

LOOKED AFTER CHILDRENS

STRATEGY

2010 - 2012

‘Improving services and outcomes for Looked After Children, Young People and Care Leavers’.

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 Message from Councillor Michael Kelly Portfolio holder for Children's Services

I welcome this revision of the Looked After Childrens Strategy and would like to thank all partner agencies for their contributions to it. This provides an important opportunity to continue work to improve services and outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 is intended to promote and deliver better outcomes for every child in care. This legislation places a very clear duty on all agencies to recognise their corporate parenting responsibility for Looked After Children and to ensure they provide services to improve outcomes for this group of children.

It is apparent that Looked After Children need all services to work together to meet their needs and this can only be achieved when everyone understands and accepts their responsibilities for this group of children and young people. I am committed to ensuring that every Looked After Child has the best possible start in life, is given help to achieve their potential and experiences safe and positive parenting. I am particularly pleased that children and young people have been involved in the production of this strategy and am committed to ensuring that they continue to be fully engaged.

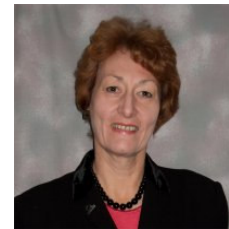


**Cllr Michael Kelly
Portfolio Holder for Childrens Services**

1.2 Message from Kath Tunstall, Director of Services for Children and Young People

I welcome this opportunity to introduce this important document setting out the District's ambition to work together in partnership to meet the needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers. The Strategy complements the priorities to improve outcomes for all children in the District as set out in the Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2012.

We want all children in the District to aim high, and recognise that for the most vulnerable children and young people in the District they need and deserve extra support to 'Be Someone' and that this starts by ensuring they all have a safe, stable place to grow up. I am proud of all the fantastic work up to now that has been undertaken to meet this ambition. This document sets out how services, in the future, will work even more closely together focused on improving outcomes for all looked after children in Bradford.



Kath Tunstall
Strategic Director of Services to Children and Young People

1.3 Message from Julie Jenkins, Assistant Director, Social Care

The Bradford Children and Young People's plan 2009 - 2012 refers to a very clear commitment from *"the Council and its partners must work together to improve the life chances for all children. We have continued to direct support to children when they are vulnerable and to provide this at the earliest opportunity and at the earliest age"*. The Children and Young People's plan has set as one of the key priorities of the District to *"improve outcomes for looked after children and young people through improving placement stability"*.

Improving placement stability is a key target within the Local Area Agreement (2008-2011), demonstrating the commitment of the Local Strategic Partnership to support partnership working to better respond to the needs of looked after young people. Making placement stability a key issue reflects the recognition that if children and young people are stable in their placement they will be more likely to achieve in other areas of their lives and, similarly, that improving outcomes in, for example Education and Health, will contribute towards a child's placement stability

The Bradford Children and Young Person's Plan goes on to make the following pledge: - *"Every child and young person will enjoy living in the District and will achieve as much as they can as they grow up and develop. We will work together to make the District a place where children and young people from all communities and backgrounds feel safe and have opportunities to improve and enjoy their lives"*.

This Strategy describes the contributions of all partner agencies that are required to further improve outcomes for this group of children and young people. Its intention is to ensure that the District is fully aware of what is required to meet the needs and wishes of Looked After Children themselves, that it meets the requirements of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and clearly demonstrates how the expectations outlined within the Bradford Children and Young People's Plan will be addressed for Care Leavers and Looked After Children.



Julie Jenkins
Asst Director Social Care
Chair of Looked after Children Strategy Group

1.4 Acknowledgement

The Looked After Children Strategy group acknowledges the work of Roger Morris Group Services Manager, Children's Social Care, who chaired the Strategy group for over five years; and helped promote the needs of looked after children across the Council and partner agencies throughout Bradford.

Roger has recently retired, although the review of the Strategy in 2009 would not have taken place without his drive and commitment to children in care.

Julie Jenkins

1.5 How the strategy was developed

The strategy is set out in six sections. The first section focuses on placement stability – on the basis that a safe, stable and secure is fundamental to each looked after person if they are to have a chance of achieving their potential. The remaining five sections are structured around the Every Child Matters outcome areas.

Working with partners

The revised Looked After Children Strategy has been developed after close partnership working between relevant agencies. For each chapter, a workshop was held with partners from a range of services and agencies, using methodology based on Outcome Based Accountability¹ in order;

1. To develop and commit to an agreed strategic approach and shared plan of action for all key partners.
2. To make sure that the shared plan of action is based on a shared agreement of what difference we want to make (impact) to improving outcomes for looked after children and young people.
3. To develop and commit to monitoring and managing performance through a framework of
 - a. headline population indicators that will ensure the Strategic Group and Trust Board will be able to monitor the intended improvements in looked after children's outcomes
 - b. service performance measures for *each* partner agency/service that will ensure the Strategic Group will be able to monitor and manage progress in the action plan.
4. To have a shared understanding of the 'Story behind the Baseline' upon which the action plan was based.
5. To have a shared understanding of what is known nationally and locally about 'what best works' upon which the action plan was based.
6. To have a shared understanding of what young people have said about their experiences and what they want.
7. To clarify what other partners are required to contribute to the action plan in order to deliver the improvement required through the Looked After Children Strategy – and agree on how to enlist their support.
8. To agree a Data Development Agenda to ensure the strategic group is better informed in the future about outstanding questions.
9. *To ensure all agencies were clear about the difference and the relationship between each agency/ service's accountability for its 'service users/ customers' and what the Strategic Group is taking collective responsibility for in terms of improving outcomes for looked after children across the District.*

¹ Outcome Based Accountability: Trying Hard is Not Enough – Freidman

Working with Children and Young People

The revised Looked After Children Strategy has been developed through close consultation with children and young people. For each section of this document, the authors have referred to what young people have said about important things in their lives. The outcomes of consultation with young people supported by Seen and Heard (Barnardos service for advocacy and participation of children in care) and the GLUW Research Group² have been invaluable sources. Additional material and information was gathered through consulting with young people at the 2009 Annual Looked After Children Event held at Bradford Bulls Stadium.

Each section of the Strategy includes a summary of what looked after young people think about key issues that affect them.

² Get the life you want: making the lives of young people in care better (April 09) Bradford Council.

SECTION 2: THE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STRATEGY GROUP – THE FIRST FIVE YEARS.

In September 2003 the Social Exclusion Unit produced a report “A Better Education for Children in Care” which states “the whole Local Authority, not just the Social Services Department, has a responsibility to act as a corporate parent for children in care and provide the kind of loyal support that any good parent would give to their children”

In March 2004 Bradford set up the Looked After Children’s Partnership. This was established to ensure the needs of Looked After Children and Care Leavers were prioritised within all partner agencies and a joined up approach was adopted in identifying and providing services for this group of children and young people. The initial focus of the partnership was to review and establish a range of appropriate services for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

During the early part of 2005 it became apparent that the work of the Partnership would be enhanced through the development of a multi-agency strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. Work was undertaken, initially through a gap analysis, to identify the additional services and actions that would further meet the needs of Looked After Children. This included consultation with children and young people themselves and with staff from all agencies working with children and young people. This culminated in a Looked After Children’s Strategy completed in September 2005. That Strategy was constructed in two parts. Firstly existing targets which the Local Authority and partner agencies were required to measure. Secondly, additional targets resulting from the gap analysis. In November 2005 the work of the Partnership and the Strategy itself was evaluated independently using the Healthy Care Audit Tool. The work of the Partnership was described as a national example in good practice and was showcased at several national and regional conferences.

A complete review of the Looked After Children’s strategy was undertaken in June 2007 resulting in a re-issue of the strategy itself. That re-issue described the achievements of the partnership in relation to the strategy developed in September 2005 and identified additional targets arising from a further gap analysis following consultation with children, young people and staff across all agencies. That review also anticipated the implications of the Care Matters agenda. The revised strategy was reviewed through the Looked After Children’s Partnership.

The Looked After Children’s Partnership recognises that the strategy needs to be dynamic and constantly reflect the changing needs of Looked After Children and young people – hence the commitment to comprehensively review the Strategy.

2.1 Key Achievements (2007-2009)

The Looked After Children's strategy of June 2007 identified a number of particular targets and actions. There have been significant achievements in relation to that particular strategy which include:-

- The percentage of Looked After Children in the same placement for two years has shown continuous improvement over the past three years from 68.5% in 2006/07 to 75% in 2009.
- The increase in the number of specialist long term commissioned foster placements to meet specific needs of young people.
- Launch of the Permanency Policy and Procedure.
- New allowance payment proposals for Special Guardianship Orders, Residence Orders and Adoption Allowances.
- Establishment of the Leaving Care Accommodation forum run by Leaving Care Service centring on the needs of Care Leavers.
- Improvements in educational outcomes at all key stages.
- Launch of the Get the Life you Want (GLUW) video.
- Further successful consultation and engagement with Looked After Children and Care Leavers through the annual event and other events, using a variety of media.
- Continuing reduction in the number of children in "out of Local Authority" placements.
- The Joint Area Review of 2008 evaluating Looked After Children's Services and partnership working as good.
- Continuing improvement in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in relation to Care Leavers.
- Between 2007 to 2009, the Supported Tenancies Contract Scheme expanded from 7 to 28 tenancies, including the provision of a Taster Flat.
- Increase in numbers of Care Leavers attending University.
- Production of a DVD "New Kid on the Block" to address offending behaviour by young people in residential care and joint protocol between Children's Social Care, the Police and Youth Offending Team in relation to reporting offences.

2.2 National Context: Care Matters

The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 has a number of particular themes as follows:-

1. Corporate Parenting. This includes expectations in relation to a Childrens Pledge, the setting up of a Children in Care Council and the clear recognition by all partner agencies of their responsibility towards improving services and thereby outcomes for Looked After Children.
2. Family and parenting support. This includes the importance of Local Authorities having appropriate services to support parents and reduce the need for care, the investment in short breaks for disabled children, the encouragement of carers to seek Residence Orders or Special Guardianship Orders and the further development of parenting work.
3. Care Placements. There is a challenge on Local Authorities to provide a sufficient range and depth of placements, to develop further commissioning arrangements, to restrict the numbers of children further who are placed out of district, to provide more specialist training for foster carers and to look at the possibility of extending care placements beyond the age of 18. There is also a strengthening of the National Minimum Standards and a more rigorous enforcement of those standards through inspection.
4. Delivering a first class education. This includes Early Years Provision, ensuring that Looked After Children are high priority on admissions procedures, and that Care Plans are very mindful of the importance of not disrupting a child's education. There is also an expectation in relation to designated teachers for Looked After Children and taking action to reduce absences and exclusions.
5. Promoting health and wellbeing. There is a strong focus on the health of Looked After Children including new standards for pregnant young people, sex education and ensuring appropriate leisure activities are included as part of Care Plans.
6. Transition to adulthood. This includes preventing the early discharge from care and enabling young people to stay in placement longer, the employment of Care Leavers with Local Authorities and partner agencies and the use of apprenticeships.

The legislation examines the role of Social Work Practitioners looking at the training needs of Social Care staff as well as the role of Independent Reviewing Officers and Independent Visitors.

The Looked After Childrens strategy has built on the positives within Bradford in relation to this legislation and considered the necessary developments. It recognises the importance of developing further the corporate parenting role, the need to develop further the Children in Care Council, the ongoing importance of placement commissioning, the need to further develop the use of Special Guardianship Orders and Residence Orders, the need to further develop apprenticeship schemes and the importance of strengthening family support arrangements.

