qualified Social Workers, Personal Advisors, a Senior Housing Worker and an Education, Employment and Training Coordinator. (See appendix 1 for Staffing Structure chart)

3.2 We provided services for 79+ Looked After Children and Young People aged 14 to 18 and 195 care Leavers during 2012-2013. With Social Workers having to 'hit the ground running' as 51 LAC were transferred to the team in the first month.



3.3 The above table illustrates the number of Looked After Children receiving a service from the team. Unfortunately data on Looked After Children ceasing to be Looked After during this period is not available to the author at the time of writing the report hence the 79+ figure given in 3.2 above.

3.4 The Social Workers are responsible for assessing the needs of LAC and for planning how these needs will be met. The Social Workers are also responsible for leading their 'hub' which are central to facilitating collaborative working between themselves and the Personal Advisors.

3.5 Personal Advisors are responsible for developing and implementing a Care Leavers 'pathway' to adult life. The Pathway Plan being informed by the assessment of need completed by the Social Worker by the time the child/young person is 16 years and 3 months old. Each young person is required by statute to have a Pathway Plan by the time they are 16 years and 6 months old. Personal Advisors must also visit Care Leavers, at a minimum of every 8 weeks

3.6 Personal Advisors have worked throughout the year with an average caseload of 27, assuming primary worker responsibility for young people aged 18-25 years and co-working with Social workers for Looked After Children from the age of 15 years and 9 months. This includes co-working with Social Workers from other teams as not all 14+ Looked After Children are transferred

to the LAC Transitions Team e.g. where a LAC has younger siblings it is often best practice for the Social Worker on the LAC team to retain case responsibility for the whole sibling group.

3.7 The Employment, Education and Training (EET) Co-ordinator and Senior Housing Worker provided specialist advice and guidance to the Social Workers and Personal Advisors and undertake direct work with young people. The work of the team in the area of EET and accommodation is further detailed below

3.8 All assessment and planning completed with the team is child centred and involves their family and friends, where appropriate, their carers' and other key professionals (see partnership section below).

4 Improving Outcomes for LAC and Care Leavers

4.1 One of the significant motivations for this restructure was the recognition that outcomes for Care Leavers could be improved significantly through earlier and better structured preparation for adult life. "A successful transition to independence is inevitably linked both to the quality of the care experience in general and the specific support directed at the transition itself". (Rebecca Faith, Di Hart and Lisa Payne 2012). Previously with Social Workers and Personal Advisors working in separate teams referrals for Aftercare Services were regularly received late with the young person having received none or limited specific preparation for independence.

4.2 The multi-disciplinary nature of the LAC Transitions team redresses this. Our Social Workers and Personal Advisors work closely together in "Hubs" (See appendix 1) to ensure that planning for independence begins early, is collaborative, involves the young people, their carers' and others who support them and allows time for contingency planning when arrangements break down.

4.3 The "hub" arrangements also provides better continuity for the young people we work with as there is an expectation that all of the workers in the hub will have some knowledge about the young people in their hub and the young person will have some knowledge of the workers.

4.4 The restructure also ensures that pathway plans are overseen and authorised by a qualified Social Work Practitioner.

5 Partnership work

5.1 Practitioners continue to involve all key agencies from private, statutory and third sector organisations in assessing the needs of children and young people and planning how these needs will be met.

5.2 We have also worked strategically with internal and external partners including Adult Services, Human Resources, Residential Services,

Connexions, Wolverhampton Homes and other accommodation providers, NCAS, the Education and Business Partnership and Base 25 to improve service provision and have provided training for partners.

5.3 A number of 'exchange' and joint training sessions have been undertaken with adult services to ensure that practitioners have a good understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities, to identify and overcome challenges in the transition process and to generally improve working relationships between the teams. The outcome of this has improved the transitional experience for young people. Young people with additional needs who may need support from Adults' Services are identified and referred at 16 with co-working between the two services commencing by the time the young person is 17 ½ years old.

5.4 Team members facilitated briefing sessions for staff within the Residential Service and foster carers to improve the quality and timeliness of the usage of the Get Ready for Adults Life (GRAL) pack.

5.5 Our work with the Youth Offending Team, Wolverhampton Homes and the Duty and Assessment team has seen the development and implementation of working practice in respect of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.

5.6 We have worked with National Care Advisory Service members, regionally and nationally to keep up to date with changes in leaving care and benchmark practice so we can improve practice and influence policy makers.

5.7 With a view to develop their knowledge and contacts, each practitioner has chosen a specialist area to promote partnership work. This enables us to provide a team with a vast and diverse bank of knowledge which can be shared with colleagues.

5.8 The team are also represented at a number of forums including CFUG, the Missing and Compromised Group and Wolverhampton's Young Peoples' Accommodation Forum.

5.9 The work with Human Resources, Base 25, Connexions, the Education and Business Partnership and other housing providers is detailed in the education and accommodation sections below.

6 Providing education, employment and training opportunities for Care Leavers.

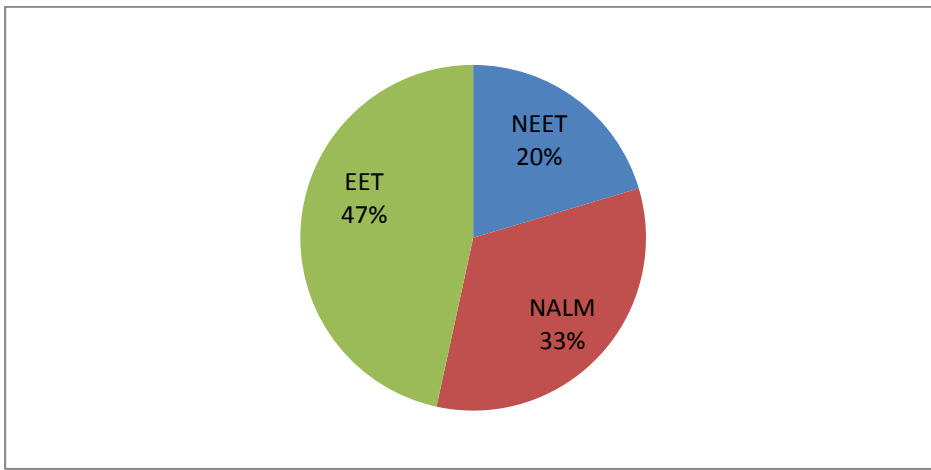
6.1 This has been a challenging area for the team. The current economic climate and the vacant Employment, Education and Training Co-ordinator (EET) post has impacted on the outcomes of this service.

Recruitment to the EET Co-ordinators post was delayed pending the completion of a review of the Looked After Children's Education Service.

6.2 Even with constraints against us we have progressed in this area, as follows:

- Reviewing the joint working protocol between LAC Transitions Team, LACE service and Connexions has ensured that collaborative working between the teams is encouraged and fragmentation and duplication is avoided.
- Monthly meetings between LACE, LAC Transitions and Connexions have been maintained to identify those at risk of becoming NEET and have planned the response to this.
- Representatives from the EBP and Connexions contract have attended team meetings to promote work experience placements and their mentoring service.
- Work has been undertaken with Human Resources which achieved agreement to allow Care Leavers to apply for entry level internal job vacancies.
- We have worked closely with the EBD to ensure that Care Leavers take advantage of Wolverhampton apprenticeships and the agreement in place which guarantees them an interview.

6.3 Data in respect of EET for NI148 cohort 2012 – 2013.



This pie chart represents the EET/NEET/NALM data averaged over the year in respect of NI 148 cohort. This sample of 23, 19 year old Care Leavers is not necessarily representative of the EET/NEET/NALM situation of all Care Leavers. Data on the EET status of the total care leaver population was collected manually in 2011 – 12. This data is not available for 2012 – 13 as these systems have not been maintained but work has been undertaken to develop the collection of this data from Care First which will allow reliable data to be reported in the 2013 – 2014 Annual Report.

7. Providing accommodation options for Care Leavers

7.1 Due to the diverse needs of Care Leavers, the LAC Transitions Team has access to a range of semi-independent and independent accommodation options. These are:

- Supported Lodgings
- Supported Accommodation
- Semi-independent Accommodation
- Independent Living in the Social or Private Rented sector, with flexible floating support as needed
- Enabling a young person to remain in the accommodation in which they lived by being looked after, i.e.: Staying Put

Through effective planning and by working in a multi-agency setting, the Housing Service works with the Social Worker and Young Persons Advisor to ensure that there is a planned move towards independence for each Care Leaver and that the accommodation is most suitable towards their individual needs.

7.2 Supported Lodgings: The YMCA Open Door provides a contracted service to the LAC Transitions Team, with the provision of 5 supported lodgings placements for Care Leavers up to 30th November 2012, and this increasing to 8 with effect from 1st December 2012.

