

**Time** 5.30 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Oversight

**Venue** MS Teams

## Membership

**Chair** Cllr Beverley Momenabadi (Lab)

**Vice Chair** Cllr Wendy Dalton (Con)

### Labour

Cllr Qaiser Azeem  
Cllr Lovinyer Daley  
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar  
Cllr Barbara McGarrity QN  
Cllr Rita Potter  
Cllr Clare Simm

### Conservative

Cllr Mak Singh  
Cllr Udey Singh

Quorum for this meeting is three Councillors.

## Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the democratic services team:

**Contact** Shelley Humphries

**Tel/Email** Tel: 01902 554070 or [shelley.humphries@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:shelley.humphries@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

**Address** Democratic Services, Civic Centre, 1st floor, St Peter's Square,  
Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

Copies of other agendas and reports are available from:

**Website** <http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk>

**email** [democratic.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

**Tel** 01902 550320

Please take note of the protocol for filming, recording and use of social media in meetings, copies of which are displayed in the meeting room.

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

- | <i>Item No.</i> | <i>Title</i>  |
|-----------------|---|
| 1               | <b>Apologies for absence</b>  |
| 2               | <b>Declarations of interests</b>  |
| 3               | <b>Minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2022</b> (Pages 5 - 10)<br>[To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2022 as a correct record.]  |
| 4               | <b>Matters arising</b><br>[To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2022.]  |
| 5               | <b>Schedule of outstanding matters</b> (Pages 11 - 14)<br>[To receive the Schedule of Outstanding Matters.]   |
| 6               | <b>Updated Terms of Reference for Corporate Parenting Board</b> (Pages 15 - 20)<br>[To approve the refreshed Terms of Reference for Corporate Parenting Board.]   |
| 7               | <b>Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan 2022 - 2023</b> (Pages 21 - 24)<br>[To approve the Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan for municipal year 2022 - 2023.]  |
| 8               | <b>Outcome of Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services</b> (Pages 25 - 50)<br>[To receive a presentation on the Ofsted inspection outcome.]   |
| 9               | <b>Supported Accommodation Annual Report</b> (Pages 51 - 74)<br>[To receive the Supported Accommodation Annual Report.]   |
| 10              | <b>Adoption Service Report</b> (To Follow)<br>[To receive the Adoption Service Report for Adoption@Heart.]  |
| 11              | <b>Performance Monitoring Information</b> (Pages 75 - 82)<br>[To receive the Performance Monitoring Information Report.]  |
| 12              | <b>Exclusion of the Press and Public</b><br>[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 falling within paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.] |

## PART 2 - ITEMS NOT OPEN TO THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 13 | <b>Councillor Visits to Establishments - Schedule of Visits</b> |
|----|---|

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

[To receive verbal feedback on any visits to establishments undertaken by Councillors since the last meeting.]

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## Attendance

**Chair** Cllr Beverley Momenabadi (Lab)

## Labour

Cllr Mary Bateman

Cllr Jasbinder Dehar

Cllr Rita Potter

## Conservative

Cllr Wendy Dalton  
Cllr Stephanie Haynes

Cllr Mak Singh

## In Attendance

Hannah Finch  
Alison Hinds  
Shelley Humphries  
Caterina Robinson  
Mark Tobin  
Jazmine Walker

Corporate Parenting Officer  
Deputy Director of Social Care  
Democratic Services Officer  
Service Manager for Children's Services  
Mark Tobin, Head of Service for Adoption@Heart  
Head of Service for Children and Young People in Care

*Item No.*    *Title*

**1        Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from the following members of the Corporate Parenting Board: Councillor Paula Brookfield and Councillor Asha Mattu.

Apologies were also received from Fiona Brennan.

**2        Declarations of interests**

There were no declarations of interest made relative to the items under consideration at the meeting.

**3        Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2022**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2022 be confirmed as correct record and signed by the Chair.

**4        Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

**5        Schedule of outstanding matters**

Jazmine Walker, Head of Service for Children and Young People in Care presented the report on current progress on matters previously considered by the Board.

An outline was provided of progress against all items and it was highlighted that all outstanding actions had now been completed.

Resolved:

That the Schedule of Outstanding Matters be received.

**6        Adoption Service Interim Report**

Mark Tobin, Head of Service for Adoption at Heart, presented the Adoption Service Interim Report and highlighted salient points. The report fulfilled the obligations in the Adoption National Minimum Standards (2011) and Adoption Service Statutory Guidance (2011) Adoption and Children Act 2002 to report to the “executive side” of the local authority.

It was noted that data and information within the published report was accurate as of 30 September 2021. It was clarified that scorecard data for children who wait longer was also for this six-month period.

It was queried if the number of children waiting to be adopted to date was known; it was reported that the figures presented were for the last six months however it was confirmed that this information would be available for the annual year-end report. It was noted that those who were waiting were not waiting due to a lack of availability

of adopters but a number of other complex factors, such as keeping members of large sibling groups together or children and young people with complex needs.

It was also clarified that the slow progression of special guardianship orders could possibly be attributed to delayed court hearings due to COVID restrictions.

It was queried whether the reported reduction in registrations of interest had been seen nationally as well as locally. It was noted that there had been a spike in enquiries and registrations of interest during 2020 – 2021 and there appeared to be a correlation between this and a rise in approval numbers as well. Although there had been a levelling off recently, it was reported that enquiries and registrations of interest were still in healthy numbers and levels were continually being monitored.

In response to a query around accessibility, it was confirmed that information material used in the 'You Can Adopt' campaign had also been translated into other languages in a conscious effort to reach a diverse range of communities.

It had been noted that children who waited longer were sometimes older children, members of large sibling groups or those with complex needs. It was suggested that younger children tended not to wait as long and there was a challenge nationally in placing large sibling groups in one family so they could remain together. It was confirmed that a package of training delivered by Adoption@Heart was available for adopters which could be tailored to include how to support children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities or other complex needs.

It was queried if a rise in unaccompanied children needing support was anticipated due to the crisis in Ukraine. It was confirmed that this had not emerged either locally or nationally at present as there were mainly family groups arriving rather than unaccompanied children.

The report was commended and thanks were offered to the Adoption@Heart Service.

Resolved:

That the Adoption Service Interim Report be received.

## **7 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) and Young People**

Caterina Robinson, Service Manager for Children's Services presented the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) and Young People report and highlighted key points. The report outlined the current position of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) and Young People in Wolverhampton and the support offered from April 2021 - March 2022. This included an overview of numbers of UASC within the City and how many of these were children and young people in care and care leavers.

The support offer was commended and it was noted that Ofsted had remarked positively on the level of support offered to UASC arriving under the National Transfer Scheme.

In response to a query on the average age range of children, it was noted that there had been no child under the age of 16 arriving in the last 12 months and the typical age was around 16-17.

Resolved:

That the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) and Young People report be received.

## 8 **Performance Monitoring Information**

Alison Hinds, Deputy Director of Social Care presented the Performance Monitoring Information report and highlighted salient points.

It was highlighted that the service continued to see a decrease in numbers of children and young people in care illustrating that only those children and young people remained in care that needed to be. The downward trajectory brought Wolverhampton ever closer in line with statistical neighbours.

It was noted that placement stability was steady and that many placements had been with internal foster carers, which meant a whole-system wraparound level of support could be offered.

There had been a small dip in numbers of children and young people with an up-to-date initial assessment however figures were still healthy at 70%. Performance was strong in terms of the number of children and young people in care with up-to-date reviews and participation in reviews.

There had been improvements in numbers of children and young people with up-to-date personal education plans (PEPs). Work undertaken focusing on PEPs for children in years 12 and 13 had paid dividends with figures improving here also.

Initial health checks were not as high as hoped however mechanisms were now in place to improve this. Work was also being undertaken to ensure timeliness of initial assessments for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC).

In terms of adoption orders being granted, it was noted that the impact of COVID could be seen in the drop in adoption numbers during 2020 - 2021 as court proceedings had been delayed, followed by a rise in 2021 – 2022 as restrictions lifted and face to face hearings could resume.

It was reported that a programme of support had recently been developed for those care leavers who had not been in education, employment or training for some time. The impact of COVID on opportunities was acknowledged. Figures for care leavers in suitable accommodation were positive.

Resolved:

That the Performance Monitoring Information report be received.



9 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved:

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 falling within paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

10 **Councillor Visits to Establishments - Schedule of Visits**

Councillor Wendy Dalton provided a verbal account of her visit to Upper Pendeford Farm Short Break Centre. It was reported that the establishment had made a good impression and provided satisfactory assurance that safety procedures were in place. It was noted that the premises was clean and provided a pleasant and calming rural outlook.

Concerns were raised around what measures were in place should a resident ever go missing. It was noted that the centre was a short stay facility providing respite for young people at risk of coming into care or at risk of placement breakdown. This was to diffuse difficult situations and prevent them escalating to a level where a child may run away.

It was noted that procedures were in place towards prevention although residents were free to move around as they wished. Assurances were offered that, should an incident occur, steps would be taken to respond and interviews would be held with the young person upon return to ascertain why they had left and if there were any further safeguarding concerns. Any young person who was considered at risk or had repeat missing episodes would be monitored.

It was noted that Councillors who had expressed an interest would be contacted to arrange a date. Councillor Stephanie Haynes added she had requested to attend at the last meeting but not been contacted therefore was placed on the list.

Resolved:

That Councillors Stephanie Haynes, Rita Potter and Mary Bateman would be contacted to arrange a visit to Upper Pendeford Farm Short Break Centre.

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<b>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</b>	<b>Corporate Parenting Board</b> <b>7 July 2022</b>
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<b>Report title</b>	Schedule of Outstanding Matters	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Beverley Momenabadi Children and Young People	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Emma Bennett, Executive Director of Families	
<b>Originating service</b>	Governance	
<b>Accountable employee</b>	Shelley Humphries	Democratic Services Officer
	Tel	01902 554070
	Email	shelley.humphries@wolverhampton.gov.uk

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**Recommendation for action:**

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to:

1. Receive and comment on the Schedule of Outstanding Matters.

## 1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to appraise the Board of the current position with a variety of matters considered at previous meetings of the Corporate Parenting Board.

## 2.0 Background

2.1 At previous meetings of the Board the following matters were considered and details of the current position is set out in the fourth column of the table.

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	<b>Current Position</b>
31 March 2022	That Councillors Stephanie Haynes, Rita Potter and Mary Bateman be contacted to arrange a visit to Upper Pendeford Farm Short Break Centre.	Hannah Finch, Corporate Parenting Officer and Phillip Johnson, Senior Residential Manager.	Councillors were contacted to arrange visits prior to Annual Council and the offer will be extended to new Board members.

## 3.0 Financial implications

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

3.2 The financial implications of each matter will be detailed in the individual report submitted to the Board.

## 4.0 Legal implications

4.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

4.2 The legal implications of each matter will be detailed in the individual report submitted to the Board.

## 5.0 Equalities implications

5.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

5.2 The equalities implications of each matter will be detailed in the individual report submitted to the Board.

## 6.0 Any other implications

6.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

## 7.0 Schedule of background papers

7.1 Minutes of previous meetings of the Corporate Parenting Board and associates.

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<b>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</b>	<b>Corporate Parenting Board</b> <b>7 July 2022</b>
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<b>Report title</b>	Updated Terms of Reference for Corporate Parenting Board	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Beverley Momenabadi Children and Young People	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All Wards	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Emma Bennett, Executive Director of Families	
<b>Originating service</b>	Children and Young People in Care	
<b>Accountable employee</b>	Hannah Finch	Corporate Parenting Officer
	Tel	01902 550621
	Email	Hannah.Finch@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report has been considered by</b>	Children's Social Care Leadership Team 05 May 2022	

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**Recommendation for decision:**

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to:

1. Approve the updated Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Board.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present an updated Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Board.

## **2.0 Role of the Board**

- 2.1 All staff and elected Councillors are responsible for the welfare and protection of the children and young people in their care, this is defined as “corporate parenting”.
- 2.2 The Corporate Parenting Board meets bi-monthly (every other month), to discuss and consider matters that effect children and young people in care. The updated Terms of Reference will ensure that the Corporate Parenting Board continues to be effective.

## **3.0 Options**

### **Option 1 – do nothing**

- 3.1 The board will continue to work with the current Terms of Reference

### **Option 2- approve the updated Terms of Reference**

- 3.2 The board are recommended to approve the updated Terms of Reference, which will continue to ensure the integrity and effectiveness of the board’s decisions and actions. This is the recommended option.

## **4.0 Financial implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications for this report.  
[JG/03052022/C]

## **5.0 Legal implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications for this report.  
[SB/28042022/Y]

## **6.0 Equalities implications**

- 6.1 There are no equalities implications for this report.

## **7.0 All other Implications**

- 7.1 There are no wider implications for this report.

## **8.0 Schedule of background papers**

- 8.1 There are no background papers for this report.

## **9.0 Appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix 1: Updated Terms of Reference for Corporate Parenting Board



**Updated Terms of Reference Corporate Parenting Board**

**1.0 Role of the Board**

- 1.1 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe our collective responsibility to care for and support our children and young people in care.
- 1.2 All staff and elected Councillors are therefore defined as “corporate parents” and have a duty to be responsible for the welfare and protection of these children and young people.

**2.0 The Purpose of the Board**

- 2.1 To provide clear political direction in terms of Corporate Parenting.
- 2.2 To ensure all Councillors, City of Wolverhampton Staff and City of Wolverhampton Council Service Groups are aware of and are fulfilling their duties as corporate parents.
- 2.3 To be committed to highlighting and improving the welfare of children and young people in the care and their carers.
- 2.4 To show drive, passion, and determination to improve and promote the aspirations of children and young people in care.
- 2.5 To promote the achievements of children and young people in care and to take part in and acknowledge celebration events to highlight these.
- 2.6 To set objectives and to closely monitor and evaluate the work undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board.
- 2.7 To receive regular reports from the Children and Young People’s Service Group, other internal Service Groups, and external partners to inform the board of the quality, level, and availability of services for children and young people in care.
- 2.8 To undertake regular Councillor visits to children’s homes within the city.
- 2.9 To highlight and promote the Council based work placements and apprenticeship programmes for Care Experienced young people.
- 2.10 To ensure that the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people in care are considered in the decision-making process and the delivery, development, and assessment of services.
- 2.11 To invite Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers to attend the Corporate Parenting Board on a regular basis as support and as experts by experience.