SECTION 3 – UNDERSTANDING NEEDS OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

3.1 What is known about looked after children and young people in Bradford.³

When we talk about looked after children and young people it is important to think of several distinct groups – each with some common needs – but also some very different needs. These groups include:

- young entrants (particularly those 0-4 years of age)
- older children becoming looked after as adolescents
- young people preparing for leaving care
- young people seeking asylum
- disabled children

877 children and young people were looked after at 31 March 2009, over 4% more than at the same time in 2008. This has risen to 900 by November 2009.

The increase in the numbers of those looked after is greatest in two age groups. There are more young children under 5 in age becoming looked after, over half remain looked after for over 12 months. This trend if it continued would lead to an increase in children looked after who are of primary school age during the period of the strategy.

The number of young people aged 16+ remaining looked after is also rising steadily. More unaccompanied asylum seekers are becoming looked after –it can be anticipated that there will be further increases in this group.

Children from BME communities are under represented, it can be anticipated the overall population is likely to become more representative in future years. The most significant shift in the ethnic profile has been the increase in children and young people who are seeking asylum from such countries as Afghanistan and Iraq. A significant number of looked after children and young people have some form of disability. The proportion of children looked after in Bradford with a disability is significantly higher than national rates. The proportion of looked after young people with a disability tends to increase with age.

Young people are looked after for different period of time. Research tells us unless young entrants are discharged within 6 months they may remain in care until they reach their teenage years. It is known that 77 children have been looked after for at least 10 years and 326 have been looked after for at least 5 years (as at 31st March 2009).

During 2008-09, 46 children were adopted; mostly these children were less than 5 years of age, although 8 were aged between 5 and 9 when they became adopted. 34% of 0-4 year olds have an adoption plan, with 22 placed for adoption as at 31 March 09.

³ (The following is a summary of information available in the full LAC Needs Analysis – looking at the children and young people looked after on 31 March 2009; except for outcome measures which are based on the OC2 report looking at outcomes for children looked after on 30th September 2009).

3.2 What is known about where looked after children and young people are living (their placements)

Children are looked after in a number of different settings.⁴ Around 50% of Looked After Children live with foster parents, almost 25% live with friends or family (other than parents), and almost 10% live with their parents. A further 10%+ live in a residential setting.

Over the period 2007-09 there has been a 30% increase in children in Family and Friends placements (from 163 to 211). More children are being placed with in-house foster carers (an increase of more than 10% 340 to 375 over the previous year). Less children are currently placed with parents (a decrease of 17% over the previous 12 months).

Looked After children by placement type (31st March)

Placement Type	2007	2008	2009	% in placement 2009
Absconded	1	1	1	0.11%
Family and Friends	163	182	211	24.06%
Fostercare In-house	340	376	375	42.76%
Fostercare Purchased	55	47	55	6.27%
Other	33	33	39	4.45%
Placed for Adoption	27	30	22	2.51%
Placed with Parents	100	79	83	9.46%
Residential In-house	54	56	55	6.27%
Residential Purchased	38	37	36	4.10%
Total	811	841	877	100.00%

190 (21.7%).children currently live outside of the District. For those where there current placement is within Bradford more children live in Bradford South than any other constituency.

Some children remain looked after for a considerable part of their childhood years. Of the 77 children who have been looked after for more than 10 years; 20 of these children have remained in the same placement for 10 years or more.

Almost 40% of the 326 children who have been looked after for more than 5 years have been in the same placement for at least 5 years. Over 60% of the 548 children who have been in the same placement for 2 years have been looked after for at least this length. Over 75% (530 out of 694) of children who have been looked after for more than 1 year

⁴

Fostering in house where a Looked after Child is placed with foster carers who have been approved by Bradford's Fostering Panel and receive support from Bradford's Adoption & Fostering Unit.

Family and Friends where a Looked after Child is placed with relatives who have been approved by Bradford's Fostering Panel and receive support from the Adoption & Fostering Unit.

Fostering purchased where a Looked after Child is placed with foster carers who have been approved by an independent provider with whom Bradford have a commissioning arrangement.

Residential in house where a Looked after Child is placed within one of the Community Homes managed by Bradford Council.

Residential purchased where a Looked after Child is placed within a Community Home managed by an independent provider with whom Bradford Council has a commissioning arrangement

Placement with parents where a Looked after Child who is also the subject of a Care Order is placed at home with their parents prior to the order being discharged.

Placed for adoption where a Looked after Child is placed with adoptive parents where the match has been approved by Bradford's Adoption Panel.

Other where Looked after Children are placed in other situations such as custody, remand or Independent Living.

have been in the same placement for at least a year; rising to 87% for those looked after for 6 months or more.

Conversely at the same point in time some children have been looked after for much shorter periods; 181 have been looked after for less than 12 months, 71 have been looked after for less than 3 months. (Note: this is not an indication of how long they may remain looked after).

3.3 What is known about outcomes for looked after children and young people in Bradford.

Being Healthy

Information relates to 30th September 2009, unless stated

98% of looked after children and young people had all their immunisations up to date an increase from last year of 95%

79% of children have had an annual health assessment (a reduction from 87% in the previous year). In previous years, children who were placed in 'in house' foster care were more likely to have had an annual health assessment compared to those placed with Parents.

76.8% of looked after children and young people visited the dentist - a decrease compared to last year of 89.5%. In previous years, children placed with Family & Friends were more likely to attend the dentist compared to those placed in Residential placement.

8 looked after young women were teenage mothers, as at 31st March 09.

117 Looked After Children and young people were being seen by CAMHS in Bradford (based on the 2007 CAMHS mapping exercise).

The emotional health of looked after children and young people is now being recorded through 'Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires'.

Staying Safe

Information relates to academic year 2008/2009, unless stated

Children being looked after are more likely to go missing than other children, which then puts them at risk of exploitation.

Children who miss school are more likely to be at risk of offending, sexual exploitation, being victims of crime and drug misuse. In Bradford the number of looked after children absent from school for 25 days or more was 17.5% (86 children), this is a slight improvement from last year of 17.8%. Bradford had the highest percentage of looked after children missing 25 days of school compared to other comparable authorities.

Enjoy and Achieve

Information relates to academic year 2008/2009, unless stated

The vast majority of pre-school looked after children, who had been eligible for their free nursery education, had taken up their free place, either via school or NEF (Nursery Education Fund) setting.

In previous years at Key Stage 1 the gap between the educational performances of Looked After Children and their peers had continued to narrow, year on year

In previous years at Key Stage 2 there had been a consistent narrowing of the gap between children looked after and their peers in English, Science and Mathematics over the 8 year period from 2001 to 2008, particularly noticeable in Science.

Of those eligible 80.5% of looked after young people sat at least one GCSE in the academic year 2008/2009, performance has improved appreciably compared to last year where 66.7% of young people sat at least one GCSE. The number who obtained 1 or more GCSE's or equivalent grades A* - G was 69 (80.5%), an increase of 15.3% over the previous year's figure. The number who obtained 5 or more GCSE or equivalent grades **A* - G** was 49 (59.8%), an increase of 18.9% compared to the 40.9% the previous year. Between 2001 to 2008, the gap has narrowed when compared with their peers

The number who obtained 5 or more GCSE's or equivalent grades **A* - C** was 15 (18.3%). This is a 3.1% improvement on the previous year and is the highest percentage of looked after young people who have achieved 5 or more GCSE's or equivalent grades **A* - C**. Although this is encouraging, the trend lines between children looked after and other children in Bradford continue to diverge, due to improving performance by Bradford children generally.

Positive Contribution

Information relates to 30th September 09, unless stated

45 looked after young people were convicted/cautioned or had received a final warning, 11 of which were placed out of authority. Of the young people who had offended 33 were male and 12 female. Analysing the LAC cohort without reference to the wider West Yorkshire population shows a reduction in offending from 11.08% to 10.82%. Although this rate has fallen the overall indicator value has slightly increased to 2.36 compared to last year of 2.16. (This indicator is calculated as a ratio of the percentage of LAC children in the cohort convicted during the year ending 30th September to the percentage of all children aged 10 or over convicted for an offence in the West Yorkshire police area.

These figures relate to young people looked after for at least 12 months)

Economic Well Being

At 31 March 2009 there were 444 young people under the Leaving Care Service of which 265 were aged 16 – 18 and 179 were 19+. Of the total number of young people: 18 young people are currently at University or on a degree level college course; 230 Young People are in further education or other forms of training. 74% 16-18 year old care leavers were in education, employment or training (as at 31 March 2009).

Care leavers need a stable secure place to live; 79% of care leavers were in suitable accommodation (NI147) at 31st March 2009. The accommodation need of care leavers has been highlighted further within the annual Housing Report for Care Leavers (2009).

There has been a year on year increase over the past three years in the rate of care leavers (16-18) who are in Education, Employment or Training, and conversely the proportion of NEET Care Leavers (aged 16-18) has decreased over time. The proportion of Care Leavers aged 19 who are in education, employment and training has remained stable over recent years.

SECTION 4 – 2009- 2012 STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

4.1 Ensure children and young people are in stable placements.

4.1.1. Ambition

- All children and young people looked after are to be placed in appropriate placements which have the greatest potential/ capability to meet their current and future needs.
- All children and young people to be safe, stable, secure and caring environments that will have a positive impact on children's health and emotional wellbeing, enable their to build positive peer relationships . We want decisions over where children and young people live not to cause unnecessary disruption to their education but rather should enhance opportunities to reach their potential in school.
- Young children (0-7) becoming looked after, should speedily move to a permanent home with the greatest opportunities for children to achieve their potential.
- All children and young people to develop trusting and secure attachments to adults, through building positive relationships with their carers.
- The life chances of disabled and adolescent young people who are looked after to be enhanced through the provision of placements where support arrangements are in place to meet additional needs.
- Young people leaving care to be helped to develop into active, successful citizens by moving into secure, safe supported independent living.

4.1.2 Strategy

- Permanency: looked after children (0-7) to be placed with the most appropriate placement as identified through a permanency plan.
- Reduce the number of children who are being looked after on care orders in favour of special guardianship arrangements and residence orders.
- Where it is safe to do so, children and young people should live within their extended family, with the family member holding parental responsibility for them
- Care leavers need to be able to access a full range of suitable accommodation appropriate to their needs at the different stages in the process of Leaving Care and becoming independent and live in a safe and comfortable home
- Placement Co-ordination: finding the right placement promptly for children and young people through rigorous assessments/ detailed care plans / that are then matched with good appropriate resources.
- Undertaking risk assessments –based on the risk of placement breakdown, enabling the targeting of resources to those most at risk of placement breakdown and extend the approach to all young people looked after.

- Multi-agency approach to supporting children and young people, through a 'team around the child approach'. Able to respond promptly when young people are in crisis and there is a risk of placement breakdown.
- Close working between Social Care and Education Services to ensure that educational stability in schools enhances young people's placement stability and vice-versa. Where a change in placements is identified as the best option for that young person a carefully considered transition plan is developed.
- Listen to what young people are saying about these issues, particularly through listening to the views expressed through the new Children in Care Council.
- For Area Partnerships it is important the needs of Looked After Children and Care Leavers are prioritised within local services so they can be given priority access to universal services.

4.1.3. Young people are telling us:

Children and young people have told us, when we were consulting them over the children's pledge they wanted to be safe and secure where they lived and in the community, and want the right to choose where they live.

Recent research undertaken by care leavers in the 'Get the life you want' project identified that a key theme for young people is that placements are too short. 'The problem with short term placements is that you have to get to know people all over again and make friends in a neighbourhood and school. People cannot get settled and are unable to cope with moving all the time. They find it hard to build good strong relationships. You can't get to know the person you are living with and you need to build up a relationship with them to make a placement last'

Another theme of the research was that young people want people to love and look after them. 'Everyone needs someone to care about them before they can care about what they do. I think that is why sometimes young people much about at school and in their placement.'