As at 31st March 2013, there were three Care Leavers, aged 16-18 years in stable supported lodgings placement, , and a further two currently going through the matching process. There were also three Care Leavers, aged 19, in Supported Lodgings placements, claiming Housing Benefit.

Regular meetings are held between the LAC Transitions Team and YMCA Supported Lodgings management to ensure that the terms of the contract are being complied with. The Senior Housing Worker also attends the quarterly Supported Lodgings Steering Group and sits on the Supported Lodgings Host Approval Panel.

7.3 Night-stop:

Through effective partnership working with YMCA Black County, a Service Level Agreement was entered into in September 2012 to provide a Night -stop Provision to Care Leavers. This has eliminated the need to use Bed and Breakfast as an emergency provision. Since the introduction of the Night stop Service to the LAC Transitions Team, 6 Care Leavers have been placed in temporary Night-stop placements, one of which subsequently converted into a permanent Support Lodgings Placement.

7.4 Supported (Semi-independent) Accommodation

Semi-independent accommodation offers Young People an opportunity to live more independently whilst still having other people around and receiving support to develop independent living skills and work towards their goals in education, training employment and other areas of life. The move into Semi-

Independent accommodation from a care placement is planned by the Social Worker/Young Persons Advisor through the appropriate statutory meetings and in discussion with the Young Person. Once it has been agreed that the Young Person is ready a referral will be made to the Wolverhampton Young Person's Accommodation Forum (WYPAF) in accordance with Wolverhampton City Council's Homeless Young People and Care Leavers Housing Protocol.

WYPAF is a multi-agency response to the housing and support needs of Young People, including Care leavers and the membership of the forum comprises of representatives of providers of supported accommodation, move on accommodation and agencies offering specialist support to Young People. The Forum is compliant with the Supporting People Framework.

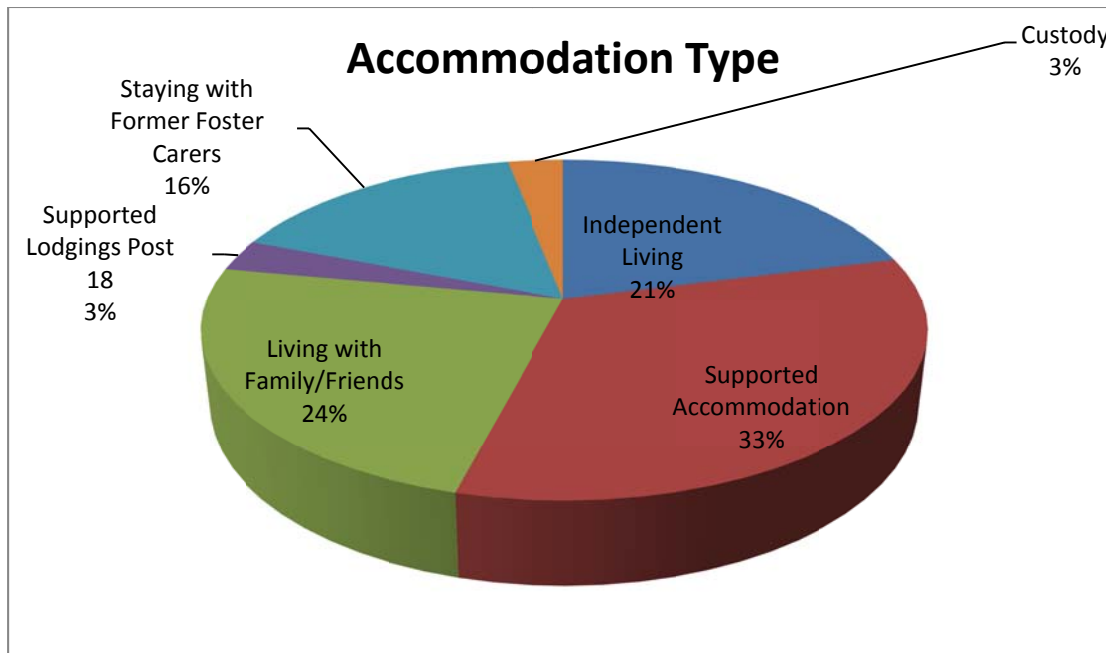
The Senior Housing Worker presents the Young Person's referral at the forum and a majority decision will be made by representatives based on the needs in matching accommodation and support requirements on where the most suitable accommodation will be. 21 Care Leavers have been referred through to WYPAF for supported accommodation as part of the transition into Independence.

7.6 Move on into Independent Living

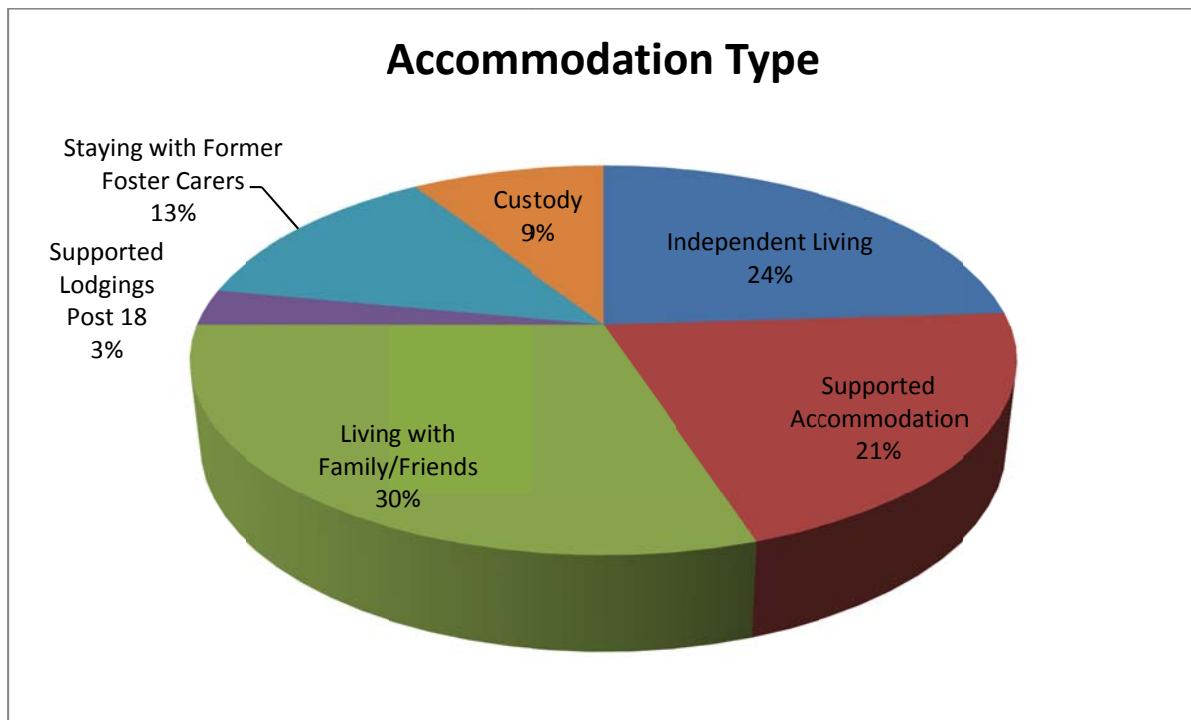
The move into independent living is planned and demonstrated in the Care Leaver's Pathway Plan. A Move On application is made and presented at the WYPAF meetings by the Senior Housing Worker. The application is supported by documentary evidence that the Young Person is ready to move on and ensures that all the necessary steps have been taken to enable the young person to take up an introductory tenancy with Wolverhampton Homes. Where appropriate, tenancy support is offered through the Tenancy Sustainment Team.

Applications accepted for Move on are referred to Wolverhampton Homes Housing Inclusion Team and processed onto Homes in the City by Wolverhampton Homes or other accommodation providers. As a Care Leaver, the Young Person's application is moved into Band 1.