- 2.12 To meet with appropriate government inspectors as required, for their input in overall inspections of Children's Services, for Annual Performance Assessments (APA) and individual inspections of fostering/adoption and children's homes.
- 2.13 To report to Cabinet or other Boards as required through the appropriate channels.

### **3.0 Membership and Quorum**

- 3.1 The Membership of the Board will consist of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children and Young People and up to nine Members on political proportionality. Membership and Chair arrangements of Corporate Parenting Board are agreed at each Annual General Meeting of the Council.
- 3.2 The Chair is the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children and Young People.
- 3.3 The Vice Chair will be appointed from the membership and agreed at the Annual General Meeting of the Council.
- 3.4 The quorum for Corporate Parenting Board is three Councillors including the Chair or Vice Chair.
- 3.5 The board will also consist of the following officer roles: Executive Director of Families, Deputy Director for Children's Social Care, Head of Service for Children and Young People in Care and the Corporate Parenting Officer.
- 3.6 The board will have direct representation from at least two Foster Carers who will be invited as experts by experience.

### **4.0 Frequency**

- 4.1 The Board meets on a bi-monthly (every other month) basis to consider matters which affect children and young people in care.

### **5.0 Access to information**

- 5.1 The Board will be recorded and communicated as follows:
- 5.2 All agendas and supplementary paperwork will be published online in accordance with legislation on the Council's public-facing website by the nominated Democratic Services Officer.
- 5.3 Full meetings of Corporate Parenting Board will be conducted in public unless confidential information is to be disclosed. Reports that are of a confidential nature (i.e., containing exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972) will be restricted from public access and discussed following exclusion of press and public

- 5.4 The Democratic Services Officer will record the minutes and decisions of the Corporate Parenting Board and publish to the Council's public-facing website.
- 5.5 Exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 will be restricted from public access.
- 5.6 Meetings of Corporate Parenting Board are currently held virtually and streamed live via the public-facing Council website. Streaming ceases during exclusion of the press and public.

## **6.0 Review**

- 6.1 These Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis at the beginning of each municipal year. The last review was 25 November 2021.

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<b>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</b>	<b>Corporate Parenting Board</b> <b>7 July 2022</b>
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<b>Report title</b>	Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan 2022-2023	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Beverley Momenabadi Children and Young People	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Emma Bennett, Executive Director of Families	
<b>Originating service</b>	Children and Young People in Care	
<b>Accountable employee</b>	Hannah Finch	Corporate Parenting Officer
	Tel	01902 550621
	Email	Hannah.Finch@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report has been considered by</b>	Children's Social Care Leadership Team	05 May 2022 Meeting

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**Recommendation for decision:**

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to:

1. Approve the Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan 2022-2023.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present for comment, review and feedback an outline of the suggested activities for the Corporate Parenting Board for the coming municipal year. The Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan 2022-2023 aims to set a clear direction for the board to allow it to fulfil its duties in relation to Corporate Parenting.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The board meets on a bi-monthly basis and as such requires a new work plan to be considered for the 2022-2023 municipal year for the board to continue to be effective.

## **3.0 Options**

### **Option 1- Do nothing**

- 3.1 The board will work without the direction of a work plan for the 2022-2023 municipal year.

### **Option 2- approve the Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan**

- 3.2 The board are recommended to approve Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan 2022-2023, which will continue to ensure the integrity and effectiveness of the board's decisions and actions while making sure all required reports are scheduled for the forthcoming meetings of this board. This is the recommended option.

## **4.0 Financial implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications for this report.  
[JG/03052022/C]

## **5.0 Legal implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications for this report.  
[SB/28042022/G]

## **6.0 Equalities implications**

- 6.1 There are no equalities implications for this report.

## **7.0 All other Implications**

- 7.1 There are no wider implications for this report.

## **8.0 Schedule of background papers**

- 8.1 There are no background papers for this report.

## **9.0 Appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix 1: Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan 2022-2023

Date of Corporate Parenting Board Meeting	Date of Children and Young People in Care Managers' Meeting	Date of Children in Care Council (CiCC)	Agenda Items	Invitees
07/07/2022	22/06/2022	08/06/2022	Updated Terms of Reference for Corporate Parenting Board  Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan 2022 – 2023  Outcome of Ofsted inspection of Children's Services  Supported Accommodation Annual Report  Adoption Annual Report	Hannah Finch  Hannah Finch  Alison Hinds  Julia Tompson  Mark Tobin / Lynn Noble
22/09/2022	31/08/2022	31/08/2022	Annual Health Report  Fostering Annual Report  Independent Reviewing Officer	Fiona Brennan  Lisa Whelan  Sonia Mahay
24/11/2022	09/11/2022	09/11/2022	Virtual School Report  Missing Children and Young People in Care Report  CLIC (Care Leavers Forum)  Care Leavers Local Offer  Sufficiency Strategy	Darren Martindale  Laura Wood  Andrew Scragg  Sam Grainger  Steven Larking

<b>Date of Corporate Parenting Board Meeting</b>	<b>Date of Children and Young People in Care Managers' Meeting</b>	<b>Date of Children in Care Council (CiCC)</b>	<b>Agenda Items</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
12/01/2023	21/12/2022	07/12/2022	CiCC (Children in Care Council)  CiCC Annual Survey Update  Care Leavers' Week Update  Care Leaver Annual Survey Update	Anton Wright  Anton Wright  Sam Grainger  Sam Grainger
23/03/2023	01/03/2023	15/02/2023	Education, Employment and Training (EET) Update  Foster Carers' Engagement	Helen Woodvine/Laura Wood  Esther Douglas



# Outcome of Ofsted Inspection

Inspection of Local Authority Childrens Service

21 March – 1 April 2022

Report Published: 18 May 2022

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Agenda Item No: 8

Presenters:

**Emma Bennett**

Executive Director for  
Families

**Alison Hinds**

Deputy Director , Children's Social Care



# Children's Social Care Services

Ofsted rated Good

## Judgement and Grades: Ofsted inspection of Children's Services 18 May 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/find-ofsted-inspection-report>

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Good

## Ofsted Recognition of our Journey of Improvement:

- Services for children and families in the City of Wolverhampton needing help and protection have improved and are now good.
- There is some outstanding practice in relation to care leavers.
- Services for children in care have been sustained.
- Since the previous inspection in 2017, senior leaders have led a relentless drive to improve services, which has led to innovative social work practice. This work continues, underpinned by senior leaders' determination to keep improving the experiences and outcomes for all children in the city.

## Summary of Findings:

- A strength-based practice model is supporting social workers to make good decisions for children, which enables the majority of children to receive the right help at the right time.
- This is underpinned by a strong corporate and political commitment through additional financial investment, which allows for the development of innovative projects that make a positive difference for children.

## Summary of Findings continued:

- The COVID-19 pandemic has not prevented the development of services and has enhanced relationships with partners.
- Children increasingly receive interventions through an embedded early help offer, which has reduced the number of children requiring statutory services.
- A mostly stable permanent workforce, along with manageable caseloads, enables positive relationships to be built with children and families.
- Several successful projects, such as Power2 and the House Project, have had a positive impact on children , diverting them away from risks of exploitation and supporting them to live independently

## What Needs to Improve:

- The arrangements for tracking and monitoring children who are missing from education.
- The recording of return home interviews to identify wider patterns and trends.
- The virtual school should improve the quality of PEP's and address the persistent absence for some children in care.
- The virtual school needs to ensure that children in care receive career advice earlier so they can make better informed decisions about their futures.
- The quality of information provided to 16 and 17 year old homeless children about their rights and entitlements including to become looked after.

## Recognition of innovative, good and improved practice: The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection

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- MASH24 has effective systems for accepting and processing information to ensure accurate identification of risks to children and adults
- Children benefit from comprehensive early help assessments,
- Children at risk of exploitation in Wolverhampton are benefiting from effective, prompt and careful consideration of their risks and needs and receive high-quality, intensive support to successfully reduce risk
- Children's assessments are analytical and effective in identifying risks and needs and management oversight of assessments is strong
- Children benefit from effective planning
- Social workers visit children frequently and build trusting relationships
- Disabled children have social workers who understand their needs well



## **Recognition of innovative ,good and improved practice: Experience and progress and children in care and care leavers**

- When children do come into care, they benefit from effective social work practice, supported by constructive management oversight and a clear focus on early permanence planning
- Children benefit from timely applications to the family court. Assessments, statements and care plans are of a good quality.
- Social workers spend meaningful time with children and build positive relationships. Creative direct work with children enables them to understand their experiences
- Children are supported and encouraged to attend their reviews. Their voices help inform their plans, which helps them progress with their independence and aspirations.
- Achieving permanence is a priority
- Children in care who are preparing for independence receive effective support to move on to independence
- Most children in care live in foster homes. Placement stability for children is strong. Children live with carers who understand their needs and promote their health and well-being

## Experience and progress of children in care and care leavers continued:

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- Care leavers benefit from high-quality services that make them feel valued and listened to. They experience positive and trusting relationships with tenacious and highly dedicated personal advisers (PAs). Young people consistently told inspectors that their PAs are significant people in their lives, that their YPAs don't give up on them and that they could not have succeeded without them
- Young people in custody receive an excellent service through the Always Hope project
- Young people are introduced to their YPA at the age of 15 years and nine months, enabling the development of strong relationships
- The care leavers independent collective and the Children in Care Council are a force for change and are fully integrated into commissioning, tendering, strategic overview, the corporate parenting board and interviews for all social work posts at all levels.

## Experience and progress of children in care and Care leavers continued:

- Pathway plans are regularly updated. They include reference to the local offer to ensure that young people understand the support and entitlements available. PAs prioritise young people's culture and identity when understanding their experiences and worries, to bolster resilience and challenge discrimination. PWP's are written to, and in collaboration with, young people, with clear objectives and measures of success
- Most young people are engaged in education, employment or training (EET). This is against a backdrop of poverty, high local unemployment and the COVID-19 pandemic
- The housing offer and associated commissioning is an area of significant strength in Wolverhampton. In partnership with local providers, care leavers have a range of housing options, from carefully scrutinised supported accommodation and emergency options through to independent living

## **The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families:**

- Leaders at all levels have continued to drive forward improvements, which has resulted in the delivery of consistently good-quality services that meet the needs of children and families.
- Senior leaders show determination and insight into how they use learning to constantly challenge themselves and improve services. At a strategic and corporate level, children's needs are prioritised.  
An aspirational transformation programme, supported by substantial financial investment, has been embedded and has improved services and practice. This is having a tangible impact on improving the experiences for vulnerable children and families.
- Creative projects are now established services and are effective in supporting children and families at the right time. These include: the innovative MASH24; the multi-agency exploitation hub and Power2 team, helping to support and divert children away from being exploited; and the House Project, which is highly effective in supporting young people to successfully live independently
- Staff consistently described feeling valued and well supported by managers and senior leaders, including during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families continued|:

- Leaders and managers continue to encourage the strength- and relationship-based restorative social work model and, as a consequence, there has been a significant reduction in the number of children requiring statutory interventions
- Senior leaders have been relentless in engaging partners effectively, which has resulted in strong and effective strategic partnerships
- Children, families and workers benefit from leaders who are committed to coproduction and who incorporate their views when developing services. The Children in Care Council is routinely engaged in shaping new services
- Elected members are committed to and prioritise the needs of vulnerable children in the city
- Senior leaders know themselves very well and endeavour to meet the needs of children and families through high-quality effective services. They have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the service, which has led to a culture that is open to challenge and learning

## Next steps:

- Action plan to progress recommendations to be submitted to Ofsted by 26 August 2022.
- Progression of actions to be monitored by Children's Social Care Leadership team and CYP Scrutiny
- Presentation to Cabinet 15 June 2022 and Full Council 20 July 2022 detailing positive outcome of inspection
- Thank you event planned for all involved in Ofsted, SEND and YOT inspections

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# Inspection of City of Wolverhampton local authority children's services

**Inspection dates:** 28 March to 1 April 2022

**Lead inspector:** Andy Waugh, Her Majesty's Inspector

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Good

Services for children and families in the City of Wolverhampton needing help and protection have improved and are now good. There is some outstanding practice in relation to care leavers and overall services for children in care have been sustained. Since the previous inspection in 2017, senior leaders have led a relentless drive to improve services, which has led to innovative social work practice. This work continues, underpinned by senior leaders' determination to keep improving the experiences and outcomes for all children in the city.

A strength-based practice model is supporting social workers to make good decisions for children, which enables the majority of children to receive the right help at the right time. This is underpinned by a strong corporate and political commitment through additional financial investment, which allows for the development of innovative projects that make a positive difference for children.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has presented the local authority with challenges and pressures, it has not prevented the development of services and the enhancement of relationships with partners. Children increasingly receive interventions through an embedded early help offer, which has reduced the number of children requiring statutory services. A mostly stable permanent workforce, along with manageable caseloads, enables positive relationships to be built with children and families. Several successful projects, such as Power2 and the House Project, have had a

positive impact on children, diverting them away from the risks of exploitation and providing them with support to live independently.

### **What needs to improve?**

- The arrangements for tracking and monitoring children who are missing from education.
- The recording of return home interviews to identify wider patterns and trends.
- The virtual school should improve the quality of PEP's and address the persistent absence for some children in care.
- The virtual school needs to ensure that children in care receive career advice earlier so they can make better informed decisions about their futures.
- The quality of information provided to 16- and 17-year-old homeless children about their rights and entitlements including to become looked after.