Young people are not happy when they have to change their social workers when they become 11 years old.

Contact with Siblings and splitting siblings are key issues for children when they and their siblings become looked after

Young people want to live in good communities and not worst areas.

4.1.4 Current / future needs of children, young people

The number of children needing to be looked after is increasing, *if* current trends continue for the period of this strategy there will be close to 1000 children and young people looked after by 2012.

Some children remain looked after for a considerable part of their childhood years. 77 children have been looked after for more than 10 years; 20 of these children have remained in the same placement for 10 years or more. Almost 40% of the 326 children who have been looked after for more than 5 years have been in the same placement for at least 5 years. Over 60% of the 548 children who have been in the same placement for 2 years have been looked after for at least this length. Over 75% (530 out of 694) of children

who have been looked after for more than 1 year have been in the same placement for at least a year; rising to 87% for those looked after for 6 months or more.

Children, on average, are being looked after for longer.

251 children started to be looked after and needed a 'first' placement in the year to 31st March. Only 8.7% of the children who remained looked after for the year had three or more placement moves (an improving situation)

Adolescents (10-15) are the largest group of young people (defined by age) who are looked after. 30% of young people becoming looked after were aged between 10 and 15, many becoming looked after from troubled backgrounds

More young people leaving care require support with their accommodation needs.

4.1.5 Experiences of children, young people (and families) using existing services

Children are looked after in a number of different settings.

Around 50% of looked after children live with foster parents, almost 25% live with friends or family (other than parents), almost 10% live with their parents, and a further 10%+ live in a residential setting. 5% are in other settings such as independent living or custody

Over the last two years there has been a 30% increase in children in family and friends placements since 2007 from 163 to 211. The number of children placed with in-house foster carers has increased by over 10% from 340 to 375 since 2007. Numbers of children placed with parents has decreased by 17% from 100 to 83 since 2007.

190 children and young people live outside of the District in a number of settings, many with Bradford supported foster carers, others with their parents, others in commissioned placements. These children and young people receive some of their support through other local authorities, schools and other services

4.1.6 National policy directives

Care Matters:

Identified that crucially children & young people who are looked after have a need to live in stable placements; this is critical in assuring their positive outcomes. Where children do need to come into the care of the state, delivering good outcomes requires excellent corporate parenting based on high aspirations, stable relationships and taking time to listen to the voice of the child. Looked after children need to be placed near to home, within the local authority's area, as long as they are safeguarded and their welfare promoted. Children and young people say they can feel isolated in distant placements and miss contact with their friends and local communities; they feel that they may not be able to depend on regular visits, for example from their social workers. Children placed out of their local authority are particularly vulnerable to poor outcomes.

Public Law Outline:

The aim of the guidance is that Local Authorities would provide higher quality applications to court and that the court processes would happen to shorter timescales. The revised guidance places considerable emphasis on pre-proceedings preparation of cases by Local Authorities as a way of ensuring that all steps have been completed prior to issuing care proceedings as a way of avoiding unnecessary delay.

Residence Orders:

One of the important elements of the 2008 Children Act is that Local Authorities should seek to place children, as far as that is possible and safe, with members of their extended family and that those family members should be assisted to seek Residence or Special Guardianship Orders.

Southwark Judgement

In 2009 the House of Lords ruled that young people previously housed as homeless Children In Need may now become Accommodated under s.20 of the Childrens Act. This may well have an impact on overall numbers of looked after young people as in the 12 months to March 2009, some 103 16 and 17 year olds had a statutory homelessness assessment, with 14 being accepted as in Priority Need, and 117 had preventative homelessness advice. However, some 137 16 year olds and 173 17 year olds were accessing Supporting People accommodation

4.1.7 Services and Agencies that contribute:

- Residential & Fostering Services
- Care Management
- Placement Coordination Team
- Independent Reviewing Officers
- Commissioners
- Independent Providers
- Education Bradford
- Schools
- Health professionals

4.1.8 Future Data Development

Better information is required:

- On the reasons why placements breakdown
- Special Guardianships and Residence Orders

Action Plan: Placement Stability

Service	Action		Performance Measure
IRO Team	Ensure every child by their second review, has a permanence plan	Paul Hill, Manager, Bradford Safeguarding Children Board	% of LAC with Permanence Plan
Care Management Teams	Ensure every child , by their second review, has a permanence plan	Melanie John Ross, Group Services Manager	% of LAC with Permanence Plan
IRO Team	Reduce number of children in care under a Care Order	Paul Hill, Manager, Bradford Safeguarding Children Board	% of LAC with Care Order
Care Management Teams	Reduce number of children in care under a Care Order	Melanie John Ross, Group Services Manager	% of LAC with Care Order
LAC Team	To avoid changes of placement wherever possible In all cases, case workers to ensure up to date care plan in place, to visit regularly and work with all agencies with whom the child is linked. In cases where there is an identified risk of placement breakdown, or this develops, to work in a proactive 'team around the child' approach, using available supports including attendance at Family Support Panel	Rachel Curtis, Service Manager (Care Management)	Rate of breakdown of children deemed to be of high risk
IRO Team	Promote Residence Orders and Special Guardianship within the Review process Ensure that social workers and carers have discussed the option of Residence Orders	Paul McLaughlin, Practice Manager, Childrens Safeguarding and	SGOs / ROs

	and Special Guardianship	Reviewing Unit	
IRO Team	Focus on the group of children and young people identified as the most vulnerable to placement breakdown Check that robust planning has taken place for this group of children and young people and that it is being implemented	Paul McLaughlin, Practice Manager, Childrens Safeguarding and Reviewing Unit	Rate of breakdown of children deemed to be of high risk
Placement Coordination Team	Improve systems and arrangements for matching	Angela Walker, Service Manager (Residential)	
Placement stability sub-group	Ensure multi-agency support is in place for children at risk of placement breakdown through ensuring multi-agency contributions at family support panels and reviews.	Lal Saki, Group Services Manager	Placement breakdown rates of children in placements considered stable (children in care over 6 months)
Strategic Commissioning-	Develop Commissioning Strategy that maximises placement choice	Jonathan Helbert, Commissioning Manager	Increase in numbers of children in placements that are identified as meeting Permanence needs
Fostering Services	Minimise disruptions of established long term placements using Family Support Panel multi agency team around the child meetings Placements with Specialist Carer Scheme are supported by the close involvement of the Fostering Support Service and the sessional psychologist for the A and F Unit Provide training on understanding and managing attachment difficulties	Sarah Patrick, Service Manager (Adoption & Fostering)	Placement breakdown rate amongst foster care placements.

4.2 Improve the health and well-being of looked after children and young people.

4.2.1 Ambition

- looked after young people are as healthy as other children in Bradford
- All looked after young people are empowered to make their own well informed healthy choices

4.2.2 Strategy

- Promote attachment, resilience and self-esteem for children and young people who are looked after by improving access to a range of coordinated services for all children and young people looked after but especially for the over 11's by:
- Providing a seamless service. Services will be well signposted so that children and young people, their carers and the professionals know what is available
- Identifying and removing barriers for young people to access health services and improved co-ordination between professionals to ensure clear pathways of care; with a particular focus in year 1 of the strategy to improving children and young people's access to General Dental Practitioners.
- Developing an awareness of what Health is, for children and young people, their carers and professionals.
- Promotion of healthy, active lives and ensure opportunities to take part in sport and active recreation.
- Improve the dialogue with young people over their health issues.
- Ensuring one point of Contact for the notification to health of new to care children, and allocation to a named health nurse for each child through the LAC health team.
- These principles should equally apply to young people out of authority.
- The 'being healthy' elements of the strategy to be taken forward by a wider multi-agency group
- Close liaison with the Being Healthy Strategy group /and its operational sub-groups, including Healthy Minds to ensure that health needs of looked after children are included in District-wide agendas,

4.2.3. What young people telling us

The views of a representative sample of 33 young people sought at 2009 LAC Event.

Young people said that they thought access to physical activities and advice/ availability of healthy food was important to help them keep well & healthy. Being in a stable placement was the most important thing to help their emotional health.

Young people say that they do not like to have a number of people they need to visit for different needs and issues – they would like one person to be able to help them over a range of issues.

Current / future needs of children, young people

Children enter the looked after system with a history of unmet needs and, for some, the accumulated damage of abusive or neglectful parenting. Many children becoming looked after have had their health needs neglected, some will have resulted from being born to drug or alcohol dependent parents

The physical and mental health and emotional well-being of children of these children and young people need to be addressed promptly as they become looked after. So that they build their self-esteem and resilience, that attachment difficulties and emotional/ behavioural deficits are addressed, and they become physically healthy.

For many young people being looked after the emotional demands and the reasons for becoming looked after are deep-seated , therefore it is important to ensure that for children and young people who remain looked after their needs are routinely assessed and their needs are responded to as these arise.

Causal factors for poor physical and emotional health in looked after children relate to;

- Their experiences before becoming looked after: low socio-economic status, chaotic parenting, abuse and neglect, the impacts of poor parental mental health, substance misuse or domestic violence.
- poor levels of routine health care, for example, immunisations (twice as likely to have missed Meningitis C vaccination) and missing out on preventive messages delivered through schools, for example sex and relationships education (SRE) or healthy eating or Basic Alcohol and Drugs Awareness.
- Negative experiences in care, for example poor placement stability or disrupted education, can result in continued disruption to health care (e.g. access to dental care) unless health services are wrapped around the child.
- Young people living independently are at risk of poor levels of routine health care
- Looked after children are at much higher risk of early conception and teenage parenthood. They are more likely to experience multiple risk factors for teenage pregnancy and parenthood and to experience worse outcomes as a result of becoming a teenage parent (increasing number of teenage mothers who are looked after.
- Nationally looked after children have higher levels of obesity

What we know of the experiences of children, young people (and families) using existing services

- The LAC health team use Assertive outreach as a method of engagement with young people. This is appreciated by the young people and leads to more positive outcomes. This is an approach which needs to be discussed by CAMHS, Comprehensive CAMHS and Adult Mental Health, to increase engagement with their services.
- Keeping the same LAC nurse throughout the whole period of care and working with one person can build trust and continuity and enables consistency in the health messages that go too looked after children.
- Looked after children do not always want to access a number of different professionals for a variety of issues for example substance use, CAMHS and Comprehensive CAMHS, good communication and consultation between professionals can reduce this problem.
- Good communication processes and systems reduce confusion, delay and duplication.
- The team around the child approach is able to support more fragile placements and encourage placement stability.
- Access problems have been identified for looked after children and young people in the district, with the Local Dental Committee and dental practitioners agreeing to prioritise this group for care and recently negotiated local dental contracts specifically considering provision for looked after children and young people.” (Middlemiss et al, 2009:82)
- Young people at the annual LAC event (2009) spoke of the importance of needing to be able to access advice and guidance on sexual health confidentially.
- Some young people said it was important for them to access health advice/ support on their terms – they wanted to take control of decisions about their health so that not taking part in the annual LAC Health assessment can be seen as young people taking positive control of their own health.

National policy directives

DOH – Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of LAC (consultation document 2009) – this will set out the statutory responsibility of health authorities to provide support for LAC. It also will set out the position OLA’s determining who is responsible for funding health support for LAC who are out of authority.

Data Development agenda

Locally we have no systems in place to collect the data needed as detailed below and these need to be developed.

- There appears to be a growing number of LAC with complex health needs. This may have an effect on adoption placements. However there needs to be more data available.
- There is awareness in Bradford and data available nationally that care leavers are more likely to become teenage parents. More accurate data needs to be collected locally.
- There is awareness in Bradford and data available nationally that LAC and care leavers are at increased risk of developing problematic patterns of alcohol or other drug misuse. More accurate data needs to be collected locally.
- There are some looked after young people who are parents of children who are also looked after again we need to collect data on this.