7.7 Accommodation situation of Young People who have left care in the last 12 months:

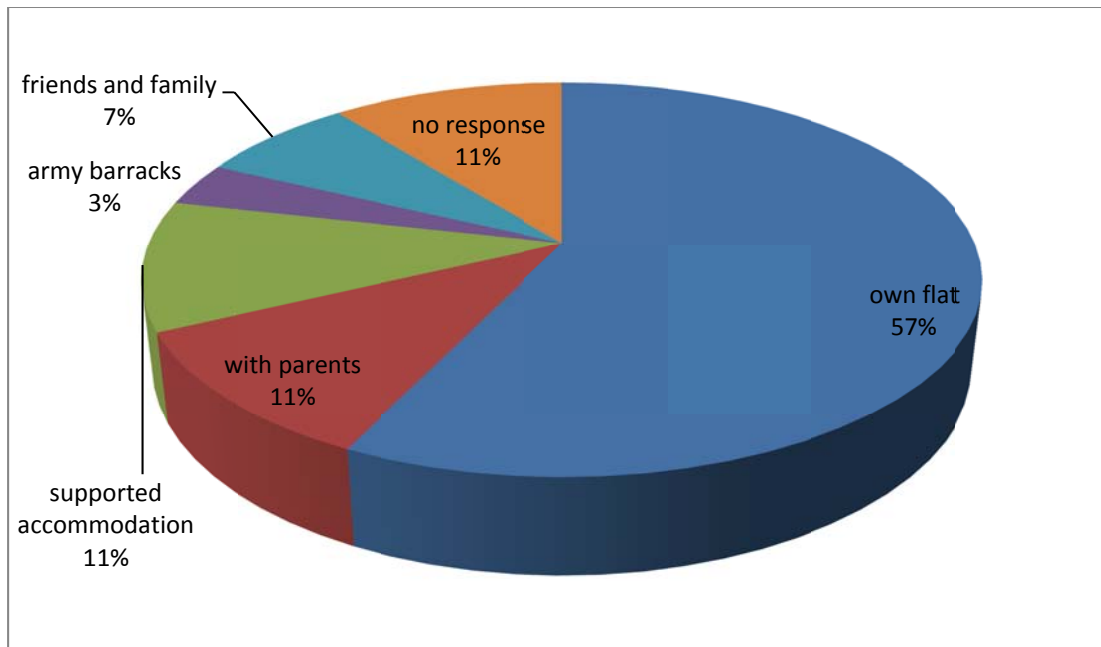


Accommodation situation of same young people, 6 months after they have left care



The charts above reflect the accommodation situation of the 33 young people who left care in 2012-2013. Most (20) young people left care aged 18. With 7 leaving aged 17 and 6 aged 16.

The chart below shows the accommodation situation of the 29 Care Leavers who completed the exit questionnaire in 2012-2013 aged 21



This illustrates how over the period of three years the majority of Care Leavers mature sufficiently to live independently.

8 Participation of Young People

8.1 The children and young people we work with are encouraged to participate in the assessment, planning and review processes which inform the care that they receive.

8.2 We also want to encourage Children and Young People to participate more broadly to ensure that their views influence how the service develops. With this in mind we held a consultation event this year with the aim of establishing a steering group and task focussed subgroups. 7 young people attended this event and it became clear during the discussion that we should start this exercise by developing some task focussed sub groups to help young people better understand the model of participation being proposed. The young people prioritised three task focussed sub groups:-

1. Planning and implementing the refurbishment of a room at Beldray which was child/young people friendly where young people could access the internet to make benefit claims, undertake job searches etc. This was prioritised as it was recognised that the existing provisions at Beldray were of a poor quality which could increase the young person's

anxiety particularly when approaching the team for a service at a point of crisis.

2. Improving how we communicate with young people as the young people at the meeting argued that traditional communication methods e.g. letters and newsletters were ineffective and often disregarded as “junk” mail. It was agreed that we should explore the usage of social media to communicate more effectively. This culminated in a Facebook page being set up. The site is used to post information about events, jobs, apprenticeships etc. and to privately contact young people to remind them of appointments and to generally stay in touch.
3. The third sub group involved young people working with the Senior housing worker to develop the policies and procedures, forms and information for young people about the ‘in-house’ supported accommodation provision which will commence on 1st April 2013.

All of these task sub-groups have completed the work agreed. Members will feedback to the broader group, which hopefully will eventually become the steering group, in the new financial year.

8.3. 29 of the 33 Care Leavers leaving the service aged 21 years have completed an exit questionnaire. The analysis of the information they provided is available in a separate report.

8.4 We involved young people in every recruitment campaign.

9 **Plans for the future**

9.1 The Housing Related Support Service contracted to NACRO will be brought back into the remit of the LAC Transitions Team in April 2013.

9.2 An apprentice Participation post will be developed

9.3 The steering group will be fully established

9.4 More comprehensive Management Information will be available

9.5 We will explore ways to raise the aspirations of Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

10 **Conclusion**

The transition from the Leaving Care service to the LAC Transitions Team progressed smoothly thanks to the positive attitude of team members and their recognition that the aim of the proposed changes was to improve outcomes for the young people we work with, something that they are committed to. We anticipate having the opportunity in the forthcoming year to complete some of the service implementation tasks which have eluded us this

year e.g. to achieve a full staff complement. Albeit with the welcome addition of the Housing Support Workers in April we do risk running out of office space. Not that desk sharing is a problem with the introduction this year of agile working. We are keen to recruit to both the EET Co-ordinators and recently established, Social Care Officer posts as we believe the absence of these posts have hindered our achievements this year.

We also look forward to making progress to establishing a LAC Transitions steering group which we believe will be central to ensuring that Looked After Children and Care Leavers are in a position to influence service development and to the development of more comprehensive management information which should provide better information both about the performance of staff and the outcomes for young people. Although our key goal in 2013-2014 is to raise the aspirations of our young people as benchmarking information highlights this as one of the areas in which we compare poorly especially if you consider statistics about how many of our Care Leavers go to university. We look forward to addressing this issue with the support of our colleagues in the Corporate Parenting Team.

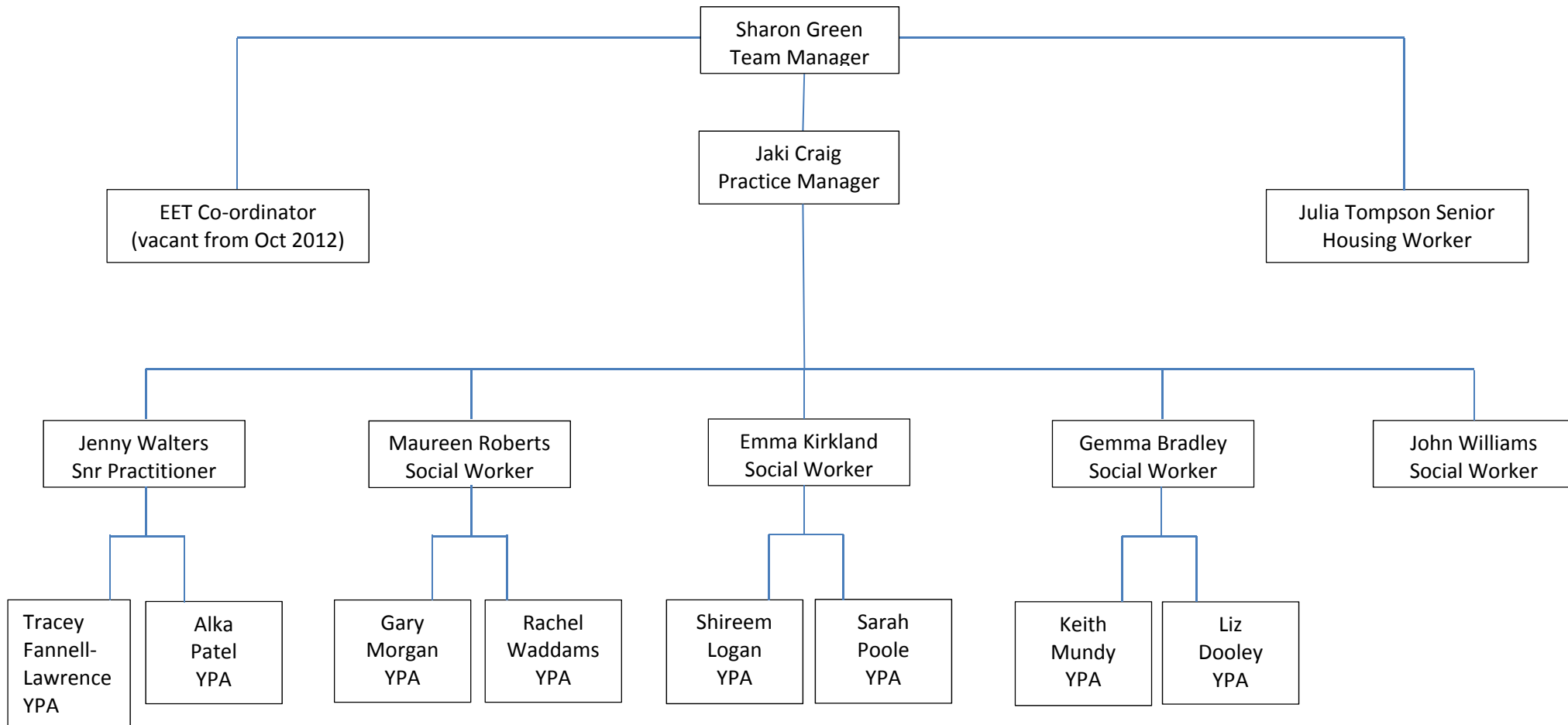
Appendices

Appendix 1

Staffing structure chart of LAC Transitions Team

Appendix 1

STAFFING OF LAC TRANSITIONS TEAM.