### **The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection: good**

1. Children receive the right help at the right time. The multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH24), which is a combined MASH and emergency duty team, provides a strong effective service that applies thresholds consistently well and directs families to the appropriate service in a timely way, including out of hours. MASH24 has effective systems for accepting and processing information to ensure accurate identification of risks to children and adults.
2. Managers have oversight at the point of receiving the contact, and the information is risk rated, with guidance for next steps. Partners share information in a timely way, which enables social workers to analyse all the information and make appropriate recommendations for future actions. Identity, including culture, race and how identity applies to presenting concerns, is routinely considered. Overall, management oversight is consistently recorded, with the correct thresholds applied. Children's needs are understood and signposted to early help services when appropriate. However, the gaining of parental consent or the rationale for overriding of consent are not consistently recorded.
3. Children benefit from comprehensive early help assessments, using family history to understand needs. However, analysis in assessments is not strongly focused on identifying risks and past concerns to inform planning. The views of children and parents are evident throughout the assessments. Early help plans and actions identify outcomes to help support children and parents to improve relationships and reduce risks. The number of early help interventions continues to increase, with a small minority needing to be stepped up to social care, indicative of successful interventions and outcomes for children at the early help level.

4. Effective domestic abuse triage arrangements are taking place daily. Initial screening is completed by experienced police officers to ensure that children at the appropriate level of risk are referred through to MASH24.
5. Children at risk of exploitation in Wolverhampton are benefiting from effective, prompt and careful consideration of their risks and needs through the daily exploitation meeting held in the Exploitation Hub. Child-exploitation screening tools are completed and appropriately used by partners alongside multi-agency referral forms. Children receive a swift response and are signposted to targeted support services or escalated to multi-agency child exploitation meetings when higher risk is identified.
6. Where concerns escalate for children, strategy meetings are held in a timely way. They are well attended by partners, with information shared leading to informed decision-making. The outcomes of strategy meetings are well recorded, with a clear rationale for next steps and actions that address risks to children.
7. Children's assessments are analytical and effective in identifying risks and needs. Managers provide strong oversight when assessments are allocated. They are focused on reviewing risks and provide clear direction about expectations and timescales. This means that children receive support at the right time. Assessments are updated to re-evaluate current needs and risks.
8. Children benefit from effective planning that addresses increased needs and reduces risks. Most plans include children's wishes and feelings. In the majority of child-protection and child-in-need plans, there is evidence of effective partnership working that contributes to the reduction of risk or needs for children.
9. Social workers visit children frequently in line with children's plans, to build trusting relationships and further understand their experiences. Through creative direct work, social workers gain insight into children's interests and abilities, and have a good understanding of their wishes and feelings.
10. In most cases, child-protection plans are effective at reducing risks for children. Plans are restorative and focused on the impact of actions on improving children's circumstances. The majority of children's plans are progressed in a timely way. Actions are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) and consistently reviewed and updated at well-attended monthly core group meetings.
11. The pre-proceedings process of the Public Law Outline is used effectively when risks to children are not diminishing. Pre-proceedings work is supported by skilled in-house Parent Assessment Manual assessors, promptly commissioned cognitive assessments and family group conferences, resulting in a significant number of children remaining with their family. Where concerns continue to escalate, early permanence is achieved for most children through timely care proceedings that have been fully informed by the completion of strong assessments in pre-proceedings.
12. Children at risk of exploitation and their families receive high-quality, intensive support to successfully reduce risk. Those children at higher risk of exploitation

and wider vulnerabilities receive high-quality support packages through the Power2 service and associated resources. This is helping Wolverhampton children to remain safely with their families. Performance-management arrangements are strong, supporting mapping activity and hotspot identification, and the tracking of individual children's circumstances.

13. Disabled children have social workers who understand their needs well and work creatively to seek their views using a variety of tools to support children's communication needs. Where disabled children are at risk of harm, risks and needs are well understood and responded to effectively.
14. Children who are 16 or 17 years old and present as homeless are supported to find alternative suitable accommodation. However, they are not routinely and explicitly made aware of their rights and entitlements, meaning that they may not be fully aware of their options when making choices and decisions about their accommodation and care arrangements.
15. Where children are missing from education, the local authority carries out a range of checks to try to locate missing pupils as quickly as possible. However, on occasions, for some children who cannot be located, managers do not consistently take additional steps to inform key agencies such as Border Force or the police. In response to this shortfall, senior managers have strengthened the service by committing dedicated resources to ensure that risks to missing children are fully explored.
16. The number of children who are electively home educated has risen significantly. Managers have strong oversight of any parental decision for a pupil to become electively home educated, to assure themselves of the welfare of the child.

## **The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers: good**

17. Children in Wolverhampton are supported to remain with their families when it is safe to do so. Strong edge of care services, such as the Star Project and Power2, complete effective work with children and families that makes a positive difference. As a consequence, children only come into care when it is in their best interests.
18. When children do come into care, they benefit from effective social work practice, supported by constructive management oversight and a clear focus on early permanence planning. This includes unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, who are supported into accommodation that, wherever possible, meets their religious and cultural needs.
19. Children benefit from timely applications to the family court. Assessments, statements and care plans are of a good quality. Inspectors were informed by both the judiciary and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service of the positive impact of timely care proceedings and the consistently good-quality work that has resulted in the right outcomes for children.

20. Social workers spend meaningful time with children and build positive relationships. Creative direct work with children enables them to understand their experiences. Children are helped to understand their own journeys into and through care, through sensitive later-life letters and life-story work.
21. Where children are moving to adoptive placements, introductions are carefully planned and supported by inventive practice tools to help to prepare children. Children's records are sensitively written and include their views, strengths and abilities. Should they wish to read their records at a later stage, children would understand why decisions were made about their care.
22. Children's assessments are regularly updated to reflect changes in circumstances. Care plans are reviewed, with additional quality assurance checks by independent reviewing officers (IROs) to monitor children's progress. Clear plans for permanence are formed as early as possible, including foster to adopt placements and other family members.
23. Children are supported and encouraged to attend their reviews. Their voices help inform their plans, which helps them progress with their independence and aspirations. IROs write reviews using accessible and child-friendly language, with some recommendations that are underpinned by research to enhance understanding of the reasoning and importance of achieving actions.
24. Achieving permanence is a priority for both children and young people staying put with their former foster carers. Children benefit from planning for their futures at the earliest opportunity, to enable a smooth and supportive transition to adulthood.
25. Children in care who are preparing for independence receive effective support to move on to independence from foster care and children's homes. The House Project enables children to gain independence skills, including financial and practical support, through a team approach to testing the young person's capacity before moving on to permanent accommodation.
26. Most children in care live in foster homes. Placement stability for children is strong. Children live with carers who understand their needs and promote their health and well-being, with referrals to specialist services when needed. Children's emotional well-being is supported through access to therapy and by specialist support for foster carers.
27. Foster carers feel welcomed and supported by the local authority. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the recruitment and support of foster carers have been sustained. The capacity of foster carers means there continues to be more children living with in-house carers than with independent foster carers. However, there are shortfalls in the quality of some foster carer assessments, the timeliness of foster carer reviews and the formal supervision of staff. Senior leaders cannot be assured that these placements continue to be suitable for children where this is the case. There are firm plans to tackle the drift in this area of the service.

28. Children's academic needs are mostly met by the virtual school. The use of pupil premiums is successful in enhancing children's education. Children who live outside Wolverhampton receive support equal to that of their peers. Children's attendance at school is generally good but the persistent rate of absence of some children is too high, meaning some children are missing significant parts of their education. The quality of personal education plans is variable, with managers not having a concerted grip on the overall quality assurance. The number of care leavers aged 19 to 21 years who are not in education, employment or training has recovered since the initial stages of the pandemic to be in line with the national average. The virtual school is becoming more aspirational in seeking to close the gap between children in care and their peers.
29. The majority of children in care who are at risk of harm as a result of going missing and exploitation receive a proactive response from social workers based on their individual assessments of risk. Return home interviews are mostly timely and comprehensive. They clearly capture information about children's safety and worries, to enable review and analysis of whether risk is reducing or escalating. Social workers frequently visit children after missing-from-care episodes to understand their experiences and to help children avoid attempts to exploit them. However, when children refuse a return home interview, it is not always evident why this is and what efforts have been made to understand and help reduce risks to individual children and to gather wider intelligence and learning.
30. Adoption is considered carefully and promptly for all children who are unable to return home to their birth families and who need a permanent alternative. Senior managers, through regular oversight, assure themselves that children receive an effective service from the regional adoption agency, Adoption@Heart.
31. A very small number of vulnerable disabled children are currently placed in homes registered only with the Care Quality Commission, with plans for the placements to be registered with Ofsted. Senior managers have oversight of these placements and there is increased visiting by social workers. Persistent efforts are made to find registered settings. A small number of older (post-16) children are placed in unregulated settings, which are meeting their needs.
32. Care leavers benefit from high-quality services that make them feel valued and listened to. They experience positive and trusting relationships with tenacious and highly dedicated personal advisers (PAs). Young people consistently told inspectors that their PAs are significant people in their lives, that their PAs don't give up on them and that they could not have succeeded without them, referring to them as 'like parents to me'. Young people in custody receive an excellent service through the Always Hope project, which draws on the probation and prison service to support young people returning to the community.
33. Young people are introduced to their PA at the age of 15 years and nine months, enabling the development of strong relationships. A seamless transition provides effective support into adulthood. The commitment of PAs to these young people has involved supporting them with appointments, and social events at weekends and evenings and responding to both positive developments and crises in young people's lives with equal vigour and attention.

34. Care leavers are consulted on the strategic direction of the local authority, and they are pivotal to key decisions. The care leavers independent collective and the Children in Care Council are a force for change and are fully integrated into commissioning, tendering, strategic overview, the corporate parenting board and interviews for all social work posts at all levels.
35. Young people's successes are celebrated at an individual level, for example through PAs and monthly children in care and care leavers awards, and at an annual I Award celebration of achievement covering children in care. Young people told inspectors that cultural activities, including the arts, music and self-identified interests, could be better funded and more encouraged by the local authority.
36. The majority of care leavers are living in safe accommodation that meets their needs. However, for the small number of care leavers who are in unsuitable accommodation, PAs increase their visiting patterns and managers have increased oversight to proactively support young people to find more permanent living arrangements.
37. The housing offer and associated commissioning is an area of significant strength in Wolverhampton. In partnership with local providers, care leavers have a range of housing options, from carefully scrutinised supported accommodation and emergency options through to independent living. The Wolverhampton iteration of the Housing Project has successfully supported three cohorts of young people into secure tenancies through intensive, and then tapered, support. This is repeated if young people are deemed not ready, rather than it being seen as a failure.
38. Young people's pathway plans (PWPs) are regularly updated when needs and circumstances change. They include multi-agency input and reference to the local offer to ensure that young people understand the support and entitlements available. PAs prioritise young people's culture and identity when understanding their experiences and worries, to bolster resilience and challenge discrimination. PWPs are written to, and in collaboration with, young people, with clear objectives and measures of success. For young people who are unaccompanied asylum seekers, a specific part of the PWP addresses legal status and contingencies if legal immigration status is denied. Safeguarding risks are considered and addressed well, including when care leavers are parents.
39. Most young people are engaged in education, employment or training (EET). This is against a backdrop of poverty, high local unemployment and the COVID-19 pandemic. The EET figures for 16- to 17-year-olds and 18- to 21-year-olds have either stabilised or improved. Young people are supported by dedicated EET advisers with strong local connections, guaranteed interviews for the 10 apprenticeships in the local authority, a thorough preparation for independence programme and repeated attempts by PAs to find the right opportunities for young people that suit their skills and abilities.

## **The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families: outstanding**

40. Since the inspection in 2017, leaders at all levels have continued to drive forward improvements, which has resulted in the delivery of consistently good-quality services that meet the needs of children and families. Senior leaders show determination and insight into how they use learning to constantly challenge themselves and improve services. At a strategic and corporate level, children's needs are prioritised. An aspirational transformation programme, supported by substantial financial investment, has been embedded and has improved services and practice. This is having a tangible impact on improving the experiences for vulnerable children and families. Creative projects are now established services and are effective in supporting children and families at the right time. These include: the innovative MASH24, which provides a consistent service every day of the year; the multi-agency exploitation hub and Power2 team, helping to support and divert children away from being exploited; and the House Project, which is highly effective in supporting young people to successfully live independently.
41. The unforeseen challenges and pressures brought on by the pandemic did not prevent the local authority from ensuring that the needs of vulnerable children continued to be prioritised. Leaders and managers across the service continued to encourage the strength- and relationship-based restorative social work model and, as a consequence, there has been a significant reduction in the number of children requiring statutory interventions.
42. Senior leaders have been relentless in engaging partners effectively, which has resulted in strong and effective strategic partnerships that have taken forward integrated approaches to MASH24 and early help intervention through the Strengthening Families hubs. The social workers in schools project has demonstrated a commitment to working closely with education partners, to support children before statutory services are required. In addition, leaders have responded to the findings of the recent inspection of the local area services for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), with virtual school leaders working with SEND colleagues to ensure better oversight of education and health plans, to minimise the impact on looked after children.
43. Children, families and workers benefit from leaders who are committed to co-production and who incorporate their views when developing services. A corporate parenting panel challenges the views of leaders and enables the voices of children to be heard. Elected members are committed to and prioritise the needs of vulnerable children in the city. The Children in Care Council is routinely engaged in shaping new services, for example the improved supported accommodation provision.
44. Senior leaders know themselves very well and endeavour to meet the needs of children and families through high-quality effective services. They have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the service, which has led to a culture that is open to challenge and learning. This has led to



a high level of consistent, strong social work practice being embedded across most service areas. During the inspection, leaders responded quickly to areas of the service that need improving, for example pledging dedicated staff to improve the service to children who are missing from education.