- Data is also needed on numbers of looked after young women who are pregnant and how many go on to become parents.
- Research into children's mental health and emotional development indicates that the formation of good attachment is critical particularly at key stages for under 3's and then at around 11 years.
- Research nationally indicates that more young people looked after need emotional and behavioural support from CAHMS than in the general child population. Data is required in Bradford on the numbers of LAC with emotional difficulties and who need to access CAMHS. The analysis of the SDQ will give some baseline outcome indications, but more in depth data is needed.
- Research nationally indicates looked after children and young people experience poorer health outcomes, in both the short and long-term.
- More information needs to be collated on what young people are saying about what they want and need to be emotionally and physically healthy (potentially through be-spoke lifestyle survey)
- More Analysis on the SDQ to inform on the emotional health needs of LAC in Bradford
- There is a need to know more about how many looked after young people attend A&E Departments – and the reasons for this
- We need to know more about levels of self-harm, overdose etc – data that would be available in future from A&E departments

Services which make significant contributions

- LAC Health Nurse team
- Safeguarding team (A&E liaison and hospital services).
- Upfront
- Care management teams
- LAC social work teams
- CAHMS
- Young People Drug and Alcohol Services
- Culture Recreation and Sport
- Residential Services
- Foster Care
- Independent Review Officers

Action Plan: Being Healthy

(The contribution of other services and additional performance measures will be included within the action plan as agreed through the Strategy Group,).

Name	What will each service do to contribute?	How will each service contribute?	Lead / Responsible Manager	Performance Measures
LAC Health Nurse team	Ensure health assessments offered for all LAC	LAC Health Team to focus on improving rate of completion of health assessments.	Barbara Cox, Designated Nurse for Safeguarding and Debbie Dickson, Designated Nurse for Looked After Children	% of assessments completed (OC2)
LAC Health Nurse team	Ensure assessments are completed within 28 days of the team being notified for children newly LAC	LAC Health team will monitor C250 notifications and audit length of time from care event to notification to the team to ascertain if this is still the most efficient way of notifying health of LAC. Once notification has been received health will offer initial health assessment with the nurse and paediatrician appointment.	Barbara Cox and Debbie Dickson	% completed with in 28 days.
LAC Health Team	Support young people who are teenage parents	Improve information collation on teenage mothers and terminations	Debbie Dickson / Claire Whitley.	Local measure
Upfront	Provide advice on sexual health	Further improve access and quality of advice	Claire Whitley (Transformation	Local measure

			Services.)	
YOT		Improve sharing of YOT health assessment for children who are also LAC – including speech and language development	Colin Barker	
Safeguarding team (A&E hospital).	Ensure LAC are flagged as vulnerable group in hospital A&E depts.	Ensure LAC are known (flagged) on hospital system (Work with Children (Dept) performance team).	Barbara Cox and Debbie Dickson	
PCT	Ensure access to dental practitioners for LAC		PCT Commissioner	% of LAC who have accessed dentist in last 12 months
LAC social work teams	Support YP to access health services / inc health assessments	Ensure responsibility of social workers to ensure LAC have dental and health assessment – and that the support is given to ensure YP able to access health care they need	Rachel Curtis, Service Manager (Care Management)	Case audit
LAC Teams	Support children accessing substance misuse treatment		Rachel Curtis, Service Manager (Care Management)	Case audit
Residential Services	Better support young people with behavioural difficulties in residential homes	Through developing individual behaviour management programmes for all children in all units by March 2010	Angela Walker (Residential Services Manager)	Case audit by manager
Residential Services	Improve awareness of sexual health for	Advice offered and given to young people	Angela Walker (Residential Services)	Case audit by manager

	looked after young people in residential homes		Manager)	
Independent Reviewing Officer Team	Increase the number of Strengths and difficulties questionnaires completed Promote access to GPs and Dentists	Check the completion rate as part of the review process Check the registration rate as part of the review process	Paul McLaughlin, Practice Manager, Childrens Safeguarding and Reviewing Unit Paul McLaughlin	Audit of review records
CAHMS	Improve targeting of CAHMS support for LAC young people to those most in need	Improve systems for identifying how many LAC are being supported by CAHMS Ensure arrangements in place for follow up of needs identified with SDQs, and improve pathways to CAHMS service.	Barbara Cox Mark Vaughn Rochelle Day (CAHMS Service) and Debbie Dickson	New measure to be developed
Young People Drug and Alcohol Services	Improve targeting of YPDAS support for LAC young people living in Residential Homes	Improve capacity of Residential staff to screen for and deliver substance related interventions or refer on for a more specialist service. Increase opportunities for young people to self refer	Hugh Bryson, Team Manager Drug and Alcohol	New service measure required
Fostering Services	Encourage foster carers to provide environment which promotes healthy living	Training to include advice on healthy eating, activities. Smoking policy being revised for all carers	Sarah Patrick (Adoption and Fostering Team)	Training records
Fostering	Promote the	Courses on Attachment running	Sarah Patrick	Training records

Services	emotional well being of LAC Organise appropriate training for carers	Continued access to the Psychologist commissioned by the Unit	(Adoption and Fostering Team)	
Fostering Services	Better support young people with behavioural difficulties Increase number of foster carers who can receive training on parenting strategies	Training for foster carers on understanding behaviour and managing challenging situations Courses for different age ranges – Child Development , Team Teach , Anger Management CRW in Fostering Support Service to be trained in Triple P	Sarah Patrick /Geoff Green, Service Manager	Training Records
Fostering Services	Improve awareness of sexual health for looked after young people.	Training Course – Speakeasy – to be run which will carers to feel comfortable in speaking to young people about sexual health matters	Sarah Patrick (Adoption and Fostering Team)	Training Records

4.3 Stay Safe

Ensuring Looked After Children and Care Leavers are safe in their home and in their community.

Ambition

- We want Children and Young People who are looked after to feel secure and experience the feeling of security associated with being with carers; that they have confidence in and to feel listened to if have concerns about safety
- We want children to feel happy and confident where they live, so that do not wish to run away into dangerous situations where sexual assault and exploitation are known risk factors
- We want children not to be at risk of bullying and particularly seek to ensure that being looked after is not a cause of them being bullied.
- We recognise that children and young people are particularly vulnerable at times of transition and fewer of the risk factors associated with placement disruption and a higher number of moves and seek to minimise those risks by minimising placement moves and ensuring children and young people's safety is thorough considered and planned for when they do move.
- LAC and Care Leavers should feel safe in own home (including carer, foster care, residential) and safe in the community, school and at contact with parents.

Strategy

- Children and young people need someone with whom they feel safe to talk to. They need to be able to tell someone if they do not feel safe.
- Work with young people as soon as they become looked after, coming into care is sometimes a difficult time.
- Ensure all settings are safe and secure for looked after young people
- Ensure a strong team around the child especially when they are at a higher risk
- Children's feelings around their safety are critical.
- Respond promptly whenever young people go missing.

What young people telling us

In previous consultations with Children and Young People they have told us that they are concerned about bullying, safety on the streets and becoming victims of crime. At School LAC have raised worries about being labelled as LAC and bullying.

The views of Young People leaving care have been collated (via Learning Employment Advice Preparation (LEAP)) ; amongst their key messages they have said that without a clear focus of filling their day they are at greater risk of engaging in more extensive drug usage, roaming the streets, in more trouble with the Police.

Current / future needs of children, young people

- Looked After can be at greater risk of sexual exploitation, drug misuse, children going missing, perpetrators or victims of crime, sexual health, teenage pregnancy
- Responsibility to recruit safe carers is an ongoing need.
- C&YP that enter care in an emergency may be at a greater risk for their safety and therefore need a particular focus.
- Children who miss school are more likely to be at risk of offending, sexual exploitation, being victims of crime and drug misuse.
- In Bradford the number of children absent from school for 25 days or more for the academic year 2007/2008 was 17.79% (90 children).
- National research shows that 44% of the children in residential accommodation went missing at some stage during the previous 12 months.

Experiences of children, young people using existing services

- Children and Young People can be at greater risk when they move placements.
- The majority of C&YP feel happy and safe in their placement
- Young people value advocacy services such as Seen & Heard
- Asylum seeking young people are particularly vulnerable due to experiences – but also positive about the Council to make them feel safe.

National policy directives

Care Matters: identified that crucially children & young people who are looked after have a need to live in stable placements; this is critical in assuring their positive outcomes. Where children do need to come into the care of the state, delivering good outcomes requires excellent corporate parenting based on high aspirations, stable relationships and taking time to listen to the voice of the child. Looked after children need to be placed near to home, within the local authority's area, as long as they are safeguarded and their welfare promoted. Children and young people say they can feel isolated in distant placements and miss contact with their friends and local communities; they feel that they may not be able to depend on regular visits, for example from their social workers. Children placed out of their local authority are particularly vulnerable to poor outcomes. National Minimum Standards 2008 Children Act.

Data Development Agenda

It is important to understand more about:

Accidents amongst looked after young people

Incidents of self harm amongst young people

How many young people are bullied – where and why they are being bullied.

More about the risks of young people being exploited.

More about young people going missing – what are the reasons which contribute to this.

Services which make significant contributions

Barnardos Turnaround

Safeguarding Teams

Independent Review Officer

Fostering/residential services

Police

YOT

Care Management
Education Bradford
Schools
Health professionals – particularly CAHMS and safeguarding teams

The role of Area Partnerships

Locality Managers will need to ensure universal and preventative services are always accessible to looked after children and young people. Their role will be to look at how to prioritise needs of LAC within universal service.

Action Plan: Staying Safe

Project/Service Name and organisation	What activities are taking place	Lead Officer	What difference is the service making for service users and how are we measuring that difference
Residential and Fostering Services	Ensure full implementation of the 'Missing from Care' policy and ensure all missing young people have a 'return to care' interview.	Angela Walker, Service Manager, Residential Anne Midgley, Service Manager, Residential Geoff Green, Service Manager, Shared Care	Reduce numbers of YP missing from care.
Residential Services	Ensure prompt and appropriate response available for all young people in residential homes deemed at risk of sexual exploitation. Ensure arrangements in place to ensure all homes call multi-agency strategy meetings when risk is identified.	Angela Walker	New local measure to be developed
Residential Services	Reduce the incidence of children going missing from care from residential homes. All residential homes will work with their police support officer to develop joint risk assessments for young people	Angela Walker	New local measure to be developed
Residential Services	Ensure all children in residential homes are protected from bullying.	Angela	Bullying incident report forms

	Full implementation of the anti-bullying policy and training of all staff by March 2010.	Walker	
IRO Team	Ensure that appropriate plans are in place to keep young people safe. At each review the question must be asked Identify any Safeguarding Issues for the young person and how are they being addressed	Paul McLaughlin, Practice Manager, Childrens Safeguarding and Reviewing Unit	Audit of Reviews
Fostering Services	Raise awareness of increased home accidents particularly scalding , burns Training course on accident prevention. All carers attend the first Aid course SSW ensure that Safe Care Assessment Forms, Health and Safety Checklists are reviewed at least annually	Sarah Patrick (Adoption and Fostering Services)	Carer training records
Fostering Services	Ensure that policies on assessment of risk and recording of children who go missing undertaken and record incidents on carers files and inform senior manager for data collection Foster carer training is rolled out, primarily for young people 12+.	Sarah Patrick	Carer training records
Social work teams	Ensure 'Missing from care' policies are implemented and action taken to reduce incidences of young people missing	Rachel Curtis (Care Management)	
Social work teams West Yorkshire Police	Ensure prompt and appropriate response available for all young people in residential homes deemed at risk of sexual exploitation.	Rachel Curtis	Case file audit

	Ensure arrangements in place to ensure all homes call multi-agency strategy meetings when risk is identified.		
Social work teams	Work to ensure all LAC and young people are in safe placements, following procedures regarding addressing concerns, undertaking appropriate assessments and checks as necessary.	Rachel Curtis	Case file audit

4.4 Enjoy & Achieve

Improve education and enjoyment outcomes for looked after children

Ambition

- Young people being looked after should not be disadvantaged from their peers. We want every child who becomes looked after to achieve their full potential.
- We want them to be equally able to access and enjoy all manner of leisure activities.
- Looked after children should have levels of attainment and progress that match their peers, subject to age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs brought about by unaddressed issues or negative impact originating from the time they have spent in care.
- In order to learn we want all children to be in a stable school setting, we want to avoid young people being truant, excluded or otherwise absent (this will also make a significant contribution to them being safe).
- Where deficits in educational attainment remain at 16, these should be addressed by the time they are 19 through support to achieve to a minimum of 5 Level 2 qualifications. (Equivalent to 5 x GCSE's A-C)

Strategy

a) Presence

Ensure arrangements are in place for young children to attend early year's provision. Ensure looked after children are given the same priority within admissions policy for early years as they are for the school admissions process.