Analysis of Care Leavers exit Questionnaire 2012-2013

2012 / 13 Exit Questionnaire Analysis

Of the 33 people leaving care between April 2012-March 2013 29, 14 females and 15 males, completed an exit questionnaire. This questionnaire is usually completed in an interview with their Personal Advisor. It provides qualitative and quantitative feedback from the Care Leaver about the service they received from the Leaving Care Service/LAC Transitions Team.

Question 1: How do you feel about moving on from the Wolverhampton Leaving Care Service/LAC Transitions Team?

There was quite a mixed response to this question. 15 young people reported that they were happy or felt good about leaving the service with four of these giving the reason that they were ready to move on and or they were enjoying independence. 10 young people reported that they felt were concerned about moving on because they would receive less support or because they would miss the support. One of these young people reported that he didn't feel that he was ready to move on and seven reported that they felt sad, concerned or that they didn't want the service to stop.

Comments included:

"I feel I have had good support getting settled. Good advice. Not ready to be left alone though"

"ok but I reckon I still need help"

"I feel confident in leaving the service"

"I feel a little sad as I have enjoyed that connection and the safety net if I need it"

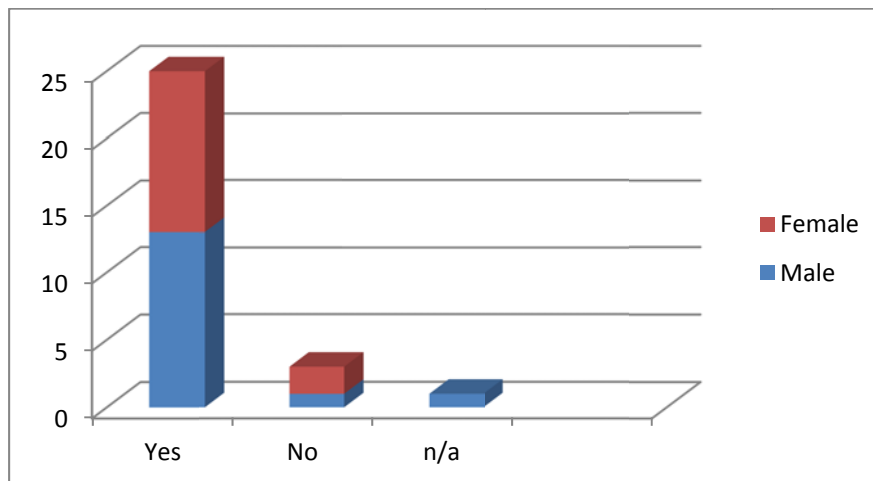
"feel good-stand on your own two feet-no one looking over me"

"fine, don't really need anything now- didn't really get on with leaving care"

"will miss help and support"

"happy to move on. I feel ready to live without support"

Question 2: Do you feel that you have been supported well enough to manage independently now?



There is a not applicable response to this question as one of the respondents is in receipt of support from adults services

Question 3. Could you explain why you answered yes or No to Q2?

Of the 23 young people responding yes to question 2 four did not answer this question. The remaining 19 responses overwhelmingly responded that they had been given enough support from their YPA and/or had enough experience of living independently to be confident that they could manage without support.

Comments included:-

"because I was helped with problems regarding budgeting and independence skill"

"Been living independently for 5 years with limited support"

"Had help and support when required from PA. PA always available when needed"

"living on my own with no problems for a year and a half now"

"got my own accommodation, nearly fully furnished, benefits sorted"

"I have been living independently since my 18th birthday and I am 22 this year"

"I have a flat of my own"

"received a lot of financial and emotional support through my university course"

" have already lived independently for 3 years"

"helped get on council list, setting up home grant and interviews for housing"

"lots of support and advise"

The four young people answering no to question 2 commented:-

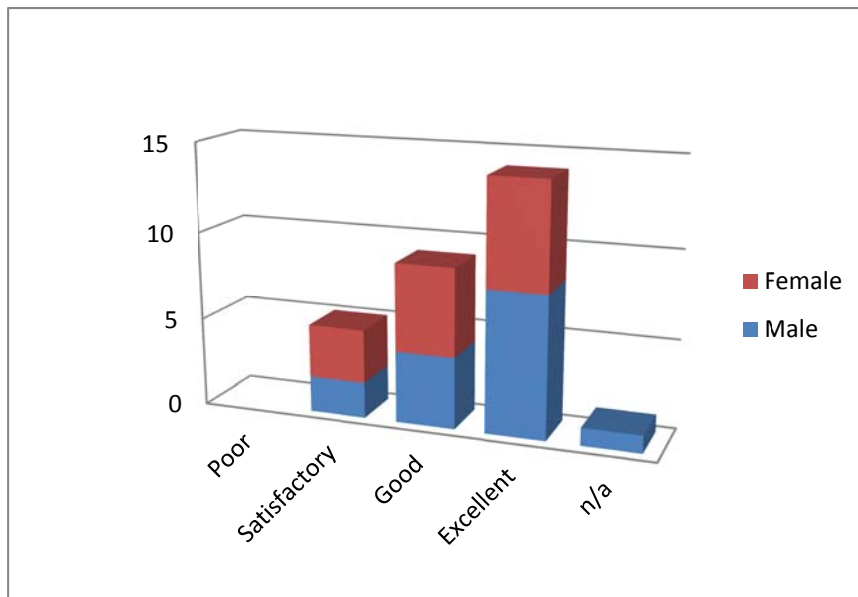
"need weekly/daily timetable to remind me of appointments, suffers memory loss, drink alcohol every day."

"I have been left to make myself independent. I feel that I could have been offered more support. Because I was already independent I have been left to manage"

"I still struggle to manage to cook, clean, budget and manage my friendships" (this young person was in receipt of support from adult services)

"because I don't think I can cope without them"

Question 4: On a scale of 1 to 4 could you mark us on the service you received?



Question 5: When a young person joins the service what information should they be given about the organisation?

12 young people responding to this question made comments about needing information about the service.

Their comments include:-

- “what support they will receive”
- “information about the service”
- “information about leaving care service we offer”
- “what they will be supported with and how. Information about leaving care”
- “what the service can offers, what they do”

Three respondents felt that it was important that information was given about the length of time the service would be available

Two further respondents felt it important to receive information about the role of the PA

Others would like to see information provided about other specific services including:-

- Counselling
- Volunteer services
- Finance
- Housing
- Independent skills

One comment "I would have liked more information about services near to where I live" highlighted the challenge faced by the team when providing services to young people in other areas of the country.

Question 6: Was there anything you achieved while working with Wolverhampton Leaving Care Services/LAC Transitions Team?

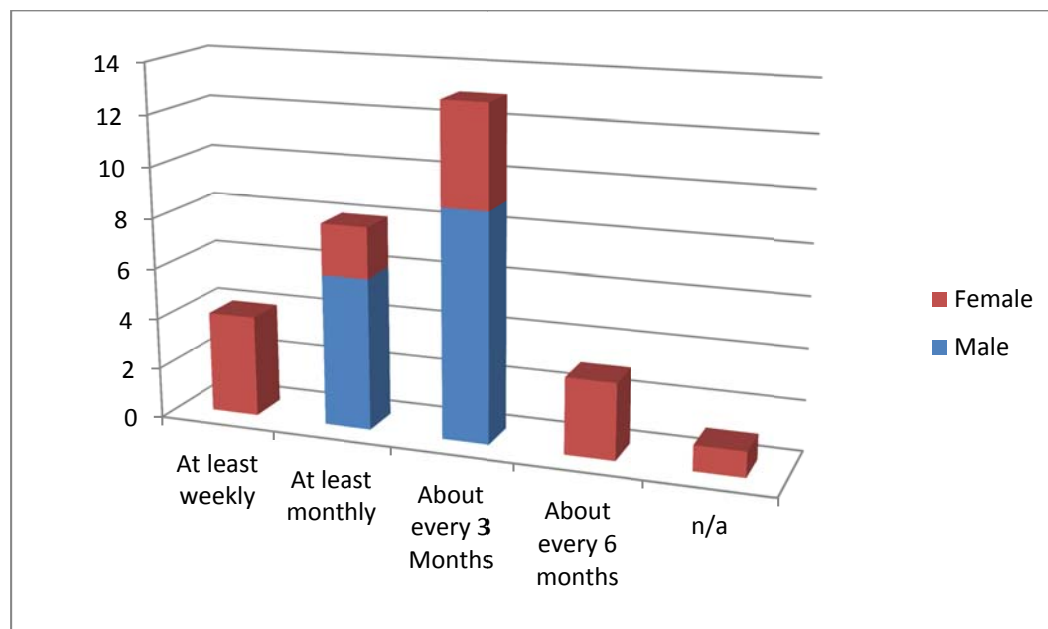
9 respondents were proud to have achieved living independently
10 were proud of their achievements in education, employment and training
2 were proud of obtaining a driving qualification
2 were proud of their children

Other comments made include:

"ability to be more outspoken"
"cooking sessions"
"I got off hard drugs and I feel I have turned my life around"
"my chair"

Unfortunately 7 people didn't feel that they has achieved anything
3 people didn't respond to this question

Question 7: How much contact did you have with the service?