45. The local authority commissioning hub has responded creatively to the current and future demands on placement sufficiency. Detached youth work, outreach, an emotional well-being service and Power2 key workers have been commissioned to protect children and prevent care from being necessary, in a bid to shift resources to where families will benefit the most.
46. Children in care and care leavers benefit from proactive joint commissioning with partners that has provided a wide range of internal and external housing options. A detailed and comprehensive strategy is underpinned by meaningful consultation with young people and is shared with regional colleagues to drive improvements beyond the borders of the local authority.
47. Regular performance and quality assurance reports and meetings focus on compliance but also on what the findings indicate about the experiences of children. This informs an approach to audit priorities and practice improvement. Quality assurance arrangements are strong, with a comprehensive approach to learning from audits. There are a range of effective processes. Learning is shared with staff through 'learning' bulletins and regular practice weeks. However, the evidence of follow up on actions and 'closing the loop' on individual cases is not yet consistent.
48. Staff consistently described feeling valued and well supported by managers and senior leaders, including during the COVID-19 pandemic. Social workers are positive about the range and quality of training opportunities that help them develop their practice. Those staff who are newer and those with less experience are positive about their induction and the higher levels of training and support they receive from managers at all levels of the service.
49. Overall, stability of staffing is a strength and is a positive factor in the ability to maintain high-quality services for children. Nevertheless, managers remain committed to the recruitment and retention of staff. The local authority promotes its various pathways for current staff to become qualified, along with 'growing your own' through an effective assessed and supported year in employment programme. Where appropriate, unqualified staff are encouraged to consider a social work qualification, through an apprenticeship model. As a result, the majority of children benefit from stable and strong relationships with their social workers, who have manageable caseloads that enable them to strive to carry out quality work with children to improve children's circumstances and experiences.

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<b>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</b>	<b>Corporate Parenting Board</b> <b>7 July 2022</b>
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<b>Report title</b>	Supported Accommodation Annual Report 2021 - 2022	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Beverley Momenabadi Children and Young People	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Emma Bennett, Executive Director of Families	
<b>Originating service</b>	Children and Young People in Care	
<b>Accountable employee</b>	Julia Tompson	Supported Accommodation Manager
	Tel	Telephone number
	Email	Email address
<b>Report has been considered by</b>	Children's Senior Leadership Team	09 June 2022

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**Recommendation for action:**

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to:

1. Receive the Supported Accommodation Annual Report.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present for review the outline of the support provided to Wolverhampton Care Leavers by The Supported Accommodation Team across the 2021 - 2022 year.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 This is the first annual report of the Supported Accommodation Team, which is situated within the Children and Young People in Care Service. Since 2015, the service has been offering accommodation to young people in care and leaving care via it's well-established Housing Support Service. It has been operating as a multi-disciplinary team since 2019, with the introduction of the Wolverhampton House Project, then an internal Supported Lodgings Service in 2020 and the final addition of the Mentoring Service in April 2021. The focus of the team is to provide a high level of efficient and effective accommodation and support options to young people in care and leaving care.
- 2.2 The report will highlight the successes and outcomes achieved by the service, also explain the challenges we have faced, our lessons learned and our plan to develop and improve our offer to the young people of Wolverhampton.
- 2.3 The report provides details of the performance and progress of the Supported Accommodation Team (Section 7.0) across the 2021-2022 year.

## **3.0 Financial implications**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications for this report.  
[JG/07072022/A]

## **4.0 Legal implications**

- 4.1 There are no legal implications for this report  
[SB/24062022/E]

## **5.0 Equalities implications**

- 5.1 There are no equalities implications for this report.

## **6.0 All other Implications**

- 6.1 There are no other implications for this report.

## **7.0 Appendices**

- 7.1 Appendix 1: Supported Accommodation Annual Report 2021 - 2022.

# Children and Young People in Care Supported Accommodation Team



## Annual Report 2021/2022

**Author: Julia Tompson, Supported Accommodation Manager  
Children and Young People in Care**

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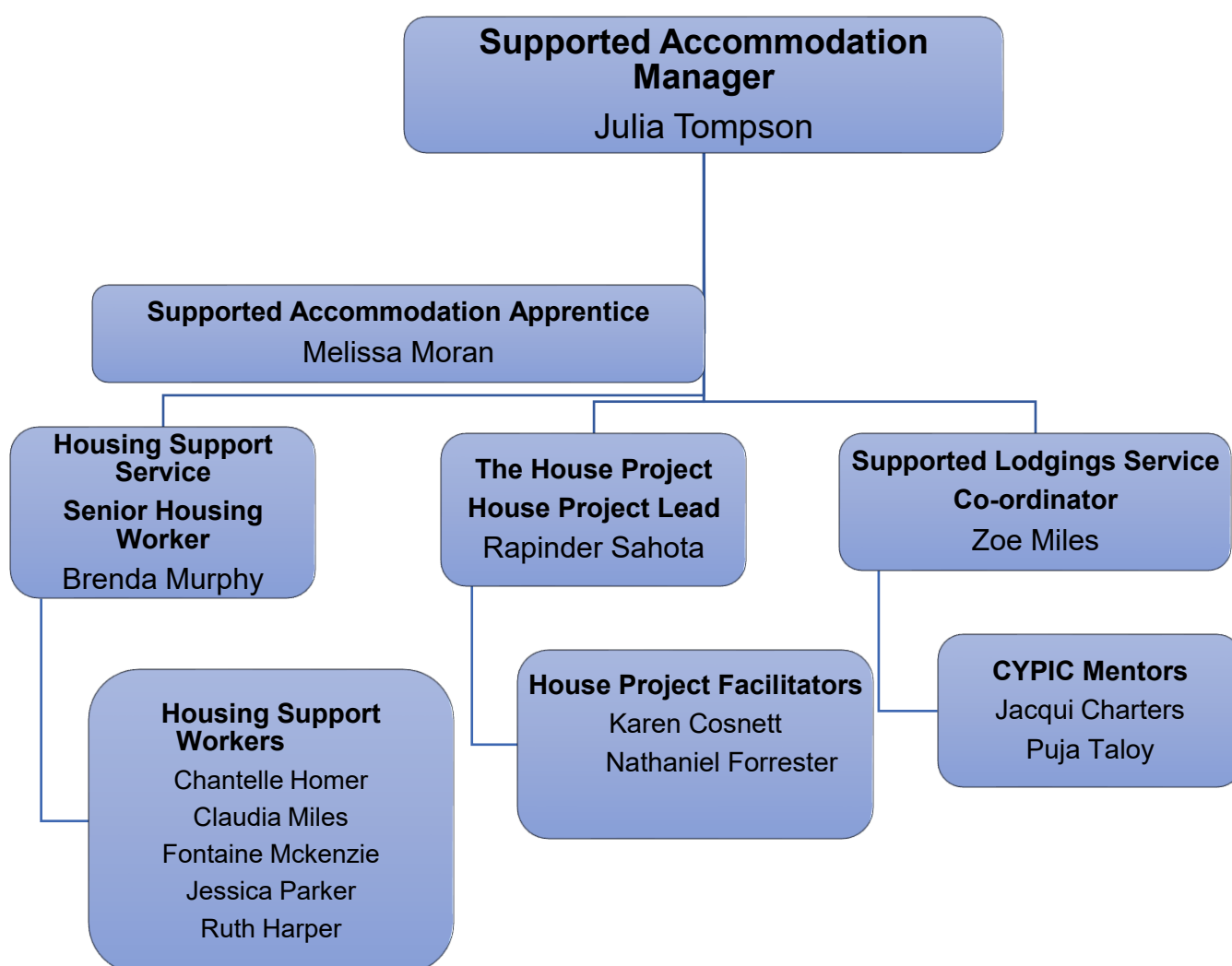
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the first annual report of the Supported Accommodation Team, which is situated within the Children and Young People in Care Service. Since 2015, the service has been offering accommodation to young people in care and leaving care via its well-established Housing Support Service. It has been operating as a multi-disciplinary team since 2019, with the introduction of the Wolverhampton House Project, then an internal Supported Lodgings Service in 2020 and the final addition of the Mentoring Service in April 2021. The focus of the team is to provide a high level of efficient and effective accommodation and support options to young people in care and leaving care.

This report will highlight the successes and outcomes achieved by the service, also explain the challenges we have faced, our lessons learned and our plan to develop and improve our offer to the young people of Wolverhampton.

### CURRENT TEAM STRUCTURE:



The team is managed by the Supported Accommodation Manager, Julia Tompson, who is responsible for the strategic management of all the services, with the aim of

providing a choice of high-quality supported accommodation provisions for Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers. In addition, support is provided to Children and Young People in Care Social Work teams and Reach Care Leaving Team to offer support and guidance with identifying appropriate move on accommodation for young people leaving care as they transition into independence.

## 2.0 HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT SERVICE

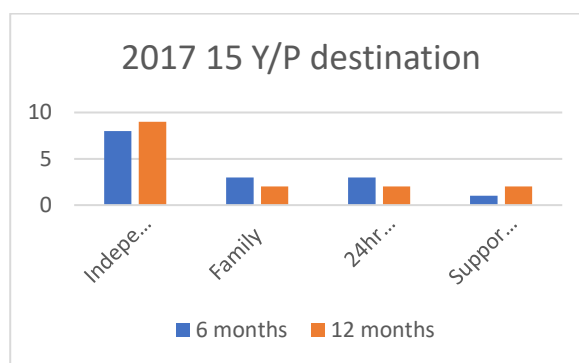
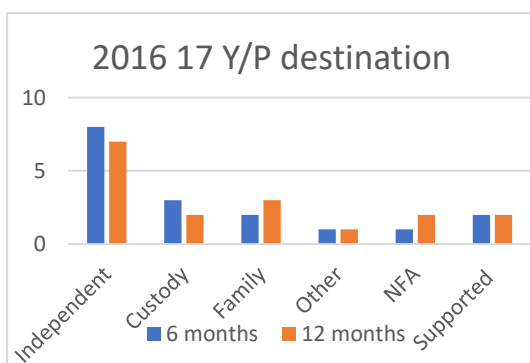
The Housing Support Service is well established and has been operating since April 2013 and following transfer from an external provision, NACRO, to being managed internally. In 2014, Cabinet approved the expansion of the service by increasing the current stock to 10 units from Wolverhampton Homes stock. In 2016, further approval was granted to increase the property stock levels to 33 flats.

The service provides accommodation and housing related support to young people leaving care and supports and guides them to move on to independent living. The 33 flats were allocated to 2 emergency crash pads, 2 training flats and 29 studio or one bedroomed properties situated around the city.

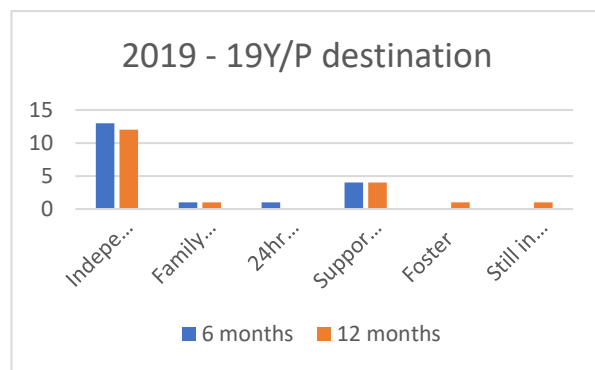
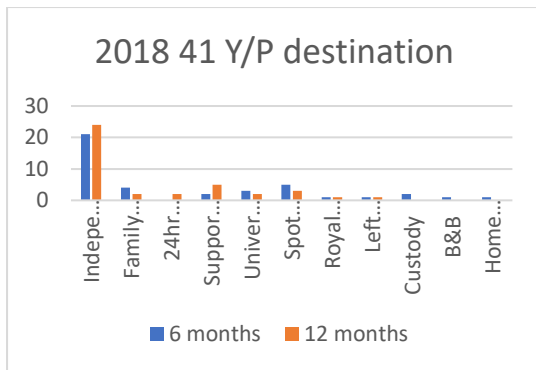
The housing related support is delivered in response to the young person’s needs working towards independent living and offers up to 30 hours support per week. Each young person has an individualised support plan, broken down into specific areas where support is offered to develop the young person’s independence skills, understanding, and developing their ability to manage their own tenancy and live in a community. In addition, the service operates between the hours of 8:00am to 8:00pm on a Monday through to Friday, and between 10:00am and 4:00pm on Saturday and Sunday. The primary aim of the service is to enable young people to move on into independence when they reach 18 or are suitably ready. If the young person can evidence their ability to manage their property and their tenancy, they have the choice to either take on the tenancy with Wolverhampton Homes or access the housing waiting list as a priority and bid for a property in an area of their choice within the City.

### 2.1 Young People Accessing the Service

Since 2013, the service has seen 158 young people leaving care access the service and has a success rate for 2019/2020 of 92% young people who have moved on from the service into independence are still maintaining their tenancy for more than 6 months. The tables below demonstrates where young people have moved onto when leaving the service.







We are unable to provide full data for young who have moved into independence during 2020 -2021, particularly around the 12-month period. This is primarily due to the delay in move-on caused by Covid, the closure of the housing waiting list during the pandemic and having 5 UASC's in our service with no leave to remain which inhibits their ability to access social housing. Of the 13 young people accessing the Housing Support service in 2020/2021, 7 have moved into independence and are still maintaining their tenancy 6 months on. Young People have received, in total 4207 hours of support during 21/22.

The service continues to operate with 100% of young people in the service having an individualised support plan, with a designated Housing Support Worker allocated to them through their stay in the service, with 100% of reviews taking place every month, where appropriate and 100% of Health and Safety checks being carried out.

## 2.2 Challenges

The service has had its challenges throughout 2019 – 2021, with a reduction in the number of young people accessing the service. The primary factors for this are the introduction of the House Project, Supported Lodgings service and the drive to reduce the numbers of young people in care. This was also hampered by a change in the structure of CYPIC Service which now operates 3 Social Work teams working with children 0-17, whereas previously there was a dedicated 14 plus Reach team. This means additional time has needed to be invested for all 3 Social Work Teams to understand of the Accommodation options and whether it would be an appropriate move on option. The team have visited Social Work team meetings to create a further awareness of the service, and our aim is for this to be a regular occurrence now home working is a long-term feature. In addition, previously the Supported Accommodation Manager would meet with the Social Work in the former Reach Team on a 3-monthly basis but with the number of Social Workers reaching 31 FTE posts, this is an unachievable task. Drop-in sessions were created to enable SW to attend and seek support/advice, but only 1 Social Work attended.

The Supported Accommodation Manager and Senior Housing Worker have implemented a monthly meeting to look at 16 plus young people and ascertain whether the Housing Support Service is the most suitable path for them. We are working extremely hard to create a greater awareness of the service and to encourage young people to be referred. This has seen an increase in young people accessing the service again.