Ensure arrangements are in place for young people to be at attend school

- If a looked after child changes school they have a school place within 20 school days
- An educational place must be confirmed before a looked after child moves placement except under exceptional circumstances and that child must visit the proposed new educational placement

Ensure children receive the support they need to attend school regularly

Ensure that additional support is in place for this to continue when children are having or presenting difficulties.

Coordinate service delivery to ensure young people do not need to be excluded from school.

A clear approach needs to be well planned to support children and young people with additional health needs being able to attend / access education.

b) Participation

Ensure provision of additional tutors/resources to meet additional needs.

Support schools to ensure high quality of assigned teaching and learning in schools.

Promote a Designated Teacher Network.

c) Achievement

Arrangements in place for educational needs of All looked children (including pre-school) to be coordinated through a Personal Education Plan), and that this is regularly reviewed.

d) Awareness

Raise the awareness of carers and professionals supporting children and young people to their responsibilities for children to attend and be supported to encourage learning.

What young people telling us

Get the life U want Report found that 73% of young people said that they had problems which stopped them doing well with their education. The following were the main issues:

45 said – too many problems

40 said – breakdown of placement

35 said – don't fit in

18 said – not enough encouragement

Current / future needs of children, young people

In many instances when a child becomes looked after there may have already been significant disruption to their education. It may also be the case that education may simply not have been a priority in their earlier life. Issues over their schooling need to be addressed promptly.

To narrow the attainment gap we know that many young people need to receive additional support and guidance as well as their full entitlement to educational provision.

They need particular targeted support to build their self-esteem and feel confident that they can achieve.

We know that many looked after children missing significant amounts of schooling have additional health needs.

The vast majority of pre-school looked after children, who had been eligible for their free nursery education, had taken up their free place, either via school or NEF (Nursery Education Fund) setting.

In previous years at Key Stage 1 the gap between the educational performances of Looked After Children and their peers had continued to narrow – year on year

In previous years at key Stage 2 there had been a consistent narrowing of the gap between children looked after and their peers in English, Science and Mathematics over the 8 year period from 2001 to 2008. This is particularly noticeable in Science.

Of those eligible 80.5% of looked after young people sat at least one GCSE in 2009, this is a great increase compared to last year where 66.7% of young people sat at least one GCSE. The number who obtained 1 or more GCSE's or equivalent grades A* - G was 69 (80.5%), an increase of 15.3% over the previous year's figure. The number who obtained 5 or more GCSE or equivalent grades **A* - G** was 49 (59.8%), an increase of 18.9% compared to the 40.9% the previous year. Between 2001 to 2008, the gap has narrowed when compared with their peers

The number who obtained 5 or more GCSE's or equivalent grades **A* - C** was 15 (18.3%). This is a 3.1% improvement on the previous year and is the highest percentage of looked after young people who have achieved 5 or more GCSE's or equivalent grades A* - C. Although this is encouraging, the trend lines between children looked after and other children in Bradford continue to diverge, due to improving performance by Bradford children generally.

What we know of the experiences of children, young people (and families) using existing services

- many children leave care with lower attainment levels than their peers.
- the gap at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage is relatively small but gets wider moving up the key stages.
- the gap is closing at KS2 but not at KS4.

- a considerable number of children miss more than 25 days of schooling in an academic year, particularly those in secondary education. Non-attendance varies significantly according to placement type.
- children sometimes miss school when placement moves take place for example; some Young People return to Bradford before any education provision has been planned. Where a home placement move requires a change of school, they need these arrangements to be well coordinated to avoid missing school or to make a successful transition. This has not always been the case up to now.
- looked after children with disabilities do not always have an effective transition.
- Personal Education Plans are a useful means of coordinating young people's educational support – but are not used for all.

National policy directives

Care Matters highlights the importance of ensuring adequate quality early years provision and the requirement to ensure that there is training and information sharing for early years practitioners, foster carers and social workers around the needs of looked after children in relation to early years education.

Other relevant directives

National Minimum Standards

2008 Children Act

Improving the educational attainment of children in care (Looked after Children). (DCSF, 2009)

Care Matters: Best Practice in Schools Working Group Report, Dame Pat Collarbone, 2007.

Narrowing the Gap (C4EO)

Statutory Guidance for designated teachers (November 2009)

Ofsted framework for schools

Inspection criteria for LAC Residential Homes.

Data Development Agenda

Further information is required around the following areas:

What young people are saying about enjoying leisure activities.

Number of children accessing extended services

Number of looked after children who are accessing play activities

Numbers of children with PEPS

What young people are saying in their reviews.

Improvement rates in attendance and attainment before/ after a young person becomes looked after.

Numbers of LAC children who are on the SEN continuum (trend over time?)

Number of LAC permanently or fixed term exclusion (trend over time)
Analysis of outcomes from the early year's inclusion panel
Within key stage/end of year teacher assessment data
Termly attainment tracking of LAC pupil progress to include progress against Fisher Family Trust estimates
Data/impact of interventions. Eg 1:1 support and additional educational support after school
Progress of LAC within other vulnerable groups. For example, do LAC with a statement make same progress as peers with a similar statement?

Services which make significant contributions

Education Bradford
School Improvement Service
Attendance Strategy Group
Education Matters Team
Behaviour Support and Education Social Work Service
Education Psychology Service
Admissions Team
Extended Services
Early Years
Culture Tourism and Sport
Foster Care
Residential Services
Care Management
Independent Review Officers

Role of Area Partnerships

Area managers need to identify a lead person with responsibility for the looked after children in their locality. As a minimum this should include robust monitoring of the children and young people in the area ensuring all locality team are co-ordinating a team around the child approach. Monitor children in each area around achievement at educational milestones. Lead person to contribute to the district wide strategy.

Action Plan: Enjoy & Achieve

(The contribution of other services and additional performance measures will be included within the action plan as agreed through the Strategy Group).

Service/Project	Contribution Which services are making significant contribution to this priority		Benefits
Project/Service Name and organisation	What activities are taking place	Lead Officer	What difference is the service making for service users and how are we measuring that difference
School Improvement Services	<p>Details of numbers of LAC in Bradford primary and secondary schools given to School Improvement Partners (SIPs). Briefing to SIPs by Education Matters Team prior to going into schools. Conversations by SIPs with Headteachers re progress of individual LAC. SIPS asking how additional Additional Education Needs (AEN) funding for LAC is used. Concerns following visit reported to EMT.</p>	<p>Phil Weston, Head of Secondary School Improvement Service and Christine Crowther, Head of School Improvement Service Primary</p>	<p>Improved outcomes. Schools becoming more aspirational for LAC Improved KS results Year by year improvement by LAC by 2 sublevels per year in English, maths and science</p>
Attendance Strategy Group	<p>Multi-agency meeting tracking attendance of all LAC. Tracking of attendance of LAC weekly in Bradford and OLA schools. Follow up with other agencies and individuals as required. Including Fostering and Adoption Service, Family and Friends Team, social workers, schools, LAC Health Team. Review approaches to improving attendance Approve or refuse requests for carers for holiday requests</p>	<p>Mike Vigurs, Strategy Manager: Behaviour and Attendance</p>	<p>Improved attendance Highlights support issues Underlines importance of attendance Provides a raft of data for services Attendance by placement type, age, year group, ethnicity, special educational needs Attendance reported to EB Leadership Team</p>

Education Matters Team	Differentiated training to group/services supporting LAC. These include social teams, individual social workers, designated teachers, schools, services in EB.	Ewen Godfrey, Head of Service – Children in Public Care	Improved support and understanding of issues faced by LAC so they are better supported in an education setting Empowering carers/social workers to promote education and high expectations Overall feedback from training excellent of good
Education Matters Team	Track progress of LAC at end of key stages. Track progress of LAC in between key stages Target extra tuition on children underperforming or working below expected national curriculum levels	Ewen Godfrey	Improved educational outcomes for LAC. Challenge to education providers to progress LAC For those receiving additional support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Improved educational progress 2) Improved self confidence 3) Improved self esteem
Behaviour Support and Education Social Work Service	LAC prioritised in Bradford Area Collaborative (BAC) process. Hard to place LAC referred to Critical Admission Panel Access to 6 day provision if fixed term or permanently excluded.	Mike Vigurs	All children in care access appropriate education provision within 20 school days Number of PE reduced
Admissions	Admission protocol for LAC LAC prioritised in transfer from pre-school to reception. LAC prioritised in transfer from primary to secondary school.	Val Jordan, Admissions Manager	To increase the stability of school and care placements. Children in care are admitted to an appropriate reception place All children in care successfully transfer to secondary school receiving their first choice school

	Develop a LAC Schools Admission Group/process for moves outside key transition times except for those children with a statement of special educational needs. The aim would be to agree on a school place before any LAC moves placement.		Children in care are admitted to an appropriate education place before a change of placement and within statutory time scales. All non stated children are in appropriate educational settings within statutory time limits and guidance.
SEN Department	Children in care prioritised by SEN Department. Annual reviews prioritised by SEN officers. SEN officer attends OLA return panel.	Glenn Allgood, SEN Team Manager	Children in care receive additional resources to address identified special needs Educational attainment of LAC with SEN matches their peers with similar needs
Education Psychology Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote LAC well-being via the SEAL agenda • Monitor LAC via Early Years Inclusion Panel • Prioritise LAC for Wave 2 & 3 interventions • Develop LAC Schools Admission Group 	Paul Nicklin, Principal Educational Psychologist and Nev Wade, Educational Psychologist	Building resilience Early Intervention Target support to vulnerable Reduce multi school moves
Residential Services	Reduce school absenteeism. Ensure arrangements in place for the early	Angela Walker	Reduction in % of children in residential provision missing 25

	identification of problems of young people not attending school, through effective monitoring and co-ordinated responses with other agencies.		days of school
Residential Services	Encourage and support young people in residential homes with their homework. Ensure all young people have a designated support for home work / school liaison (either worker or volunteer)	Angela Walker	Growing % of young people with designated support.
Independent Reviewing Officer Team	Increase the number of PEPs completed for children and young people. Ensure that PEPS are up to date and completed as part of the review process	Paul McLaughlin, Practice Manager, Childrens Safeguarding and Reviewing Unit	100% of young people with completed PEP.
Looked After Children Team	Regular engagement with young people to ensure: Close liaison with the attendance strategy group and action to address attendance to be taken in conjunction with carers, education staff etc. Children not to take holidays in school term Personal Education Plans to be in place and updated and action taken to provide extra supports, to improve educational achievement wherever possible. Change of school in year 10 and 11 to be avoided wherever possible. All looked after young people to be encouraged to undertake some qualifications in year 11, whatever educational provision they are in.	Rachel Curtis	Increased levels of Education attendance and attainment
Extended Services	Ensure LAC access the Subsidy Grant Programme. LAC are specifically targeted within the grant allocation to enable them to access the core offer – varied menu of activity, to enable them to participate in activity of	Gill Dooley	Increasing % of Looked After children accessing extended services.