This response provides evidence that most young people where being seen at least within the statutory minimum period required.

Question 8: Do you have any regrets on things you did not follow through with?

14 young people reported having no regrets
7 reported regretting that they had not continued with their education/employment
3 young people reported regretting not taking better advantage of the advice and support available
1 regretted not complaining when they had a poor PA.
2 regretted not following up their contact with their siblings/child
2 young people made no response.

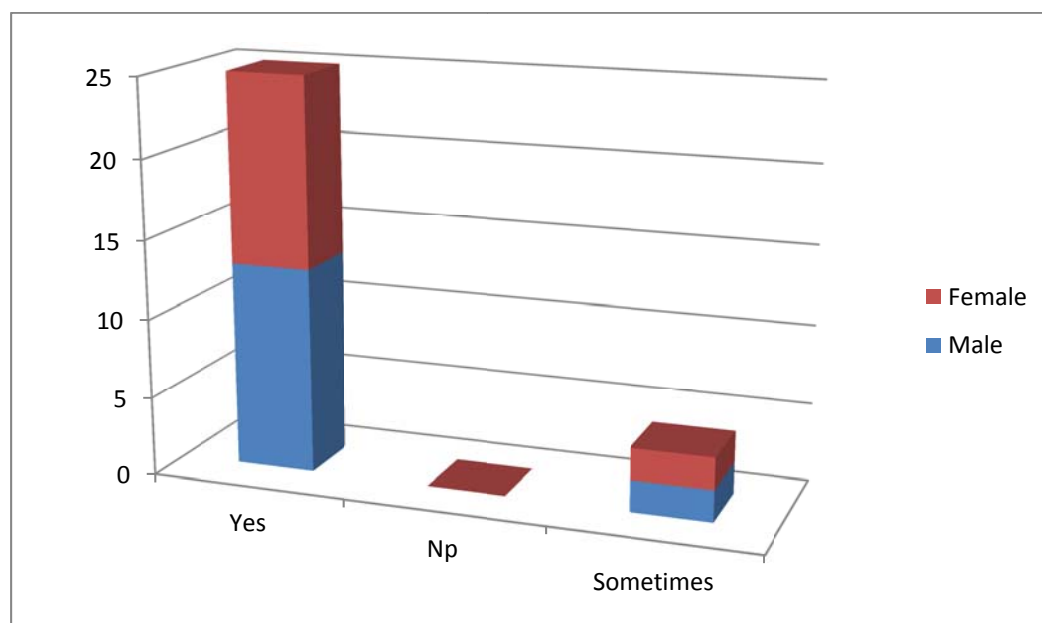
Question 9: Can you tell me who or what helped you most while you had this service?

24 respondents reported that their Personal Advisor had helped them most
3 respondents reported that they had been helped most by a manager in the service, 3 by the financial support they had been given and 4 reported the support with housing /accommodation to have helped them most.

Other comments include:-

- "Everyone who worked with me"
- "having someone to talk to"
- "foster carer"
- "the people who helped me most was subs"

Question 10: Did you feel that you could go to your YPA for help and support?



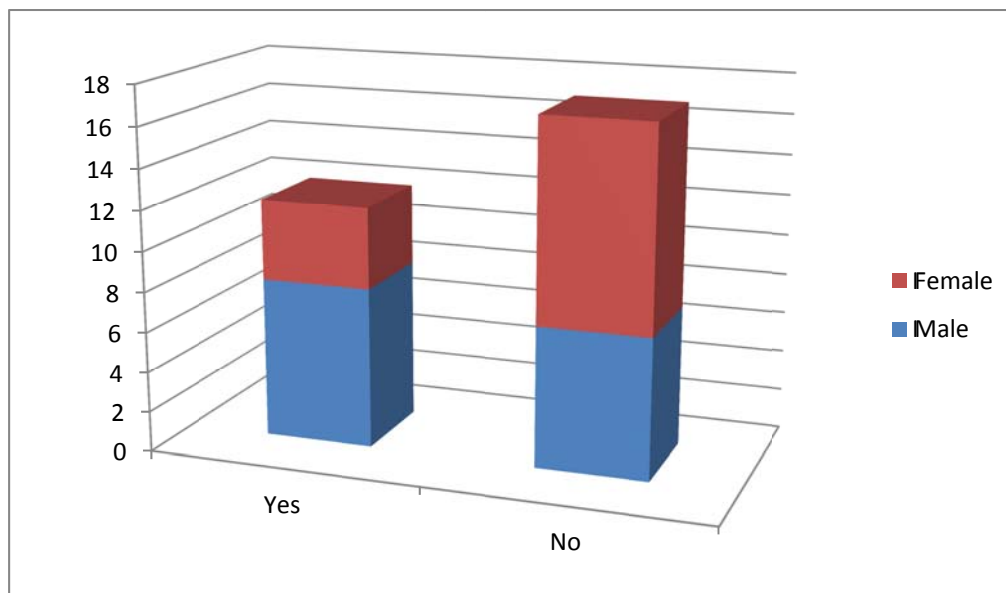
Question 11: Can you give me examples when your YPA helped or supported you?

23 respondents reported getting help with accommodation, 19 with finance/benefits, 14 reported being supported to obtain education, employment or training, 6 commented on receiving help around parenting issues including managing meetings when there have been some concerns about their parenting and 9 reported that they were helped by their PA being available/listening to them/giving advice and support.

Question 12: What are your future goals?

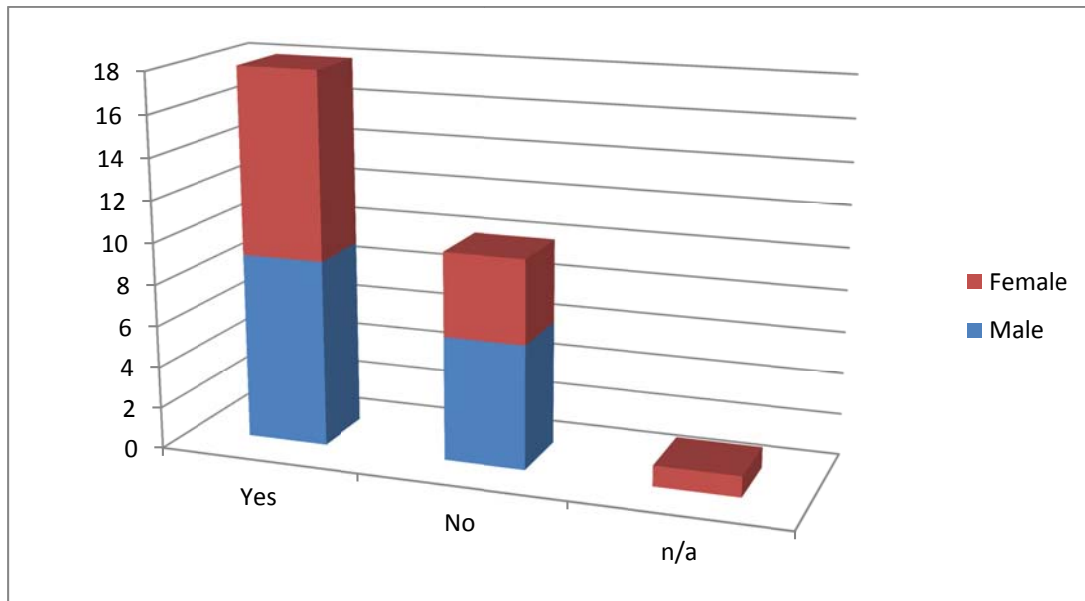
17 responded had goals around employment. They wanted to get a job or where they were in work to get a better job. 8 young people were aiming to return to education and 15 had aspiration around relationships. They reported wanting to get married, wanting to start a family or have more children, wanting to rebuild their family relationships and wanting to keep away from poor friends. 4 young people reported having aspirations to travel and 9 had aspirations about where they lived. Some reported that they wanted to own their own home, others that they wanted to move home. Three respondents reported that they just wanted to enjoy life/be happy and three reported not having any goals or to be just taking life a day at a time. One young person wants to publish a book and another to secure funding to own their own Care Home.