The data table below show the numbers of young people accessing the Housing Support Service:

Year	Total no. young people
04/2016– 03/2017	17
04/2017– 03/2018	15
04/2018– 03/2019	41
04/2019– 03/2020	19
04/2020– 03/2021	13
04/2021– 03/2022	15
04/2022	5 planned

### 2.3 Current Situation

Due to the challenges, described above and to ensure cost efficiencies, accessing replacement properties when a young person moved on or took the tenancy on has been delayed ensuring that properties were not left vacant. We have only replaced and as when needed, which has subsequently seen a reduction in rent charges.

In addition, when the service was increased, it was estimated that 10 Housing Support Workers would be required to maximise the 30 hours support offered, should a young person need it, we have naturally reduced staffing numbers to 6 Housing Support Worker posts to correlate this. Savings has been made by transferring Housing Support Worker posts into other roles within the team – funding an addition House Project Facilitator Post, part funding a Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator post and creating a Supported Accommodation Apprentice. We currently have budget for 1.5 vacant Housing Support Worker posts which will be filled when capacity increases. At present, we have 26 flats in operation, and we are awaiting 3 further flats from Wolverhampton Homes.

#### 2.3.1 Donations

The service has this year received donations from services/foster carers to enable young people to have a greater start in their journey to independence:

- WV Living – a Wolverhampton-based house builder has gifted show home furniture from 3 of its properties to the young people in both the Housing Support Service and the House Project Team, this furniture has been greatly welcomed by the young people.
- Foster carers raised a significant amount of money and donated this to the young people in the Housing Support Service – it is our intention to offer fun days out for our young people with a Bowling evening already planned.

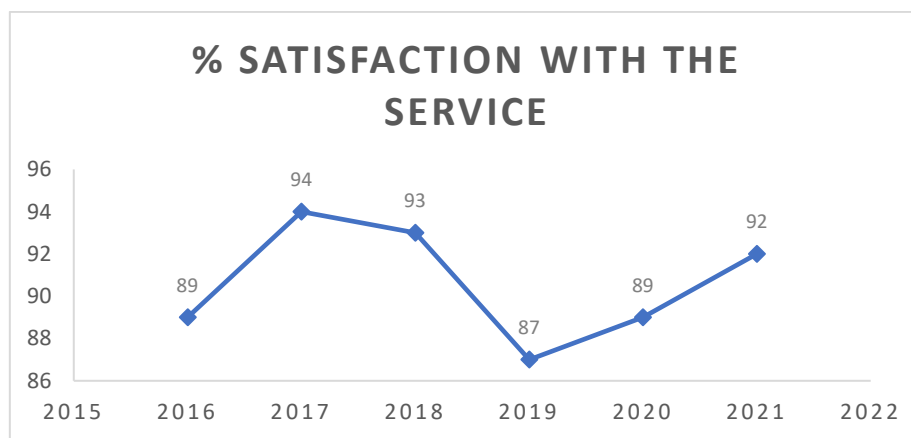
#### 2.3.2 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

The service has seen an increase in UASCs accessing accommodation, we currently have 9 in the flats. Since 2016, we have supported 25 unaccompanied young people, we have had 10 that have transitioned into independent living and 1 that went to university. The 9 remaining young people, are being supported intensely to become part of the community, access local amenities appropriate to their culture and educational provisions.

It is important to note that whilst these young people are awaiting their leave to remain, they are unable to access Social Housing, and this can often mean that they remain in the service for longer than their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## 2.4 Service reviews

Service improvement reviews are carried out within 3 months of the young person moving into their property and an exit review is carried out when they progress into independence, both are demonstrating positive experiences and evidence how young people are supported to develop their independence skills. Analysis of the surveys shows that the majority of young people are happy with the service they receive. The data chart below shows a relatively consistent percentage of satisfaction. There is a dip in 2019, but this can be explained; we had one young person who was not coping, under significant peer pressure, and needed to move to a more supported provision with 24-hour support where he could keep himself safe. Whilst he did move across to another provision, he felt he was not supported of his desire to stay in the flat and responded to his exit review negatively.



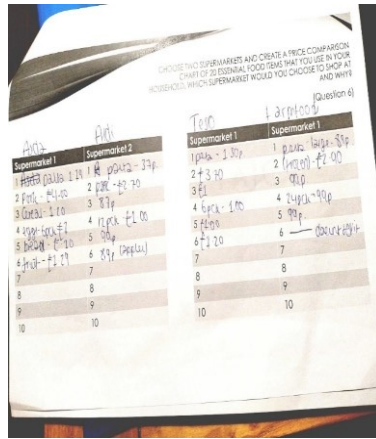
Snapshot comments from some of the surveys are:

*“My housing support worker has helped me through everything- living in my own property, and anything that I have struggled with, she has always been there to help me”*

*“the guidance and support I have received has helped me grow my independence skills along the way from first moving into the property”*

## 2.5 ASDAN

As part of the young person’s individualised support plan, the primary focus is preparation for independence and incorporated within this is the ASDAN short course, Living Independently. Young people are supported to achieve this accreditation during their stay. It requires them to complete 6 individual units, evidencing the skills that they have learned. The evidence can be in the form of written pieces of work or photographic evidence of them completing the tasks: (see examples photos below)

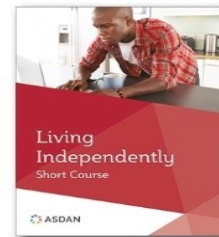


Since April 2021, 10 young people have completed their ASDAN and have received their certificates to evidence that they have completed their accreditation.

## Living Independently

The ASDAN Living Independently Short Course is focused on helping looked-after children make a successful transition from school education to adulthood.

Developed in collaboration with local authorities, the course supports the cross-government strategy to transform support for young people leaving care – ‘Keep on caring: supporting young people from care to independence.’



Find out more: [www.asdan.org.uk/living-independently](http://www.asdan.org.uk/living-independently)

### 2.6 Move on to independence

In addition to supporting young people in the service to move on, the Senior Housing Worker within the team, works closely with the Young People’s Team at Wolverhampton Homes and meets weekly to ensure that all Care Leavers applications for move on are monitored and progressed through the process efficiently. We also support young people with the first week’s rent to compliment the 3-week subsidy from Wolverhampton Homes as part of the local offer.

### 2.7 Training flat



The Supported Accommodation training flats enable young people in care, leaving care and care leavers an opportunity to experience independence and be supported in acquiring the skills to live independently. This opportunity is also offered to young people in Staying Put placements to provide them with the same experiences. For some young people, living more independently offers them freedom, privacy and control, but they are often unprepared for the responsibility, loneliness and isolation this entails.



There are two training flats available and currently young people can access them for day sessions and anything between 3 days and up to two weeks and they provide young people with:

- The opportunity to experience the challenges of independent living, and the potential tenancy failure, without this having an impact on future housing options
- A move from a more supportive arrangement but can also offer an opportunity for a young person who has failed to live more independently and requires more support or has a missing skill set.
- Replication of reality by giving young people an allowance that will mirror what they would receive if in low paid employment, at college or on benefits.
- Self-contained accommodation.
- A reflection of the standards, location and facilities of the accommodation they are likely to move onto, e.g., the white goods, floor coverings, decoration the young person can expect.

A Housing Support Worker provides support throughout their stay, supporting them and enabling them to develop their independence skills. Stays in the training flats are not supervised 24 hours a day, seven days a week as this enables the young person to experience staying alone so they can be supported in developing strategies in managing that. Whilst a young person stays in the training flat their ability to manage living more independently is assessed by the Supported Accommodation Team and is shared with the young person and their Social Worker/Young Persons Advisor. This assessment enables their social worker to be more informed and supports the pathway planning process and informs the decision about their next accommodation option.

Data below detailing number of young people accessing the training flat over the last 12 months. It shows which provision young people are in when they access the training flats. This provision has enabled young people, such as those in Staying Put or Supported Accommodation the opportunity to establish whether they are ready to take the next step before making their application for independence.



	18+	House project	Staying put	Offered flat	Moved in to CYPIC flat	Supported Accommodation	UASC	TOTAL
<b>2021/22</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>59</b>

To enable young people to develop their skills further, the team have worked closely with the House Project Team and enabled young people in the project to access stays in the training flat to develop and have their independence skills assessed. This has proved beneficial and an integral part of the young people moving into independence, particular during the pandemic.

## 2.8 Future Plans

It has been our aspirations for a couple of years now to implement group sessions for the young people in the flats, to enable them to have peer support, and to complete elements of their ASDAN portfolios. This ambition has been hampered due to the pandemic, but as the hub is now available for group sessions, the team will be arranging some drop in/information sessions with the young people to look at how we can make group sessions work for them.

As identified earlier, we need to further promote the service and create a greater understanding amongst Social Work Teams about the Housing Support Service. We aim to hold quarterly information sessions and also attend team meetings regularly to ensure that social workers can support young people to make informed choices about their future. This will enable new Social Workers to have a greater understanding of what services we can offer to young people and assist them in care planning.

It has been identified that accurate data can be collated via our Eclipse system, enabling Business Intelligence to create a scorecard/analysis of Housing Support visits/number of hours spent with young people. A request has been submitted for this piece of work to be carried out; to date we have no completion date, but all the necessary information has been passed through to the team. As we are always aspiring to improve, we aim to benchmark our service with other local authorities, to see where we can learn from our partners and develop our offer further. It is our intention to undertake this benchmarking during April – June 2022.

## 3.0 THE WOLVERHAMPTON HOUSE PROJECT



The Wolverhampton House Project has now been operational since October 2019 following the endorsement by Cabinet in July 2019. This is in partnership with the National House Project (NHP), Wolverhampton is one of 13 House Projects across the United Kingdom working under the NHP framework. In January 2021, The House Project Steering Group members agreed that the end date for formal project management/support could be brought forward to April 2021. This decision was based on the success of cohort 1, and at the time with the progress of cohort 2, and the present Covid restrictions and the likelihood that progress to cohort 3 might be delayed

beyond the original project end date of July 2021. This decision was also taken in consultation with the National House Project and external partner Reconomy who both agreed that Wolverhampton's local House Project (HP) was sufficiently mature to succeed as part of business-as-usual activity.

In March 2021, we won the CYP NOW award for the Leaving Care



### 3.1 Current situation

Despite the challenges faced with Covid 19, the young people progressed extremely well, both cohorts 1 and 2 completed their House Project Journey and moved into independence or appropriate accommodation. Whilst not actively engaged regularly with the HP staff, the young people will communicate and access support if they need it. The graduation ceremony for these 16 young people was held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022, where all the young people and relevant adults/professionals in their lives came together to celebrate their success on the HP journey. Cohort 3 began in October 2021, and 11 young people completed their application forms. However, despite regular one to one visits and encouragement from HP staff, 5 young people no longer wanted to engage in the project.

In February 2022, the young people from cohort 3 attended their residential. This forms part of their HP Journey and is one of the modules on their AQA accreditation. Following a successful pitch, they headed off to Derbyshire for two days.

Just some of their adventures -



The ethos of the House Project is around promoting a sense of community and working in a group is instrumental in this. The group has recently been able to access the Co-production hub, which has seen their relationships develop and this along with the residential has had a significant impact on the young people’s confidence and friendships. In addition, they are working extremely well together and are achieving positive results on their House Project Journey.

### 3.2 Successes

Young people have thrived on the House Project, and we are extremely proud of their successes:

- a) 21 young people have now been part of the House Project, with 12 now living independently, a further 4 are now living in accommodation suitable to their needs, and we have 2 in our current cohort planning to move into their own properties.
- b) The co-production hub has opened which has enabled us to deliver group face to face sessions and enable our young people to develop communities of support with their peers.
- c) The House Project was shortlisted for the MJ Awards for the Best Social Housing Initiative in May 2022.
- d) Winner of Children and Young People Now Award 2021 in the Care Leaver category for the impact of the House Project on improved outcomes for young people.

We have 11 young people continuing to maintain their tenancies, some for more than 12 months, a further 5 are in accommodation that is appropriate to their needs. In addition, we have one young person who is maintaining an apprenticeship.

The table below shows each cohort, what type of accommodation they moved into and how they are maintaining their tenancy.

Cohort No.	No of young people	Independence	Supported	Living with parent	Time in tenancy (average)	In EET
1	10	7	1	2	17 months	4
2	6	5	1		8 months	4
3	6					

Our young people in Cohorts 1 and 2 have finally been able to “graduate” from the House Project, celebrating in style with their peers and HP community. A celebration evening was held, where all young people, HP staff and partners came together to celebrate their achievements.





Two young people are currently active members of the Care Leavers National Movement which is made up of care leavers from Local House Projects across the country. They use their skills as expert advisers to develop House Projects and improve outcomes for all young people leaving care. In addition, one of our young people is also Vice Chair of Wolverhampton's Care Leavers Independence Collective and uses the skills she has developed on the House Project to ensure that our Care Leavers receive the best services and support.

### 3.2 Benefits

#### **Benefits outlined in the 2021 Closure Report and 2022 annual review updates are:-**

- a) Reduction in high-cost residential and semi-independent spot purchased placement durations – This has been 'Partially Achieved' in as much as: -
  - ✓ Reduction in placement costs over the 3 years has not achieved the forecasted saving the project had envisaged
  - ✓ The overall CYPIC placement costs (for all CYPIC) have not reduced due to the number of children and young people presenting with complex high-level needs in the younger age groups
  - ✓ The timeliness of portfolio completion and young people's readiness to move within the planned 6-month period necessary to achieve cost savings.
  
- b) Young people leaving care involvement in project decision making processes – Yes, this benefit was wholly met and has been evidenced by young people participation in local HP Steering Group, Local Care Leaver groups, and National HP groups

- c) More flexibility in identification and allocation of housing for Care Leavers – Yes, this benefit has been wholly met and is evidenced by the active engagement of Wolverhampton Homes with the young people involved in the HP project
- d) Personal development of Care Leavers (Initially cohort 1 followed by cohorts 2,3,4 etc) - Yes, this benefit has been wholly met and is evidenced by the readiness of the young people involved in the project to sustain their own tenancy and build and sustain personal relationships with other members of the project and the wider House Project community.
- e) Development of a peer support network within the community for care leavers (Initially cohort 1 then cohorts 2,3,4 etc) - Yes, this benefit has been wholly met and is evidenced by participation in 'Drop-Ins', Community Events, Residentials etc.