	their choice subsidised by the grant.		
Early years- localities	<p>LAC progress is tracked at the end of EYFS and assessed against previous cohorts and any identified Issues tackled to ensure future improvement is maintained.</p> <p>Continue briefing sessions with social care teams to ensure that priority is given to ensuring LAC have access to quality early years provision. Maintain the promotion of the early years PEP within social care teams with an emphasis on transition arrangements from early years to school.</p> <p>Admissions for early years is standardised across the district and gives priority for looked after children</p> <p>The electronic early years PEP project is progressed with an identified lead within early years to dove tail with the electronic PEP for school aged children</p> <p>Training sessions for early years practitioners is continued to ensure that all services are fully aware of their responsibilities and the needs and issues of young looked after children</p> <p>Offer foster care services the briefing sessions currently offered to social care teams</p>	tbc	<p>Progression is measured and enables gaps to be identified and addressed.</p> <p>Social care teams are up to date with issues relating to early years provision for looked after children and are able to use PEPs to ensure partnership working to improve early years outcomes and transition to school</p> <p>Looked after children have the same rights at entry to nursery as they do at entry to school</p> <p>Clearer links with the school based PEP</p> <p>The early years children's workforce is equipped with the knowledge and awareness to offer the best possible service to young looked after children and their carers</p> <p>Foster carers are equipped with the knowledge and awareness to make positive choices around early years provision and to support looked after children more effectively</p>

Culture, Tourism And Sport Commercial & Support Services	Passport to Leisure	Taj Butt, Development Officer Equalities & Community Cohesion Culture, Tourism & Sport.	Carers and LAC now able to access a range of leisure activities across the district – <i>Take Up Of The Cards</i>
Commercial & Support Services	Contribution To The Annual Lac Event Organised Through Scene & Heard	Bobsie Robinson	Continuation Of The Event – <i>Evaluation Report Produced By Scene & Heard</i>
Leisure Services	A Range Of Out Of School And Holiday Activities In Partnership With Bfd City & Bfd Bulls	Zuby Hamard, Sport and Physical Activity Manager	Engaging More People To Get Involved In Physical & Sport Activities – <i>Number Of Individuals Taking Part</i>
Libraries	Mobile Library Service Provided To Children Homes Within The District	Joan Oddy	Encourage More Young People To Enjoy Reading – <i>Number Of Books Borrowed</i>
Commercial & Support Services	Max Cards	Bobsie Robinson	Offers Access To Museums Across The Region Including Fee Paying Ones – <i>Take Up Of Cards And An Impact Assessment Report Undertaken Mla Yorkshire</i>
Theatres	Annual Panto Event For Lac	Adam Renton	Engages Vulnerable Young People In The Arts – <i>Individuals Attending The Event</i>

4.5 Positive Contribution

Improve positive contribution outcomes for looked after children

Ambition

- We want all children being looked after to be able to take control of their lives, to make a positive contribution to their day-to day living and make their own informed choices about what they do.
- We want all young people to build their self- esteem and resilience.
- We want all young people to be able to make a positive contribution within different communities – where they live, where they go to school, both currently and in the future.
- We want all young people to be able to contribute and have a say in the future direction of service provision.

Strategy

- Develop a “Children in Care Council “to influence Service design, delivery and evaluation.
- Ensuring voices of Children in Care are taken forward.
- Minimise Children and Young People’s involvement with criminality and Criminal Justice System.
- All looked after young people should have positive role models.
- Ensure that all of the aspirations of the District Wide Participation Strategy are delivered for LAC.
- Support needs to be delivered without stigmatising LAC.
- Positive promotion of Young People’s achievements.
- Reward Schemes to be encouraged.
- Improve arrangement to support children placed out of district.

What young people telling us

These are some of the key messages from young people the GLUW Report:

- Young people want more positive role models, for example other people who have been in care, and mentors.
- Young people don’t want to be labelled as different.

- Young people want someone to love and care for them.
- Young people want 1:1 time with important people in their lives.
- Children don't feel listened to and views are not valued and therefore need to be listened to (individually and collectively)
- Young people need to see that something has changed as a result of what they have said (in some cases repeatedly over a number of years).
- Young People want to be praised for their positive achievements, not just told off when they go/ do wrong.

Current / future needs of children, young people

In Bradford, at 30 September 2009, 45 looked after young people were convicted/cautioned or had received a final warning, 11 of which were placed out of authority. Of the young people who had offended 33 were male and 12 female. The rate of offending dropped in the last year from 11.08% at 30 September 08 to 10.82% at 30 September 09. (These figures relate to young people looked after for at least 12 months)

Many looked after children and young people need support to access activities

Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers need specialised support for their specific needs eg. Language.

Experiences of children, young people using existing services

Over 92% of looked after young people participate in their reviews (08-09).

It is difficult for LAC to take part in school activities, BKYP, football clubs, extra curricula activities because home is not close enough to school. The out of school clubs and activities are not near their homes. For some LAC being Looked After means you don't have the same links with peer groups, especially those who have recently been taken into care.

Young People don't like the formality of Reviews, who is invited and sometimes where they take place. They would like more control over the Review process.

There is a marked difference between the views of children with Foster Carers and Children in Residential Homes regarding control of behaviour. Foster Carers are better able to deal with outbursts and often reward for good behaviour.

Young people want behaviour managed before Police become involved.
LAC Young People can quickly move up offending ladder because of being in care.

Children with disabilities have problems accessing activities close to home.
Disabled Children are vulnerable to inappropriate choices.
There is not sufficient level of resourcing to enable Children with disabilities and Children with complex health needs to express their view on a par with their peers.

National policy directives

1. Children's Pledge
2. Children in Care Council
3. Protocols around offending
4. Disadvantaged subsidy

5. Care Matters
6. National Minimum Standards
7. 2008 Children Act
8. Integrated youth support

Services which make significant contributions

Youth Service
Independent Review Officers
Extended Schools
Locality Services
Leaving Care Service
Residential Services
Fostering Services
Commissioned Services
Youth Offending
Seen & Heard

Action Plan: Positive Contribution

SERVICE	CONTRIBUTION		Performance Measures
	Which services are making significant contribution to this priority		
Name	What activities are taking place	Lead / Responsible Manager	What difference is the service making for service users and how are we measuring that difference
LAC/LC	Social Workers need to ensure LAC engage and meaningfully participate in their reviews. Consult YP about where Reviews take place and who is involved.	Rachel Curtis, Services Manager	Trial measurement through exit interviews
Social work teams	Ensure that no child care review takes place without the young person's views being recorded. All Social Workers to ensure that YP views are recorded on Care Plan. Rigorous scrutiny of the reasons for any review where this does not take place.	Rachel Curtis	PAF C64 – participation of looked after children and young people in their review.
LAC Team	To ensure reviews take place on time, with allocated workers having progressed plans between reviews: Social Workers to ensure that review reports are prepared fully and in time for the reviews and that reviews take place as planned where ever possible	Rachel Curtis	Reviews held on time National Indicator 66
LAC/LC Seen and Heard IYS	Develop a functioning Children in Care Council (CiCC)	Julie Jenkins/Chair of Strategy Group	Through ICS and Reporting through LAC strategy and MPC framework.
Seen & Heard	Ensure views of Children with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs (CDCHN), Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and mainstream LAC are heard and taken to Children in Care Council.	Mark Eades-Jones, Childrens Service Manager	Attendance figures Contract monitoring
Seen &	Increase quality of agreed Outcomes.	Mark Eades-	Outcome Based recording

Heard	Continue to provide advocacy services for Young People to enable them to get something stopped, started or changed.	Jones	Contract monitoring
YOT	Develop and implementation of the tripartite protocol.	Mehnaz Malik, Social Inclusion Officer for LAC	
YOT	Monitor protocol effectively through bi-annual reports to LAC Strategy Group.	Mehnaz Malik	
West Yorkshire Police	To link Neighbouring Policing Team and Safer Schools partnership to each Children's Homes to deal with incidents appropriately.	Acting Inspector Paul Robinson, Safer Neighbourhoods & Partnerships	
YOT	Diversions Activities for young people at risk of offending.	Mehnaz Malik	YOT case files
YOT	Provide training and guidance in making positive choices to other professionals.	Mehnaz Malik	
IRO Team	Encourage young people fully participate in their review. Meet individually with young people as appropriate. Make sure consultation documentation is sent to young people.	Paul McLaughlin, Practice Manager, Childrens Safeguarding and Reviewing Unit	C64 – participation in reviews
IRO Team	Ensure that LAC reviews are completed within timescales. Avoid the cancellation of reviews. Emphasise to area colleagues the importance of early notification of a child becoming looked after.	Paul McLaughlin	National Indicator 66 – Timeliness of Reviews

Residential Services	Young people in residential homes have a voice. All homes to ensure young people are supported and encouraged to be involved in residents meetings, reviews. Those young people wishing to be involved in external groups / e.g. CiC Council to be supported to take part.	Angela Walker / Anne Midgley, Service Manager, Residential	Evidence from residents meetings etc
Residential Services	Reduce number of young people in residential homes entering criminal justice system. Development of appropriate reparation options available in each home.	Angela Walker	% of young people with a conviction/warning within last 12 months
.Looked After Children Team	Appropriate support to be available to LAC who do receive a custodial sentence.	Rachel Curtis, Service Manager	% of supported young people in custody
Fostering Services	Encourage children and Young People to comment on the service they receive.	Sarah Patrick, Service Manager Adoption and Fostering	Responses from questionnaires and other feedback

4.6 Achieve Economic Well-Being

Ambition

- All young people need to be supported to aspire to;
 - Engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school.
 - Be ready for employment.
 - Live in decent homes and sustainable communities.
 - Access to transport and material goods.
 - Live in households free from low income.
- We want young people to leave care with ambition and be able to become successful adults, able to deliver their potential in an adult world.
- We want young people leaving care to be able to access all opportunities open to other young people and build on partnerships and give expression to the whole Council's corporate parenting responsibility
- We want young people to have an affordable, safe and secure place to live.
- We want young people to be able to readily access and engage in appropriate employment, education or training opportunities suitable to the diverse needs of care leavers at different stages in the leaving care process.
- We want young people to be financially better off in employment, education and training and not fall into the poverty trap.
- We want young people to receive the right support, at the right time, where they may be most vulnerable during this time of transition in their lives. If their accommodation or employment / training are at risk, that timely intervention can help them.
- We want to ensure that young people make smooth transitions by promoting positive planning rather than reactive planning so that ultimately young people leave the service at 21 (or over) who are truly independent and secure in their life.

Strategy

- Economic Wellbeing for young people leaving care is not mutually exclusive to the other ECM outcomes.
- Develop and maintain multi-agency task group to map provision and address barriers to engage young people in Education Employment Training (EET) / Non Education Employment Training (NEET).
- Promote the engagement of the most vulnerable young people into EET destinations, which is flexible, targeted and realistic from pre 16 to 21.

- It needs to be acknowledged that EET provision aimed at NEET groups of hard to engage young people leaving care can be fragmented and inadequately addressed as separately funded and/or contracted.
- Ensure the Corporate Parenting Agenda is fully realised and implemented regarding EET / NEET.
- Provide suitable housing provision of consistent quality for young people.