Question 13: Are you currently in Employment, Training or Education?

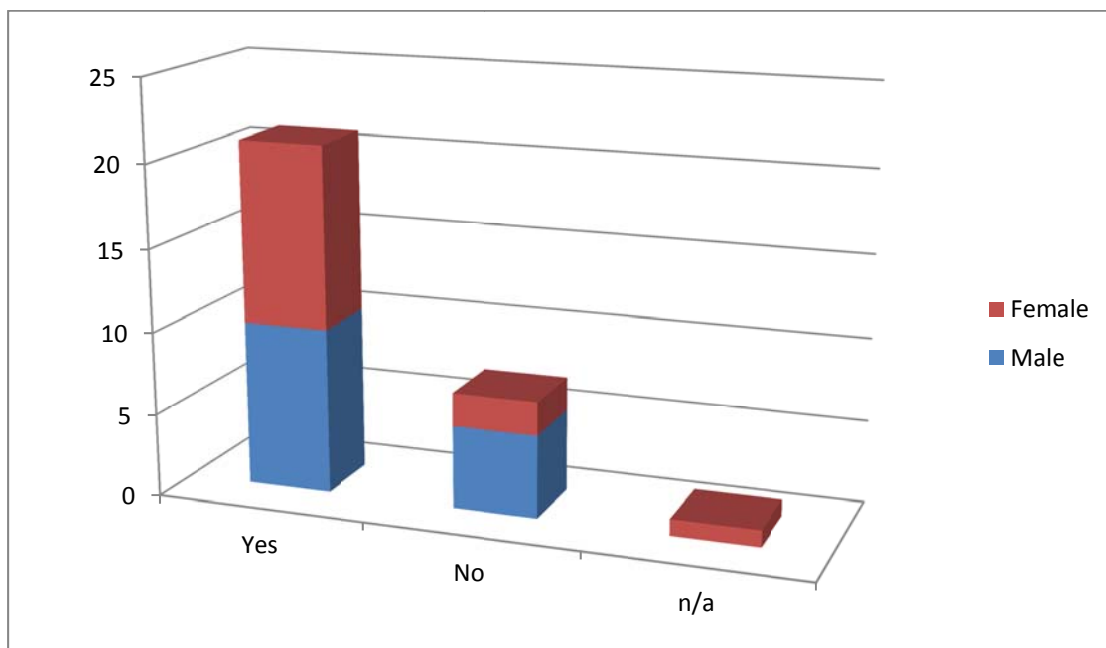


This is a concerning response and one which indicates that further work is needed in this area. It is however a challenging area to influence as research highlights Care Leavers attitudes about education, employment and training are strongly influenced by their pre-care experiences.

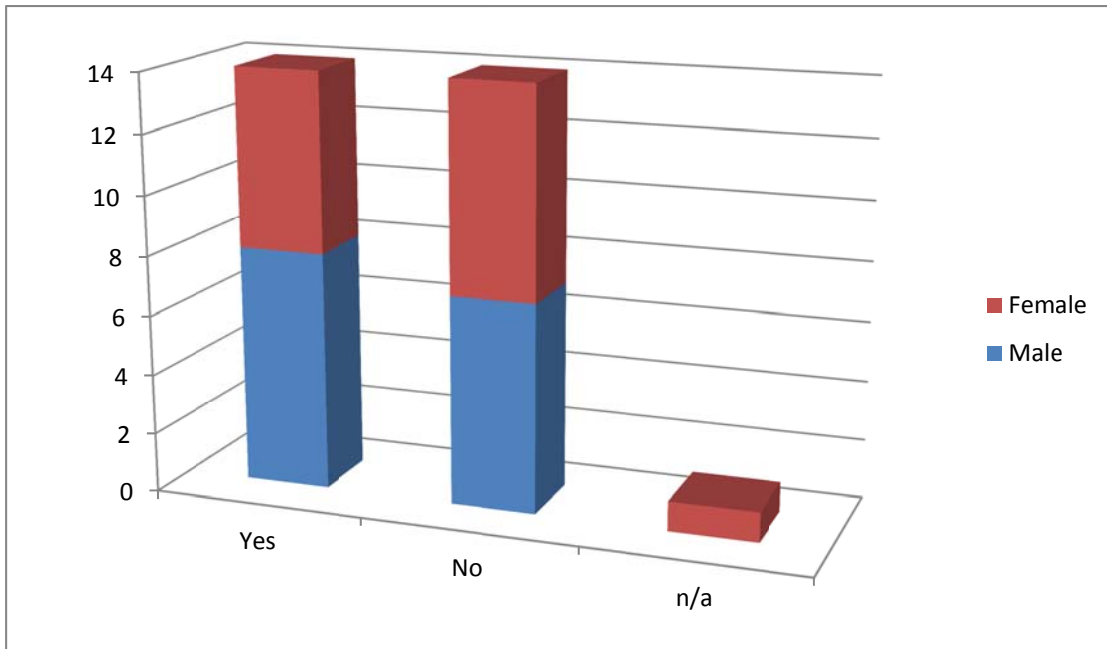
Question 14a: Are you currently in contact with one or both of your parents?



Question 14b: Are you currently in contact with one or all of your brothers and sisters?



Question 14c: Are you currently in contact with anyone else in your family?



Question 15: Do you think you are currently living in suitable accommodation?

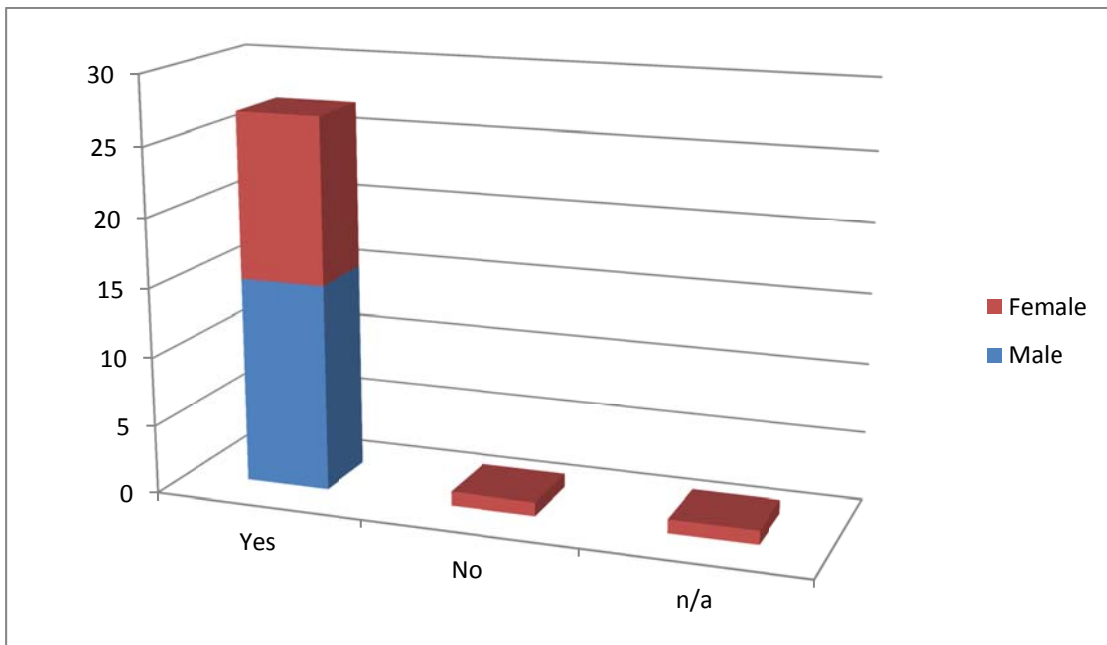
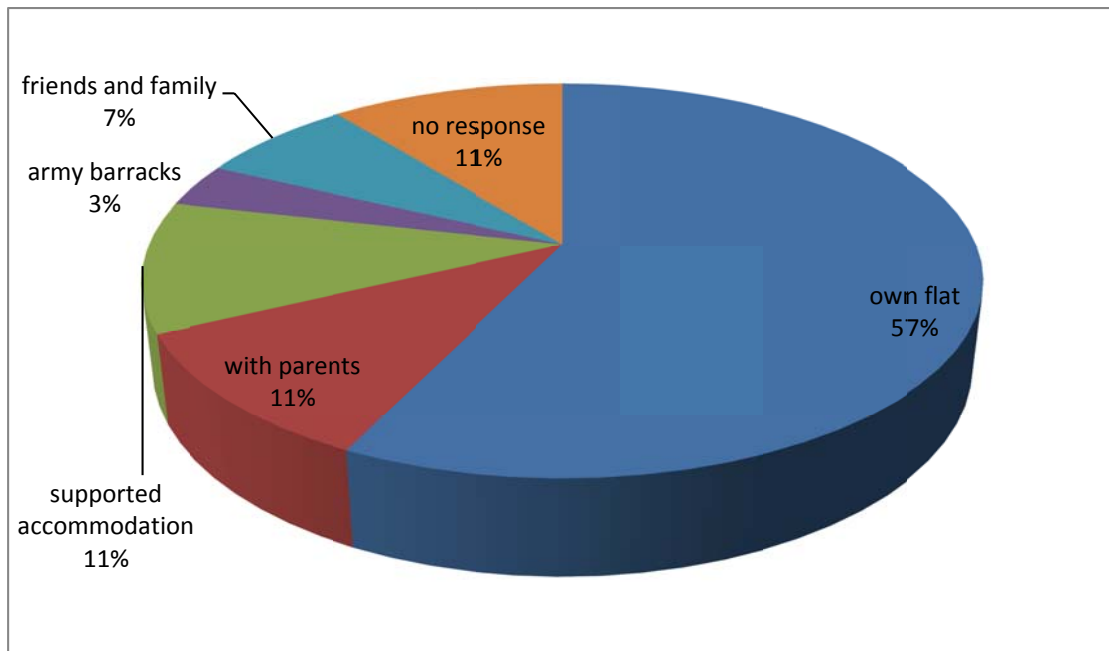