### 3.4 Future plans

We are actively looking to start identifying Cohort 4, and as identified with the Housing Support Service, we need to further promote the service and create a greater understanding amongst Social Work Teams about the House Project. We have already scheduled time at CYPIC Social Work team meetings to encourage and support Social Workers to identify young people who may benefit from the House Project. We are also aiming to hold face to face information sessions with young people to make them aware of what the House Project has to offer.

We are still awaiting Implementation of the new Outcomes and Learning Framework Reporting System by the National House Project. The system has been in draft since September 2021. The NHP are currently refining g a reporting function to enable both NHP and LHP to run live reports.

### 3.5 Feedback from young people:

I feel as though this is a golden opportunity to learn new skills and become independent as well as taking responsibility.

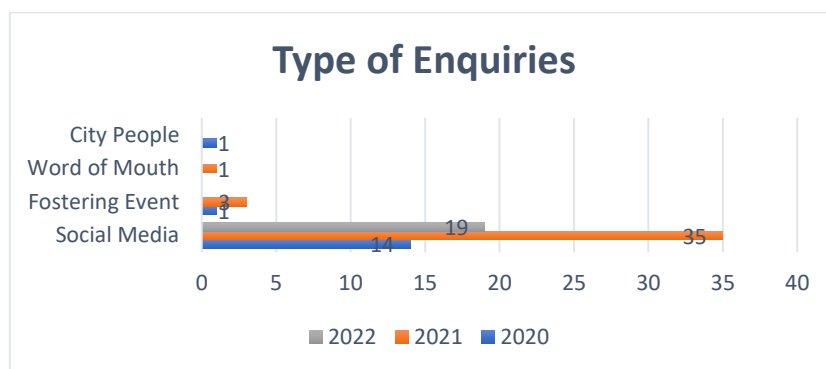
I feel I have achieved confidence as well as being an important part of the team and take part in all the activities.

I think it's a really good idea to allow young people to build an environment they are comfortable with, especially when they're at a stage where they are basically alone.

### 4.0 SUPPORTED LODGINGS

The Supported Lodgings Service was implemented in July 2020 with the aim of recruiting internal supported lodgings providers (hosts) to provide supported accommodation for vulnerable young people who are not ready to live independently. The service provides homes for Children and Young People in Care and care leavers aged between 16 and 21 years. The intention is to meet the needs of young people,

with the focus being on living an independent life but having some support available when needed. It is aimed at young people with low level needs e.g. young people who are responsible, have independence skills and have no major challenges. Young people accessing the service have reached a level of maturity to manage in a setting where they are expected to mainly take responsibility for themselves and will not require the intensity of support provided in foster care or residential care. The implementation of this and subsequent recruitment of hosts was challenging particularly due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Understandably, people were apprehensive and reluctant to open their home during an extremely anxious time. Marketing was carried out via City People, social media, fostering events and through the fostering portal. Whilst we have had significant numbers of interest (see table below) there has been little following through once information was provided to them



From the total number of enquiries, only 7 progressed through to the assessment process. 5 of which were approved, 1 declined to agree to the DBS process, and one is currently undergoing assessment. More recently, one host has withdrawn fully due to personal circumstances, and one is on hold due to a family bereavement. All enquiries are followed up by a telephone call discussion and then a clear information booklet is sent out to inform their decision further. There is a clear area of work identified here in relation to reasons why interest is not progressing and with effect from April 2022, whilst most cited that this was not something they wanted to pursue, further research will be carried out into the reasons why there is no progression.

#### 4.1 Referrals

Referrals to the service have been sporadic and require regular prompting via team meetings or via email by the Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator.

Year	Hosts approved	Hosts closed	Referrals	Placed	Closed	Reason for closure
2020	2		9	2	7	No longer needed
2021	3	1	8	2	6	No longer needed
2022		1	1	1		

We will continue to promote the service and identify young people whose needs are appropriate to accessing the supported lodgings service via monthly reviews of young people's care plans.

## **4.2 Supported Lodgings Supervisions**

Supervision is offered monthly with the focus being on supporting the host and ensuring that the young person is feeling supported in their placement. These have been carried out both virtually and face to face during the pandemic. A management oversight exercise of these supervisions has found them to be timely and effective.

## **4.3 Reviews**

As part of our commitment to ensure that this new service is effective and that we are supporting our hosts effectively, we carry out reviews within 3 months of placement and when a young person moves on. Whilst our numbers are low in placements, the surveys evidence that our hosts are satisfied with the support that they are receiving from the service.

## **4.4 Case Study:**

*Norean and Nigel live in a three-bedroom mid terrace house in Willenhall. Norean has 13 years previous experience working in residential care with young people and has also been a foster carer. The couple decided to become hosts for supported lodgings after they had recently helped an ex-foster daughter and her two children move on to independence. Norean and Nigel completed the assessment process and became hosts for Wolverhampton Supported Lodgings service in March 2021.*

*YP, 16, arrived in the UK as an unaccompanied minor. He needed time to settle in a supportive environment, conducive to learning the self-care skills he needed to enable him to move onto independent living accommodation within the community. YP had not previously lived on his own due to his age; his mother passed away when he was around 14 /15 years of age and it was unclear what level of independence he had, if any. Naturally his vulnerability was high, with limited English, creating communication difficulties. He could not read or write and had no familiarity with English culture.*

*When YP was first accommodated in the care of Wolverhampton he was due to be placed in his own independent flat with help, support, and guidance via the Supported Accommodation Team. However, YP became extremely upset and broke down upon arrival, asking to be placed with a family. Acting on YP's request, his social worker made a referral to Supported Lodgings.*

*After introductions were made, YP stated he was happy to live with Norean and Nigel and was placed shortly afterwards. Norean has gone above and beyond her role as a host, supporting YP with his health needs such as Dentist, Doctors and Optician's, taking him to a Kurdish community in Wolverhampton to enable YP to make friends and purchase food. YP also had his hair cut here and whilst talking to the barber discovered that they have a football team. YP has now joined this and attends weekly. Norean has also supported YP's religious beliefs by sourcing out local mosques for YP to attend and educational needs by finding a college to suit YP's ability's and where he can study basic maths and English. His English has improved which helps YP communicate with his hosts. She has also accompanied him on public transport taking him on several bus routes to help him find his way and to ensure he understands payments/stops/locations etc. Norean has also promoted YP's independent living skills such as cooking, cleaning, washing, budgeting, and prompting personal hygiene. YP has also been helping Norean with DIY tasks around the house.*

*YP has now been in placement for nearly 8 months and is now ready to take the next step into more independent accommodation. A plan is in place for him to move across to the Housing Support Service, where he can further develop his independence skills in preparation for adulthood. YP now has the confidence to travel around Wolverhampton and surrounding areas independently, has made new friendship groups, attends college regularly and enjoys playing football.*

#### **4.5 Future Plans**

This service is relatively new to CYPIC and to the team and it has been a learning curve around how we market hosts, whilst we are recording all expressions of interest, and refusals, as advised earlier and with effect from April 2022, further research will be carried out into the reasons why there is no progression.

It has been identified that accurate data can be collated via our Eclipse system, enabling Business Intelligence to create a scorecard/analysis of Supported Lodgings supervisions. A request has been submitted for this piece of work to be carried out; to date we have no completion date, but all the necessary information has been passed through to the team.

#### **5.0 STAYING PUT**

The oversight and management of Staying Put was transferred over to the Supported Accommodation Manager in 2015, and the new policy was implemented enabling young people to remain with their former foster carers up to the age of 21. The policy sets out clear guidance around what the Staying Put offer was to young people and their carers and created a one point of contact, setting our clear guidance around the offer and payments. The City of Wolverhampton have seen a significant increase in Staying Put placements, along with a clear process and guidelines around what the local authority offers. In addition, the implementation of a retainer payment to those placements where a young person has gone to university and has the option to return to their home during vacation times has provided stability to our young people.

#### **4.1 Staying Put Placements**

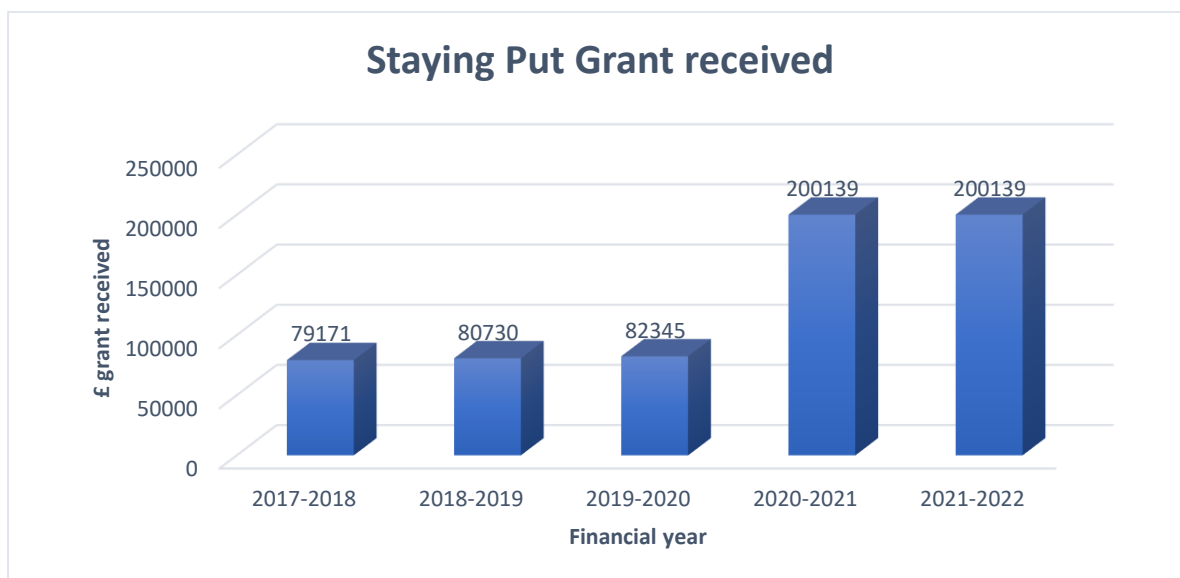
Since 2015, and to present date, there have been a total of 101 Staying Put placements, 65 of which have now closed as the young person has progressed into adulthood. There are currently 33 live Staying Put placements. The table below shows where young people leaving Staying Put placements moved on to:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Independence</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>Stayed post 21</b>	<b>Supported Accommm</b>	<b>Left</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Totals</b>
2016			1	1	1			3
2017	4		1	3				8
2018	2		2		3	1	1	9
2019	5	2	3		1	3		14
2020	7	2	3	3	1	1	1	18
2021	1	3	2	2	1	1		10
2022	1		1	1				3

#### **5.2 Staying Put Grant**

The large increase and success of Staying Put has also seen a significant increase in the grant provided to the local authority by Central Government, which enables financial support to the costs associated with maintaining a 'Staying Put' arrangement.





### 5.3 Staying Put Supervisions

A further review of the policy in 2020, saw the introduction of an offer of supervision and support to all Staying Put providers from the Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator. It was identified that former foster carers would often pull on the support of their previous Supervising Social Worker if challenges arose or they needed advice, so the option of supervision through the Supported Accommodation Team was introduced and offered to all new Staying Put providers. This has proven to be an effective offer which has been taken up by many. As we recognised that the young people in placement had support from their young person’s advisors, we focus our support on our carers and supporting them to support our young people as they transition into adulthood.

Supervision is offered on a bi - monthly basis but is scheduled around the needs and request of the carers; this could also be bi-monthly if appropriate. To date we have 20 Staying Put providers accessing this support. Management oversight of these supervisions is carried out by the Supported Accommodation Manager and found these to be timely and of a good standard.

### 5.4 Future Plans

As with Supported Lodgings, it has been identified that accurate data can be collated via our Eclipse system, enabling Business Intelligence to create a scorecard/analysis of Staying Put supervisions. A request has been submitted for this piece of work to be carried out; to date we have no completion date, but all the necessary information has been passed through to the team.

In addition, we have plans to implement annual and exit reviews with all our carers around the Staying Put offer and the supervision we provide. We are looking to implement this during April 2022.

### 6.0 MENTORING SERVICE

The Children and Young People in Care Mentoring Service was transferred over into the team in April 2021 and is available for all children and young people in care and care leavers, irrespective of their age. The purpose, to build positive, respectful, and

empowering relationships with children and young people in care and care leavers, and to provide support and guidance to achieve their potential during their transition into adulthood. It comprises of two full time mentors.

The mentoring relationship is focused on working with and assisting the child, young person, and care leaver to achieve specified and agreed goals. The mentors aim to provide personal support and encouragement at a decisive or challenging moment in the life of children and young people in care and care leavers. Their main purpose is to work directly with children and young people in care and care leavers on a specific identified area/need. These areas are (but not limited to):

- Building confidence/self esteem
- Developing social skills
- Building positive relationships
- Internet safety
- CSE awareness
- Managing anxieties around the transition to adulthood and support with practical life skills

### 6.1 Referrals

On transfer in April, an interim new policy was devised, providing more specific guidance around the service and how this can be accessed within the Children and Young People in Care Service. There has also been a significant drive in acquiring more referrals to ensure that young people are offered support when it is needed. Since transfer into CYPIC in April 2021, and the push to offer the opportunity of all young people in care the opportunity to have mentoring support there have been 17 new referrals received.

The table below shows the primary factors for referrals, broken down into more specific categories. In most cases, each referral had an additional secondary factor as the reason for the request for mentoring support.