What young people are telling us:

Learning Employment Advice and Preparation (LEAP) was established in 2006 within the Leaving Care Service to fulfil an identified EET gap with a primary focus to intensively engage with the most vulnerable care leavers in the Service and our communities. LEAP quickly established that there were care leavers who had been NEET for several months and in some cases over a year. Through information and tracking systems LEAP can readily identify the most vulnerable young people and engage them.

In August 2008 LEAP continued to engage care leavers in partnership with Aspire-i under E2E (Entry to Employment) Tier 1. Since August 2008, LEAP has engaged with 40 care leavers with a further 12 identified to start in November 2009.

LEAP has actively engaged the views of care leavers who have engaged with LEAP provision to ensure that LEAP is continually evolving and awake to young people's requirements. From the 40 care leavers who have engaged with LEAP provision, 23 young people have completed questionnaires so far.

Key points / themes from young people who engaged LEAP;

- 91% of young people believe that it is important to have EET provision within the Leaving Care Service.
- 91% of young people expressed that their engagement with LEAP was valuable.
- 96% of young people expressed that they felt supported by LEAP.
- 96% of young people expressed that they felt valued by LEAP.
- Over 95% of young people expressed that they would be disengaged if they were not engaged with LEAP i.e. bored at home, engaging in drug, alcohol, criminal activities, de-motivated.
- LEAP provision is easily accessible by young people as it operates within the Leaving Care Service. In this framework LEAP utilises and engages holistic working practices with young people by linking in with already established support networks around the young person in the Leaving Care Service, i.e. allocated worker, housing support health support, financial support.
- Young people expressed the value of being around staff familiar and understanding to young people in the care system.
- Young people expressed the value of being around young people from a similar background within LEAP.
- Under current contractual systems (E2E framework) for LEAP, some young people are not ready or able to move on to further EET provision from LEAP provision (12 weeks maximum) and simply go back to NEET status. Progression pathways are not fluid, realistic.

Current / future needs of children, young people.

- Young people leaving care have unmet emotional, mental health, social and physical needs, which Employment, education and training (EET) / Housing provision (in isolation) cannot deal with.
- EET opportunities for young people leaving care appear out of synchronisation when compared to other young people i.e. due to a generally poor statutory education, care leavers have very poor basic skills at 16, 17 and even 18 years of age.
- Young people become ready to leave care at different stages between 16 and 18 years of age. The pathway to independent living for some will be complex and require additional support. EET provision for young people leaving care may be out of synchronisation to the rest of the population.

At 31 March 2009 there were 444 young people under the Leaving Care Service of which 265 were aged 16 – 18 and 179 were 19+

Of the total number of young people:

220 had most of their placements in Foster Care

91 had most of their placement in Residential

133 had most of their placement in other types of accommodation

(E.g. placed with parents, secure accommodation, young offender institution)

- 15 young people are engaged in Higher Education.
- 3 young people have graduated from University in September 2009
- 12 young people are identified to attend Higher Education in 2010.
- Since 2008 there have been more care leaver's within Higher Education than in prison / Young Offenders Institute (YOI).
- 230 Young People are in Further education or other forms of training (needs updating).

74% 16-18 year old care leavers were in education, employment or training (as at 31 March 2009). There has been a year on year increase over the past three years in the rate of care leavers who are in Education, Employment or Training, and conversely the proportion of NEET Care Leavers (aged 16-18) has decreased over time. Similarly the proportion of Care Leavers aged 19 who are in education, employment and training has increased and compares favourably with all three standard comparators (England, Statistical Neighbours and Yorkshire and Humber).

Children with an entrenched pattern of low achievement through their school career have a higher risk of being NEET at the end of compulsory schooling. (Thomas et al, 2008) Therefore, a consistent pattern of under-achievement at school, from primary school onwards provides an early indicator of risk for becoming NEET. Looked after children who have low educational achievement arguably have multiple risk factors for becoming NEET and therefore merit particular efforts to ensure that this does not transpire.

Young people leaving care are likely to require supported accommodation as a step towards an independent tenancy.

Experiences of children, young people using existing services.

- There is a lack of intensive EET provision which is over 12 weeks and over 12 hours per week for young people leaving care. This then creates a void in provision

i.e. a young person engages in intensive EET provision and has no where to move on to.

- There is a lack of funds available to support post 19 year olds within intensive EET provision and the majority of funding appears to be targeted at 16-18 year olds.
- Intensive EET provision in Bradford is time limited (maximum 12 weeks) at varying levels of commitment (3-12 hours per week) and offer varying range in achievements (accredited and non-accredited) (MORE provision). Within this context it is an unrealistic goal for some to move from intensive EET support to mainstream EET.
- There is a clear concern and state of flux around key agencies and EET provision which will change in the coming months; Connexions re-commissioning, LSC moving into the Council and the introduction of Foundation Learning in 2010.
- Young people leaving care who have been in prison / YOI have generally achieved more qualifications in EET provision than they would have when not in prison / YOI.
- Young people who are released from prison /YOI can drift and enter further criminal activity. EET provision for care leavers needs to be tied in with Probation / YOT / prison / YOI.
- Not all looked after young people get to go on the two weeks work experience within statutory education.
- We know that young people can sometimes be 'written off' by schools when year 11 is reached. (NB - NOT all schools).
- Links between the Looked After Children and the Leaving Care Service are getting improving working together to ensure that young people in the transition between the two services are targeted and EET provision is identified and provided.
- We know that Intensive Support Connexions PA's within the Service are pivotal to co-ordinating and engaging young people who are NEET, which is complimented by statutory service provision (LAC/LCS).
- We know that there is a lack of support in maintaining EET / engaging NEET i.e. Connexion's PA caseloads are too big for intensive support work. The Connexions PA within Leaving Care Service has a caseload currently of 95 young people.
- We know that Intensive Connexions PA's operate on a more social care model than other more generic Connexions PA's, i.e. assertive outreach, rapport building one-one etc.
- We know that (generally), EET outcomes are driven by hard targets (i.e. a young person needs to progress) and not soft targets (i.e. a young person turning up to EET provision), which are generally driven by Government targets. This is unrealistic for some young people who have complex and chaotic lives.
- EET providers can be unwilling or unable to engage with young people leaving care who have a Schedule 1 status, behavioural issues, convictions / issues of arson etc.

- We know that seamless (one stop shop) services to young people (i.e. health, EET, housing support) work better than fragmented services to young people. Protects against communication lapses when issues occur.
- We know Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers cannot access the same EET provision (i.e. EMA) than other young people
- Young people leaving care can have a fear of rejection and failure.
- We know young people leaving care may have little or no positive role models to aspire to. However the Leaving Care Service had 3 recent University graduates in July 2009.
- We know young people over 19 are experiencing the poverty trap (Benefits vs EET). There is a lack of funding / financial support for 19 (plus) year olds living with family/foster carers who want full time college or care leavers who have succeeded on addressing their issues but have no qualifications / experience (Adult Learning Grant).
- Young people leaving care and entering New Deal (18) may be set up to fail. Figures on this are not readily available, but New Deal provision / statistics on care leavers occurs in isolation of the Leaving Care Service.
- Young people leave their last statutory care placement at different points between 16 and 18 and the timing generally reflects the flow of the school year. The effect of the school year means that some young people are 16 at start of Year 11 while others reach 16 at the end.
- Some young people do not effectively move from their care placement until age 18 or over, especially where the care placement is fostering or living at home is this placement is converted into supported lodgings.
- Young people over 18 often want to return to their birth family after statutory care.
- The scope of (supported) housing for young people is variable in location and quality.
- Supported housing provision for young people in Keighley is not comparable to Bradford.
- Some young people prefer Bed and Breakfast accommodation as opposed to Hostel accommodation, supported accommodation.
- We know that there is a need for better provision for emergency accommodation for young people.
- We know some young people may never be ready for independent living.

National Policy Directives

Leaving Care Act 2000

Each young person should have a young person's advisor who will coordinate the provision of support and assistance to meet the needs of the young person. Particular

emphasis will be placed on helping the young person into education, training or employment.

Children's Services are responsible for the accommodation needs and accommodation costs of Eligible and Relevant care leavers; Guidance to the Act states that these young people should be in "suitable" accommodation" and that for most young people this will be "supported accommodation"

Care Matters and the Children and Young Persons Act 2008

Care Matters: The Time for Change. This identified that, despite improvements in socio-economic outcomes in recent years, there remained a significant gap between the outcomes of those in care and leaving care and other young people.

1996 Housing Act and 2002 Homelessness Act

At 18, care leavers become Former Relevant and Children's Services no longer has direct legal responsibility for their housing provision. Provision for supported accommodation is made within the Supporting People Plan. Under the 1996 Housing Act and 2002 Homelessness Act, the local housing authority also has a duty to homeless 18+ care leavers who are "vulnerable". From November 2009, homelessness services for 16 to 25 year olds will be provided by the TCOY as part of a housing options approach

Total Place

Total Place is the opportunity to look outside existing structures and processes to identify what is needed and to find solutions. To be ready to change, not just the delivery of services on the ground, but potentially the whole architecture from the frontline to Whitehall, through which those services are delivered.

All delivery partners in the pilot area will work together, using evidence on their population base and its' needs, as well as how money currently flows into and around the place, to identify innovative ways to deliver better, customer-led services for less. It will help them to bring together the evidence on the needs of their customers, and on what is being spent, by which agencies, and on what services, to address those needs.

National Standards in Leaving Care

"The National Standards in Leaving Care and the self-assessment process and practice database, upon which they are based, originate from the work carried out by a subgroup of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Leaving Care Project Group, which began in 2005 to update the original First Key Standards in Leaving Care published in 1996. Thanks are due to the early work done by the members of that subgroup. These new standards were developed in partnership between the What Makes the Difference? project (led by Rainer and funded by the EQUAL programme of the European Social Fund) and the National Leaving Care Advisory Service.

The standards reflect considerable changes in legislation, regulations and guidance since 1996 and have taken account of learning in good practice. They are arranged according to the five Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes contained in the Children Act 2004, the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Care Matters Green and White Papers and largely follow the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspection requirements.

Key elements of our preferred strategy:

The role of Area Partnerships in delivering the priority

- To agree and implement the Action Plan and set a future reviewing structure.
- To create a LAP (or link in with already existing partnerships) to address ECM outcomes.
- To identify existing gaps in provision and address under Economic Well Being for young people.
- To co-ordinate, implement and review EET provision which is targeted at vulnerable NEET in the district.
- To co-ordinate, implement and review suitable housing provision for young people.

Action Plan: Economic Well-Being

SERVICE	ACTION	LEAD	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
LAC Strategy, Children in Care Council	To listen and be informed by the Children in Care Council.	Children in Care Council	Track participation / views / comments.
Jason Egan Learning: Employment: Advice: Preparation (LEAP), Meaningful Opportunities and Real Employability (MORE), Activity Agreement (AA)	Ensure that the most vulnerable young people are engaged in EET appropriate to their needs and capacity.	Jason Egan, Senior Care Manager	% of EET / NEET figures for care leavers
Education Bradford, Jason Egan, Rachel Curtis	Ensure that there is a clear list provided to LCS of LAC young people from yr 10/11	Ewen Godfrey	Ensure regular lists are provided and clear communication lines are established.
Jason Egan (LEAP) Ewen Godfrey	Ensure that care leavers have the opportunity to engage and be supported in HE. Ensure that all LAC children have the options / tracked to attend HE	Jason Egan Ewen Godfrey	% of care leavers attending HE. % of LAC with aspirations of HE.
Jason Egan (LEAP), Prisons, YOI,	Clarify why young people imprisoned are classified as G5 (NEET), when it has been regularly proven that young people in prison	Jason Egan, Prisons, YOI, Learning Skills	% of young people engaged in EET in prison, YOI and their achievements.