Chart show where respondents reported they were living:



Question 16: Is there anything else you would like to share about your time with us?

Comments made include:

" I feel that most of my support came from subs who helped me at a very traumatic time. They supported me through court case. I did not have support from Leaving Care"

"Thank Leaving care for help and support"

"I enjoyed it"

"I would like access to records"

"I really enjoyed my time with leaving care it's a really good service for young people like me"

"it has been good. In the future PA's to do more with Yong people"

"Thank you"

"appreciate the help and support I received. Couldn't have coped without your help"

"had highs and lows but enjoyed my time"

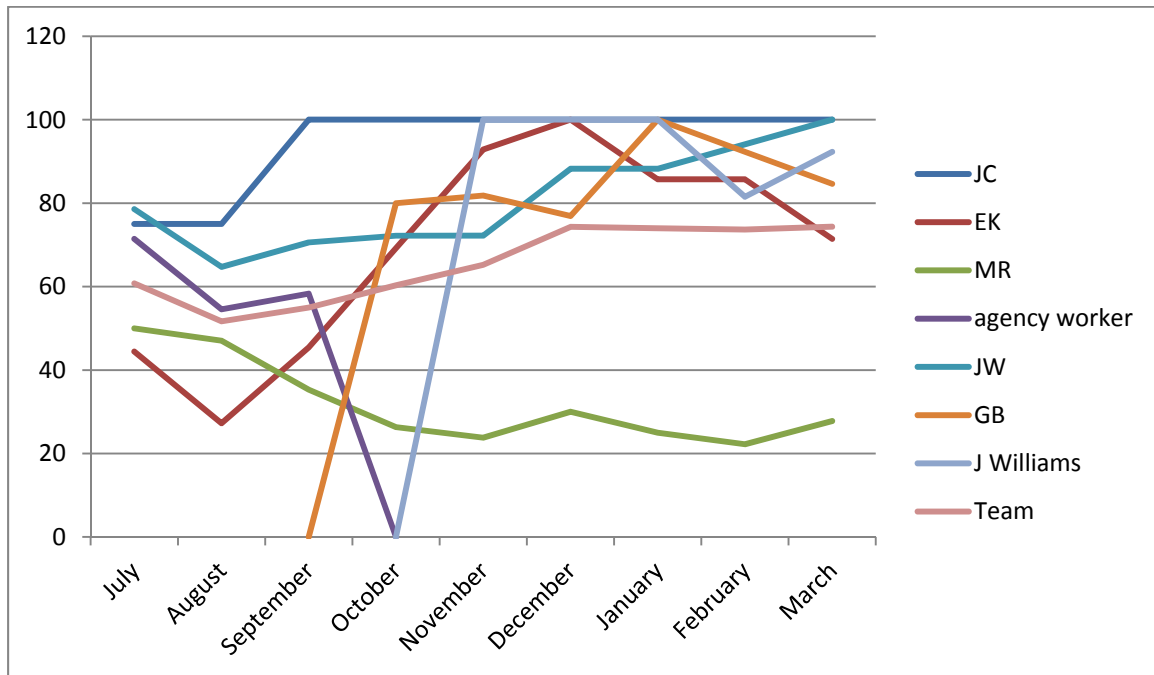
"Thank the service for help and support during the last 5 years"

"I'm happy and o.k."

"I want to know if my case will be re-opened and if I will receive support when returning to uni"

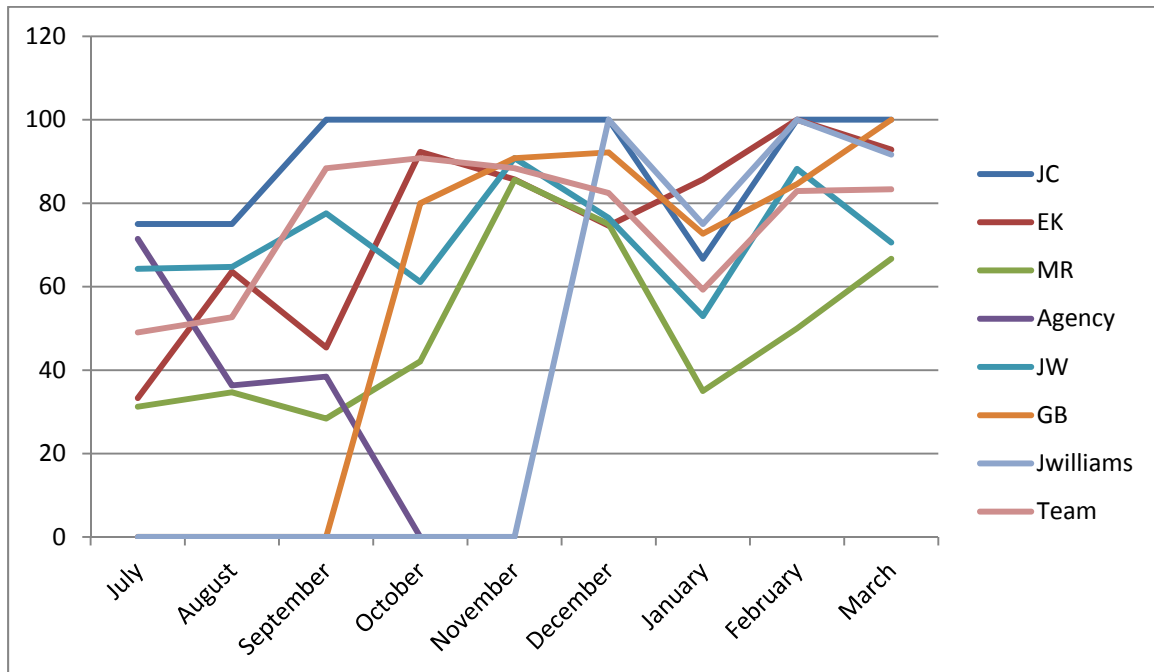
**Management
Information
report
LAC Transitions
Team
July 2012-March
2013**

Graph 1: Current LAC with status of latest Care Plan



This table does demonstrate some incremental improvement but we are clearly far from achieving the 100% target required. We are taking action to address this.