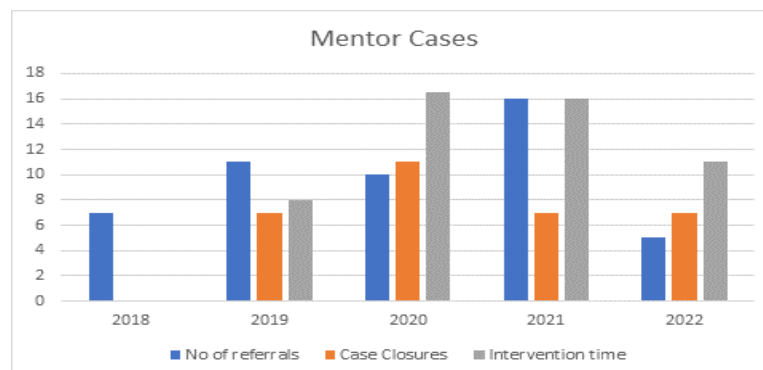
Referral Primary Factor	Secondary factors	Year: 2018	Year: 2019	Year: 2020	Year: 2021	Year 2022
Positive Activities	Engagement Living Skills	1	9	7	13	5
Poor home relationships	Positive Activities				1	
Missing	Behavioural EET engagement	4				
Mental Health	Anxiety Independence			3	1	2
EET	Independence		1			
Exploitation	EET engagement	1				
Behavioural	EET engagement	1				
Anxiety	EET engagement Mental Health		1		1	
<b>Total Referrals</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>

Once allocated, the young person will work with their mentor to devise a plan of support and to agree achievable SMART targets, with a focus on ensuring that the plan doesn't drift. Mentors use a variety of tools, including music, craft play, safety planning to encourage engagement from the young people and to make support sessions successful in ways which meet the needs of the young people. Support visits are generally once a week, with the frequency agreed with the child or young person and their carers. These are facilitated around the needs of the child or young person and to incorporate any educational needs. The Mentors are extremely flexible in their approach and adjust their working patterns to ensure that young people are supported at times that are suitable to them.



## 6.2 Case Closures

Since transfer, the service has been reviewing timescales around work completion and case closures and it has identified that often cases have been left open longer than needed. In addition, young people have moved out of city during the support period with mentors, into high costs placements with therapeutic support included. A review of all cases has been undertaken in March 2022 and closures have been made where support work has been completed or drifted. The table below evidences the number of months cases were open.



Of the 7 cases closed during April to December 2021, 5 were closed due to improvements in the behaviour, increase in engagement in education and missing episodes reduced, showing a success rate of 71%. The other 2 that were closed were



due to non-engagement despite many attempts to support the young person to engage.

### 6.3 Future Plans

There is no doubt that the Mentoring Service is effective and a valuable opportunity of support to our young people. The transfer across into the Supported Accommodation Team has provided an opportunity to review the service and plan to implement improvements whilst continuing to offer the existing service to children and young people in care. In addition, there has been a complete staffing change, which has also provided the opportunity for new eyes to look at how we are operating, streamline the service and ensure that there is a generic pool of resources. In addition, the completion of exit surveys with both the young person and the carer were hit and miss, but the completion of these will be at the forefront of the changes to be implemented. It is crucial that we look to the feedback from our colleagues and our young people to ensure that this service is meeting the needs of those that access the service.

Using the *Mentoring for Looked after Children's Dissemination Manual, Rainer*, we have identified the following areas, to develop/improve:

1. **Young Peoples feedback** – what would they want the service to look like. How will the service ensure young people's feedback informs the development of the service?
2. **Monitoring and evaluation** – how will the effectiveness of the service be ensured and reviewed?
3. **Length of relationships** - how long does this need to be to achieve the objectives of the mentoring intervention?
4. **Target setting** – what are realistic targets for service delivery?

### 7.0 SUMMARY

The Supported Accommodation Team has grown significantly since its conception in 2015, with 3 new services being devised and developed. We are an ever-evolving service who put the needs of young people at the heart of the services we provide. The pandemic brought its challenges, but all services continued to operate as normal, completing face to face visits throughout, ensuring that young people were supported in their transition to adulthood. All services within the team have made progress with many developments and successful outcomes as outlined above. The team benefits from experienced, young person-centred staff who are willing to adapt, go that extra mile and ensure young people are supported appropriately in their journey. The team also understands the importance of working with partners, both internally and externally to ensure that we offer the best possible support to young people to enable them to achieve their full potential.

### Key Achievements

- A success rate of 92% of young people who have moved on from the Housing Support Service into independence are still maintaining their tenancy for more than 6 months.
- Young people in the Housing Support Service have received in total 4207 hours of support during 2021/22.
- During 2021/22 10 young people in the Housing Support Service have successfully completed their ASDAN short course, Living Independently

- 59 young people have had “taster sessions” in our training flats during 2021/2022.
- The House Project became business as usual, offering more placement choice for young people leaving care.
- Group sessions were implemented, young people attended their HP residential, and our young people were finally able to celebrate their success at their Graduation Ceremony
- A continued marketing campaign to recruit hosts, which saw 5 hosts approved during the pandemic.
- We have 33 live Staying Put placements.
- The implementation of Staying Put supervisions, offering more support to our former foster carers.
- Mentoring service referrals have increased, 23 in 2021/22, evidencing the need to provide young people with this opportunity.

### **Key Objectives 2022/23**

- To maintain success rate of above 90% of young people who have moved on from the Housing Support Service into independence are still maintaining their tenancy for more than 6 months.
- To ensure all our internal colleagues are aware of our services and implement regular information sessions, ensuring that young people have greater placement choice and are aware of the services on offer by implementing quarterly accommodation information sessions on the services on offer to young people.
- To implement group sessions for young people accessing the Housing Support Service, to enable a sense of belonging and to develop peer relationships.
- To benchmark and review our current offer within the Housing Support Service, to develop a plan to improve our offer.
- To implement annual reviews for all our Staying Put placements.
- To formulate an improvement plan for our Mentoring Service, ensuring that young people receive an effective, yet efficient service.
- To look at how we can improve our marketing campaign for Supported Lodgings, ensuring we reach the right people.
- To recruit 2 further HOST families
- To continue to support our young people to thrive on their House Project journey by ensuring we reach those at need of it most. We will data capture the following: numbers in future cohorts, attendance levels at group sessions, completion rate of their HP Portfolios and the timescales around moving into independence.
- To work with our SCS and I&P colleagues, capturing business intelligence for management reporting.
- 15 young people to complete their ASDAN short course, Living Independently.
- 15 Staying Put arrangements to be achieved for 2022/23.

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

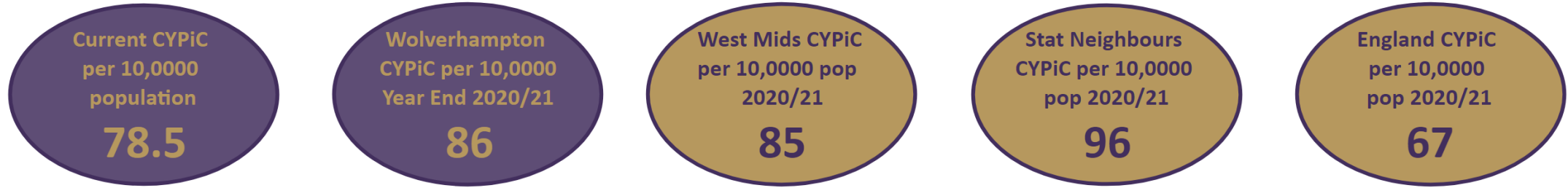
**PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW**

**Data as at:  
30 April 2022**

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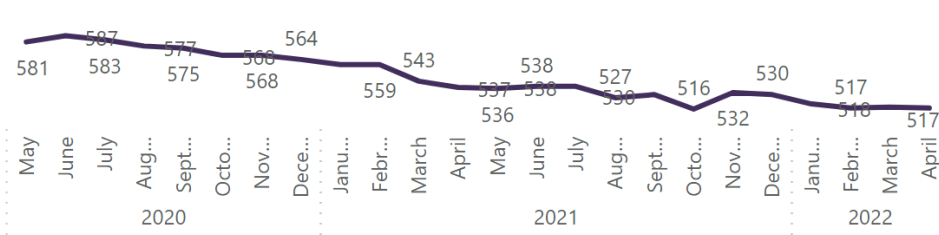
Agenda Item No: 91

## Current CYPiC Profile



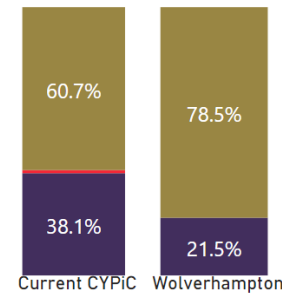
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Number of Children and Young People in Care in Wolverhampton



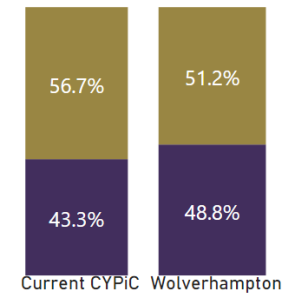
Ethnicity Comparison

- Ethnic Minority...
- Other
- White

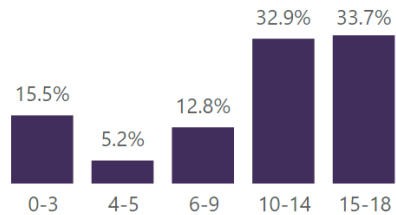


Gender Comparison

- Female
- Male



Age Breakdown

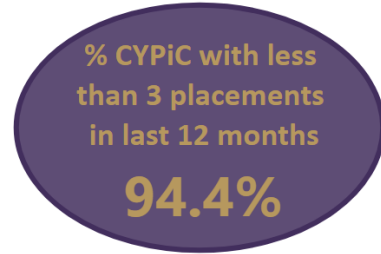


There are 517 children and young people in care in April 2022. The numbers of children entering care has gradually decreased over the last 12 months, however there was a slight increase of those entering the care in November 21 which has since stabilised and continued to decrease. 67% of the children and young people in care are over the age of 10 with 32.9% for ages 10 – 14 and 33.7% aged 15 – 18 years. When comparing Ethnicity there is an over representation of children and young people from an ethnic minority background in the current CYPiC cohort with 38.1% compared to 21.5% for the Wolverhampton population. There is also a slight over representation of males in the current CYPiC cohort when compared to the overall Wolverhampton population.

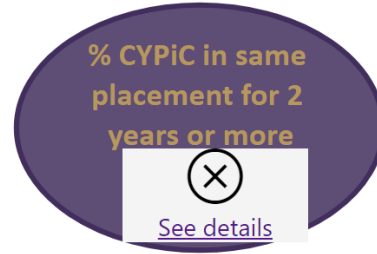
## CYPiC Placement Analysis



2018/19 = 13%, 2019/20 = 10%, 2020/21 = 11%

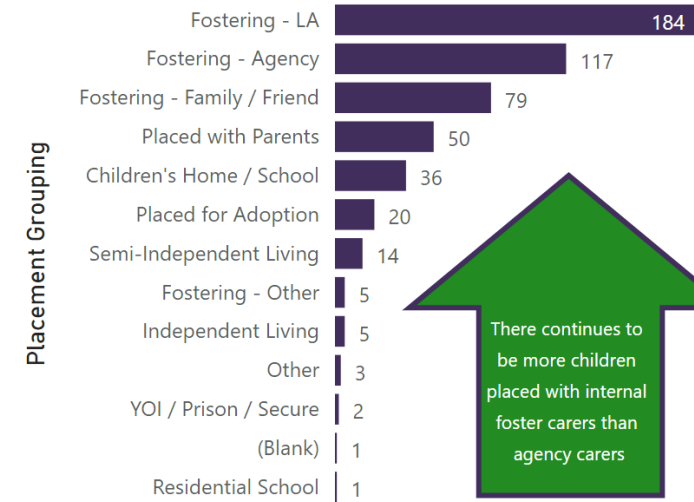


2018/19 = 86%, 2019/20 = 91%, 2020/21 = 94%



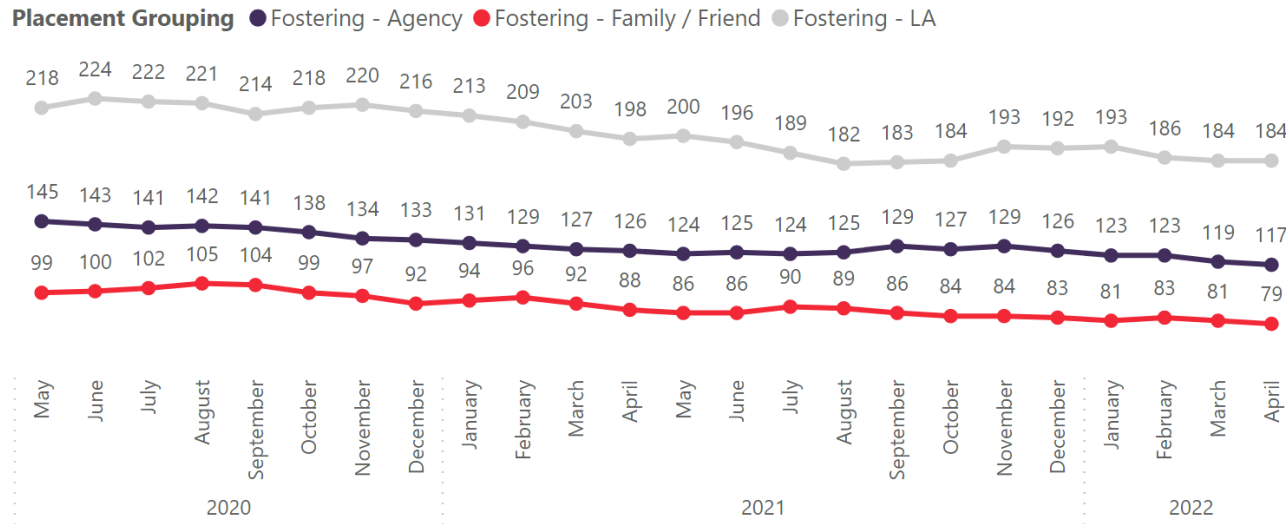
2018/19 = 73%, 2019/20 = 74%, 2020/21 = 78%

### Current CYPiC by Placement Type

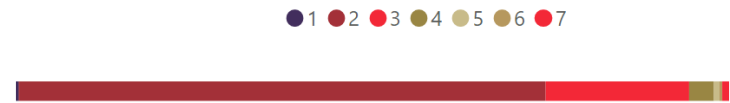


There continues to be more children placed with internal foster carers than agency carers

### Number of placements for current CYPiC in past 12 months



### Number of placements for current CYPiC in past 12 months



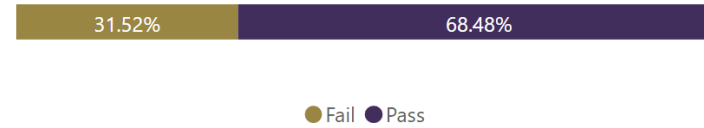
The percentage of CYPiC with fewer than 3 placements during the last 2 years has remained consistent, when compared to the latest published year end data, at 94%. There has been an increase of 1% from the end of the 20/21 year for CYPiC placed more than 20 miles from home and the percentage of CYPiC in the same placement for 2 years or more has dropped by 6.3%.