Graph 2 Current LAC Visit



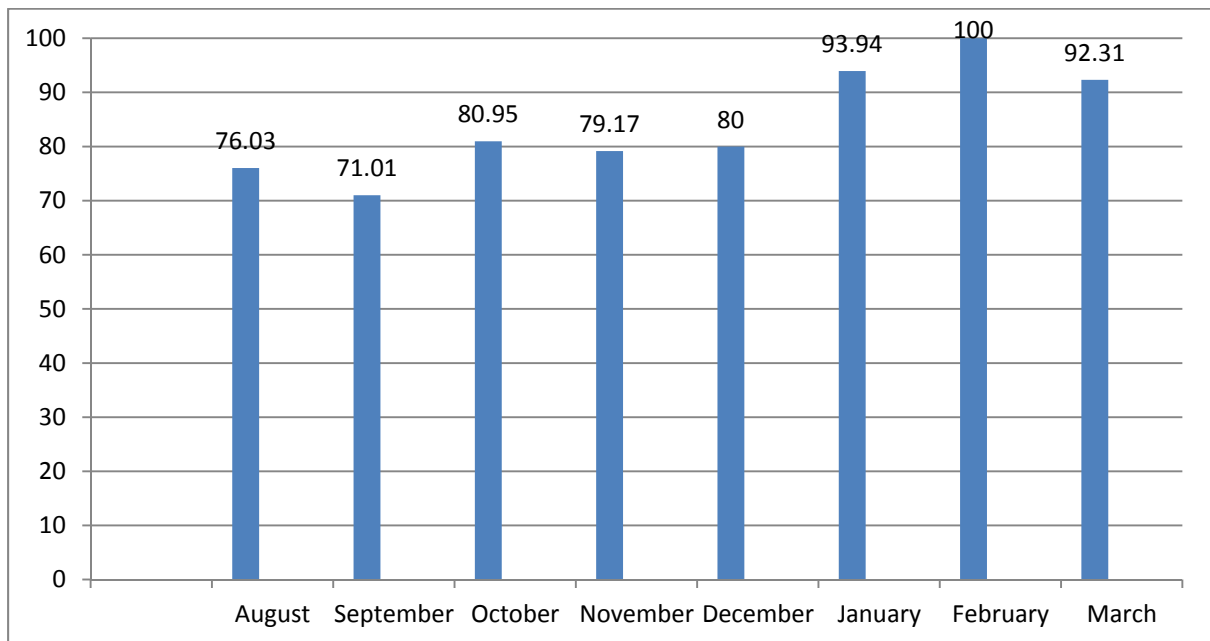
A number of factors led to the initial poor recording of statutory visits including:

- Young People transferring without a current statutory visit having been recorded.
- Social Workers being unfamiliar with recording systems as they were either NQSW's or had been out of front line practice for some time.
- Social Workers were prioritising getting to know the young people on their caseloads, and responding to their needs which is challenging when receiving so many new transfers at one time.
- Social Workers had to read the Children's files to understand their background.

I am confident that the children and young people were being visited within statutory timescales during this period but equally accept that lack of recording is not an acceptable excuse for poor performance in this area.

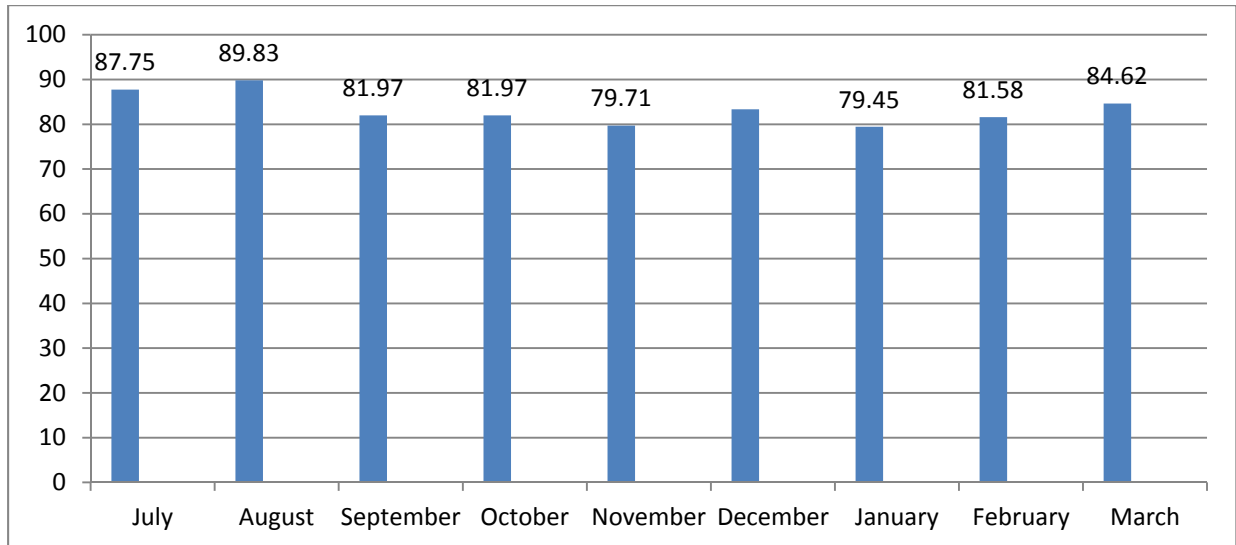
The Social Workers are generally responding to the message that improvement is needed in this area. Unfortunately with such a small team of workers a drop in performance by one worker has a significant impact upon the overall team performance.

Graph 3: Personal Education Plans (PEPS)



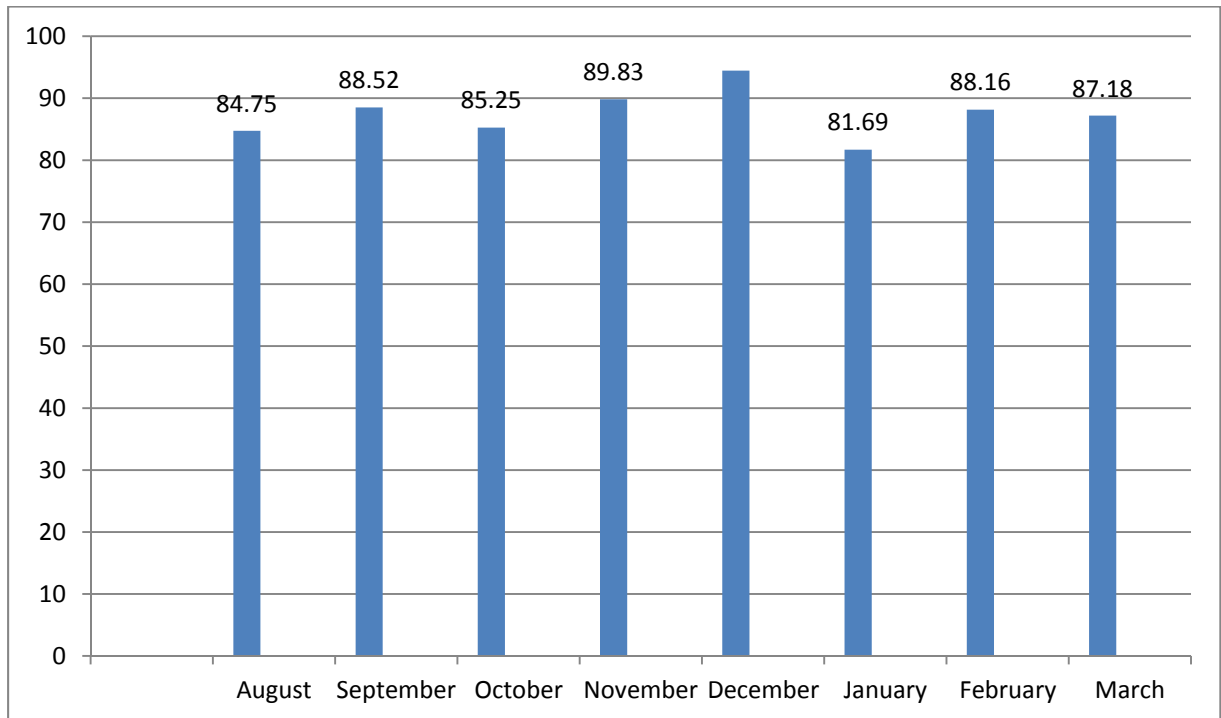
Health Data:

Graph 4: LAC with dental checks completed in timescales.



Performance in this area has remained fairly consistent over the year. Given the age of the young people we are working with some, particularly the 16+ 17 year olds are resistant or refuse to attend the dentists

Graph 5: LAC With Health Assessments completed in timescales.



There are some challenges to completing all health assessments in timescales. These include:-

- Some young people refuse to attend their health assessment appointments
- Where young people are placed out of city there are often delays in the paperwork being sent back and therefore delays in recording that the health assessment has taken place which can make it appear for some time that the Health assessment is out of timescale even when it has been completed within their timescales.
- Where young people are in custody it can be difficult to identify who is responsible for undertaking the health assessment.

Progress made in respect of collecting a broader range of management information.

Work is being undertaken to collect and collate data from Care First to show that Personal Advisors are completing their visits and pathway plans in accordance with the minimum statutory requirements. This should be available in the next financial year.

We have also added classifications to record:

- The leaving care status of the young person
- Their EET status
- Whether or not the team remain in touch with them
- The type of accommodation Care Leavers are living in
- Whether or not the Care Leaver's accommodation is suitable

The leaving care status and in touch classification will be added on or around the young person's 16th birthday. The accommodation and suitability of accommodation classification when they move into non-regulated accommodation e.g. supported accommodation and the EET classification as they start year 12.