## Assessments, Reviews, Visits



### CYPiC with an up to date assessment

Where a new assessment has been completed within 12 months



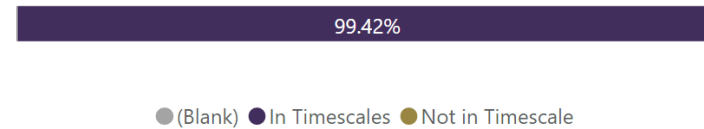
2020/21 = 80.66%  
2019/20 = 77.82%

● Fail ● Pass



### CYPiC with an up to date review

Where the First Review is within 20 working days. Second review within 3 months. Third and subsequent reviews every 6 months



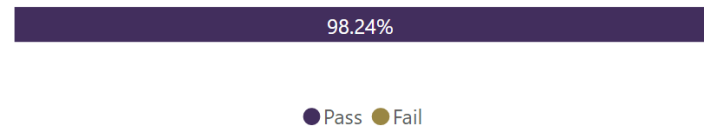
2020/21 = 98.9%  
2019/20 = 96.93%

● (Blank) ● In Timescales ● Not in Timescale



### CYPiC who participated in the review

The proportion of CYPiC reviews where the child was present or contributed by other means in their review



2020/21 = 99.3%  
2019/20 = 93.8%

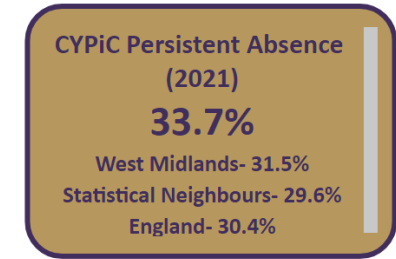
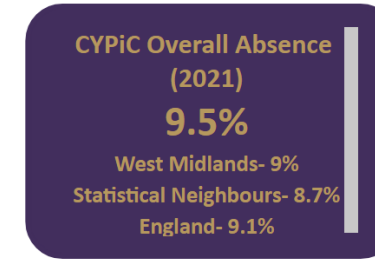
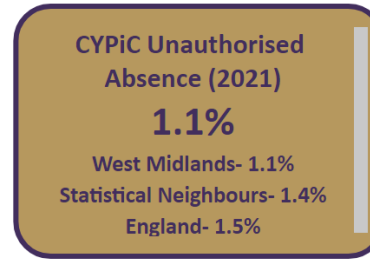
● Pass ● Fail

CYPiC with an up to date assessments is at 68% and reviews continue to stay strong with 99.42% of children recorded as having an up to date review.

CYPiC Review Participation over the last 12 months is at 98.24%.

## Education

KS2 Expected Standard	Maths	Reading	Writing	Reading, Writing and Maths
CYPiC Wolverhampton 2019	47%	50%	58%	42%
Wolverhampton 2019	74%	70%	77%	64%
CYPiC West Midlands 2019	50%	51%	52%	38%
CYPiC Stat Neighbours 2019	54%	49%	52%	38%
CYPiC England 2019	51%	49%	50%	37%
KS4	9-4 Pass in English and Maths	Attainment 8	Progress 8	
CYPiC Wolverhampton 2019	15%	20%	-1%	
Wolverhampton 2019	58%	45%	0%	
CYPiC West Midlands 2019	18%	20%	-1%	
CYPiC Stat Neighbours 2019	18%	20%	-1%	
CYPiC England 2019	18%	19%	-1%	



The 2019 KS2 and KS4 results show that Wolverhampton CYPiC has improved in line with comparator performance. There remains a significant gap between the performance of CYPiC and all Wolverhampton children however small numbers in the cohort can make these measurements volatile. For further information about the education attainment of CYPiC in Wolverhampton please refer to the Virtual School Head teacher annual report.

Attendance data has been updated for 2021. This is taken from latest DfE published data and shows that performance is in line with comparator groups. Wolverhampton are in the upper quartile nationally (best performance) for children and young people in care unauthorised absence.

CYPiC with an up to date PEP performance has decreased in April. Work is ongoing in the service to improve the PEP performance for the year 12 and 13 cohort.



### CYPiC with an up to date PEP

The proportion eligible CYPiC with an up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP)

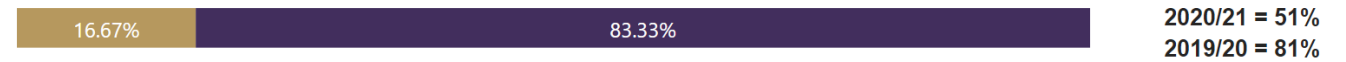
#### PEP's - All Ages



#### PEP's - Early Year's



#### PEP's - Year 12 & 13's



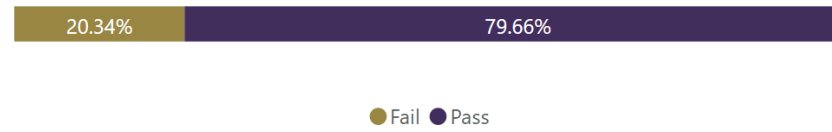
● Fail ● Pass

## Health & Dental - This data is internal CWC data and reflects different timescales to the data provided by health



### CYPiC with an up to date review health check

Where a review health check has been completed within 12 months



2020/21 = 85%  
2019/20 = 92%



### CYPiC with an initial health check

Where a health check has been completed within 20 working days of entering care (rolling 12 months)



2020/21 = 36%  
2019/20 = 27%



### CYPiC with an up to date dental check

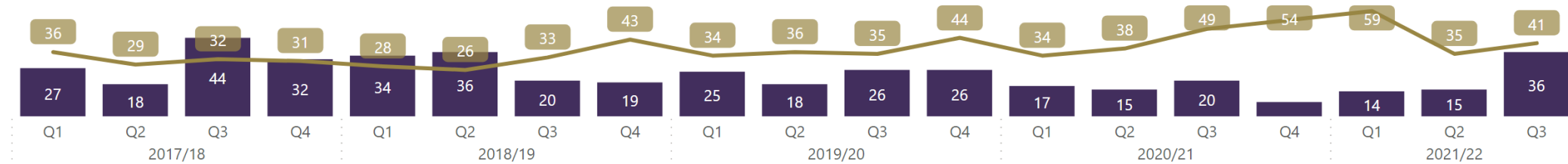
Where a dental check has been completed within 12 months



2020/21 = 45%  
2019/20 = 95%

Care Applications (Source: www.cafcass.gov.uk)

● Number of children subject of Care applications ● Timeliness of care applications (Avg. Duration)



The percentage of dental checks completed has seen an improvement throughout the last year from 49.3% in April 2021 to 82.35% at the end of April 2022. Medical checks which were previously an area of strength had been low previously, partly impacted by recording issues, this remains at 79%% for April. Of the new CYPiC in the past 12 months, 13% had an initial health assessment within the first 20 working days, this remains an area of concern and continues to be flagged as an area of concern in internal performance management meetings. The number of children subject of care applications has seen a significant increase to 36 in 2021/22 Q3, more than double the reported figures for Q1 and Q2.

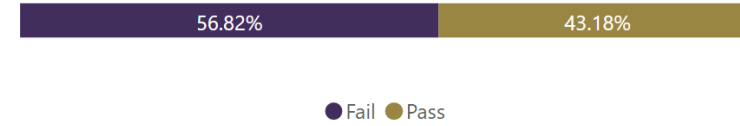


## Adoption



### CYPiC adopted within A1 indicator (428 days)

Average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family

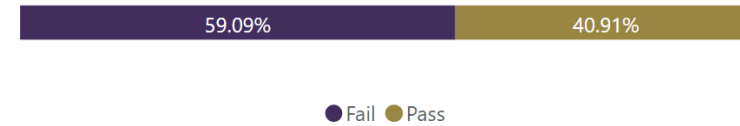


2020/21 = 29%  
2019/20 = 66%  
2018/19 = 58%



### CYPiC adopted within A2 indicator (122 Days)

Average time between receiving court authority to place and finding a match

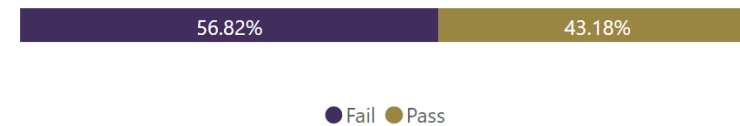


2020/21 = 43%  
2019/20 = 49%  
2018/19 = 67%



### CYPiC adopted within A10 indicator (428 Days)

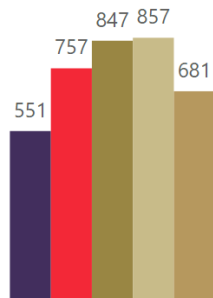
Average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (stopped at point of fostering for foster carers adoptions)



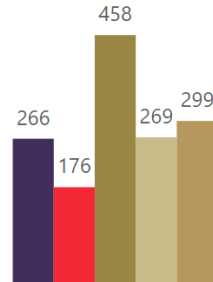
2020/21 = 38%  
2019/20 = 81%  
2018/19 = 80%

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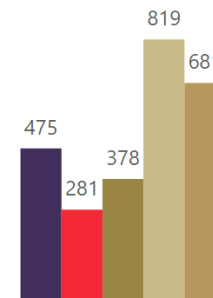
Adoptions - A1 (Avg. Days)



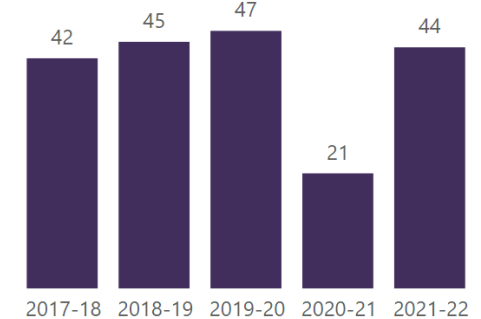
Adoptions - A2 (Avg. Days)



Adoptions - A10 (Avg. Days)



Number of Adoptions



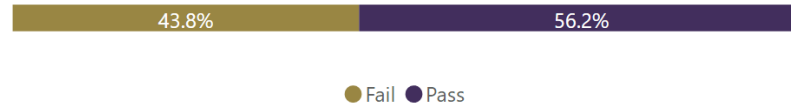
There were 44 adoptions in the 2021/22 year, a significant increase from the 21 adoptions in 2020/21 which was heavily impacted by Covid-19 as court closures caused delays in timeliness, no adoptions recorded YTD for 2022/23.

## Care Leavers



### Care Leavers EET Status

Education, Employment and Training of Care Leavers aged 19-21

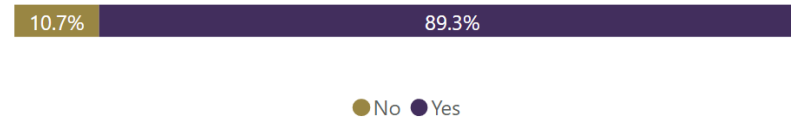


2020/21 Year Out-turn = 46%  
 2020/21 West Midlands = 50%  
 2020/21 Stat Neighbours = 48%  
 2020/21 England = 52%



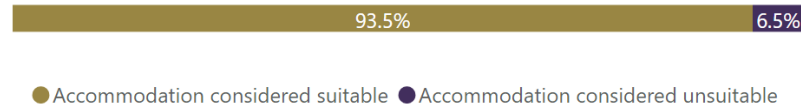
### Care Leavers available to work

Care Leavers aged 17-21 who are available for education, training or employment



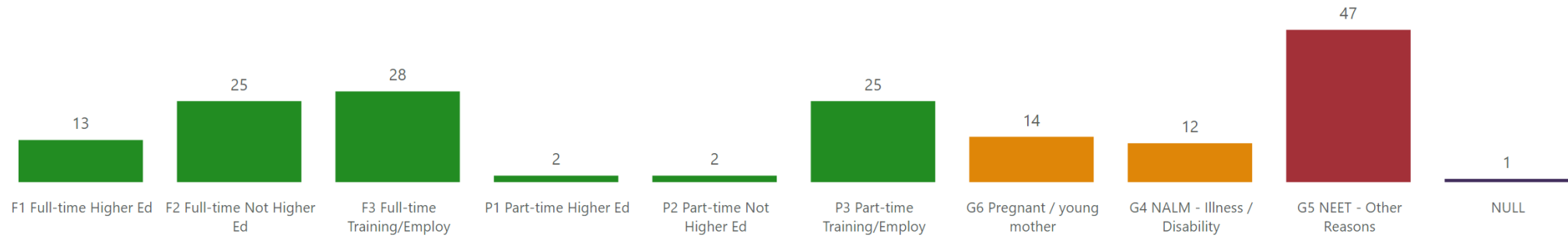
### Care Leavers in suitable accommodation

Care Leavers aged 19-21 who live in suitable accommodation



2020/21 Year Out-turn = 85%  
 2020/21 West Midlands = 87%  
 2020/21 Stat Neighbours = 87%  
 2020/21 England = 88%

Current Care Leaver EET Status (19-21)



At the end April, 56% of 19-21 year old care leavers were in Education, Employment or Training. This remains above the previous year's out turn, local, regional and national level. 89.3% of care leavers aged 17-21 are available for work. This is a significant achievement when considering the high levels of youth unemployment within the city. Of the 19-21 cohort 6.5% (11 young people) were not available. 93.5% of the current care leavers 19-21 cohort are currently deemed to be in suitable accommodation.