LSC	achieve qualifications.	Council (LSC)	
Department of Work and Pensions	Ensure that care leavers who are engaged in New Deal / Job Centre is the most appropriate provision.	Department of Work and Pensions	% of care leavers engaged with New Deal / succeeding / failing
Department of Work and Pensions	Ensure a single point of contact within benefits for Social work teams to access to generate consistent and ready available information.	Department of Work and Pensions	Protect against benefits trap i.e. employment vs training. Embed cooperative working / information lines.
Learning Skills Council (LSC)	Ensure that LAC / LCS young people have access to flexible and appropriate EET provision, specifically EET provision for young people with significant issues i.e. arson, which we know EET providers will not / cannot engage.	Angela Dobson, Director 16-19 Team Bradford (LSC)	NEET reduction figures / progression rates
Learning Skills Council	Ensure that all care leavers post 19 have access to EET provision, which is flexible, easily accessible and appropriate to need and capacity of young person.	Angela Dobson	Track EET / NEET figures post 19
Learning Skills Council	Ensure that young people have the opportunity and flexibility to earn incentives appropriate to academic level and capacity i.e. introduction of EMA part payments.	Angela Dobson	Track intensive support EET / NEET figures
Learning Skills Council	Ensure that the LSC provides funding directly to EET provision which allows flexibility and engagement of vulnerable groups i.e. funding basic skills one to one, funding more fluid intensive EET provision, which is over 12 weeks and not based around EMA restrictions i.e. over 16 hours.	Angela Dobson	Track intensive support EET / NEET figures
Learning Skills Council	Explore ways to support Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers to have the right to access EET provision.	Angela Dobson	% of Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers in EET / NEET destinations.

Learning Skills Council / Aspire-i / Connexions	Ensure that EET provision is appropriately delivered, consistent and sustainable, i.e. Service vs Business.	LSC / Aspire-i / Connexions	NEET figures
LAC / LCS / Connexions	Ensure that LAC young people are engaged in EET provision and prepared for Pathways into post 16 EET provision	LAC / LCS / Connexions	NEET figures
LCS / LAC / Connexions	To continue to have Intensive Support Connexions PA's within the Service to contribute to supporting young people in accessing Education. Employment and training opportunities.	LAC / LCS / Connexions	% of EET / NEET figures for LAC/LCS young people.
LCS - Bradford / Keighley / Shipley College	Ensure that all LAC / LCS young people are fully supported in College and clear lines of communication are open.	LCS - Bradford / Keighley / Shipley College	Track % of LAC / LCS young people at College / drop out rates.
YOT / Probation Services	Ensure that all care leavers engaged with YOT / Probation work alongside Leaving Care Service	YOT / Probation / Leaving Care Service	All care leavers engaged with YOT / Probation have an appropriate EET plan.
Social Work Teams	Ensure all young people have Pathway Plans in place and action is taken to ensure appropriate EET plans are implemented.	Jason Egan / Rachel Curtis	All LAC / LCS young people have appropriate EET plans in place.
Social Work Teams / Ewen Godfrey	Ensure that all young people have the opportunity to provide confidential / impartial feedback on their EET provision.	Jason Egan / Rachel Curtis / Ewen Godfrey	Create data and track youth voice / attendance within EET provision.
Social Work Teams / Ewen Godfrey	Ensure that all young people have the opportunity to provide confidential / impartial feedback on their NEET status.	Jason Egan / Rachel Curtis / Ewen Godfrey	Create data and track youth voice / gaps within EET provision.
IRO Team	Ensure that young people do not leave care too early. IRO team to question early discharge to independent living	Paul McLaughlin, Practice Manager, Childrens Safeguarding and Reviewing Unit	Young people only leave care when ready.
IRO Team /	Support young people no longer at school to	IRO Team / Jason	Ensure that young people are receiving

Jason Egan (LEAP) / Rachel Curtis	access Education, Employment or Training. Ensure, via the review that young people have robust Pathway Plans and that they are receiving the level of support required.	Egan / Rachel Curtis	the correct EET provision for them.
Early Years	Ensure that all care leavers who are parents have the option to enter EET destinations if they so wish via childcare provision.	Vicky Hawthorne, Care to Learn Coordinator	Track the number of parents who are care leavers (NEET / EET)
Residential Services	Promote semi-independence for young people. Semi-independence programmes developed and successfully implemented for all young people	Angela Walker	Completion rates of programmes
Residential Services, Jason Egan (LEAP), Rachel Curtis	Support young people no longer at school to access Education, employment or Training. Close liaison with Connexion workers to support young people leaving school	Angela Walker	(reduce) young people who are NEET
Fostering Services	Promote preparation for Independence through ensuring all carers with young people aged 15+ to attend training provided by Leaving Care Services	Sarah Patrick, Service Manager Adoption and Fostering	% attending LC training courses

SECTION 5 IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

5.1. The role of the Strategic Group

The responsibility for implementation of the Strategy, and its ambition to improve outcomes for looked after young people rests with the Strategic Group for Looked After Children. This Strategic group will report regularly to the Children's Trust in order to demonstrate satisfactory progress is being made across each of the five outcomes. Coordinating activity for each of the outcomes lies with operational groups focused on each outcome; each group will be chaired by a member of the Strategic Group. The Strategic Group will develop appropriate arrangements are in place with the Children in Care Council to ensure they have a voice in developments.

5.2 Performance Management Arrangements

The strategy is to be monitored routinely through the overall performance management framework of the Children's Trust (CISIF – Children's Integrated Service Improvement Framework). Each of the sections of the strategy are available as a series of 'Report Cards' and accessible on-line – across the council and for key partners.

Targets for relevant National Indicators were agreed with the Trust (C&YP Partnership) Board in May 2009. Further local targets have been and will be set through the Strategy Group.

It is intended that the strategy, action plans and monitoring arrangements will evolve over time. Revisions of the strategy will be available through CISIF.

The Needs Analysis sections of the document will also develop over time as new information becomes available (as identified within the Data Development Sections of the Plan).

New partners will be able to contribute to the action plans. Information on performance, both in terms of population indicators which focus on outcomes for children and young people and service performance measures for individual contributing services will be updated routinely through CISIF.

Information from the routine monitoring and review of the strategy will therefore be available to other strategic groups, to the Trust Board and to the Local Strategic Partnership.

Appendix 1 Performance Targets

Priority and key population indicators	Brief Description	08/09 Actual	08/09 Target	09/10 Actual	09/10 Target	10/11 Target	11/12 Target	Commentary
Placement Stability								
Number of looked after children	Total number of LAC	836			840	860	840	
NI62	Stability of placement - no of moves	8.67%	10%		9%	7.00%	6.5%	
NI63	Long Term Placement Stability	72.7%	69.0%		70%	71%	75%	(9/10 and 10/11 targets set through Local Area Agreement).
% of LAC with Permanence Plan	Ensure every child, by their 2nd review has a permanence plan						100%	Data Development agenda- baseline not available.
% of LAC under 7 with Care order	Reduce no of children in care with Care Order	NEW						Data Development agenda- baseline not available. (target for 12/13 – 0%)
Number of Special Guardianship and Residence Orders in year	number of children ceasing to be looked after – through ROs/SGO's in year	1			5	12	12	
PAC C23	Children placed for adoption	5.48	7%		7%	7.5%	8.00%	
Being Healthy								
NI58	Emotional and behavioural health of children looked after	13						Score derived from Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire – targets to be generated following 31 March 2010 return

Priority and key population indicators	Brief Description	08/09 Actual	08/09 Target	09/10 Actual	09/10 Target	10/11 Target	11/12 Target	Commentary
1037SC (C19)	Health of Children Looked after	87.5%	89.0%	79.0%	89%	90%	90%	
% of health assessments completed within 28 days for children newly LAC	Ensure health assessments are completed within 28 days for children newly LAC	NEW						Data Development agenda- Baseline being developed.
No of Teenage pregnancies in year		NEW						Data Development agenda- Baseline being developed.
No of Termination in year		NEW						Data Development agenda- Baseline being developed.
No of LAC attending A&E	Number and analysis of reasons for admission to A&E.	NEW						Data Development agenda- Baseline being developed.
No of new Assessments undertaken for LAC by CAMHS		NEW						Data Development agenda- Baseline being developed.
Staying Safe								
No of YP missing from care	Reduce number of YP missing from care.	NEW						Data Development agenda- Baseline being developed.
No of YP missing from Residential Homes	Reduce number of YP missing from Residential Homes	NEW						Data Development agenda- Baseline being developed.

Priority and key population indicators	Brief Description	08/09 Actual	08/09 Target	09/10 Actual	09/10 Target	10/11 Target	11/12 Target	Commentary
Enjoy & Achieve								
3074SC (C24)	LAC missing 25 days or more of school	17.8%	11.0%	17.5%	11.0%	15%	13%	*relates to previous academic year
NI99	LAC reaching level 4 in English at KS2	43.90%	53%	42.9%	51%			Targets set through National Strategies Meeting with DCSF *relates to previous academic year
NI100	LAC reaching level 4 in Maths at KS2	48.80%	61.70%	54.30%	80.50%			Targets set through National Strategies Meeting with DCSF *relates to previous academic year
NI101	LAC achieving 5 A* - C GCSE's (or equivalent) at KS4 (including Maths & English)	12.1%	10%	9.8%	12.7%			Targets set through National Strategies Meeting with DCSF *relates to previous academic year
% of Children in Residential provision missing 25 or more of school	% of Children in Residential provision missing 25 or more of school	NEW						Data Development agenda- baseline being developed
% of YP with designated support	School aged LAC with designated support for home work / school liaison (either worker or volunteer)							*relates to previous academic year Data Development agenda- baseline being developed
% of YP with completed PEP	% PEPs completed for children and young people							Data Development agenda- baseline being developed.

Priority and key population indicators	Brief Description	08/09 Actual	08/09 Target	09/10 Actual	09/10 Target	10/11 Target	11/12 Target	Commentary
% of LAC accessing extended services	Ensure LAC access the Subsidy Grant Programme.							Data Development agenda- baseline being developed
Positive Contribution								
%	Reviews within Timescale	86.80%	95.00%		95%	95%	95%	
C63	% Participation in Reviews	95.60%	95%		95%	95%	95%	
4015SC (C18)	LAC receiving Final Warning/Convictions	2.16	2.75	2.36	2.75	2.25	2.25	
Economic Wellbeing								
NI 147	Care leavers in suitable accommodation	79%	90%		90%	90%	90%	
NI148	% EET for Care Leavers	67.70%	65.3%		70%	70%	70%	

Appendix 2 Best Practice Research

2.1 Placement Stability.

If Looked After Children do not have safe and stable placements during the time they are looked after by a local authority it becomes much more difficult to achieve good outcomes in any of the other areas.....changes in placement and lack of placement stability have a negative impact on the health and emotional wellbeing of looked after children and young people. Disruption to education, to peer relationships and particularly to children's ability to develop trusting and secure attachments to adults in childhood have lasting and damaging effects (DfES, 2008).

Adolescents being looked after

For older children, better outcomes are achieved through family support during adolescence and realism in placement planning with enhanced support and recognition for long-term foster placements. Specific recommendations on supporting placements for adolescents include:

- An early start to long-term planning;
- Listening to older children about placement preferences;
- Supporting successful long-term placements;
- Planned respite support to prevent good placements from breaking down;
- Removing children from placements where they were unhappy;
- More support and recognition of the parenting provided by foster carers, training on dealing with challenging behaviour;
- Focus on maintaining education;
- Developing policy and practice to enable some young people to remain with foster carers, or to have an ongoing relationship and support from them beyond 18.

Placement stability for children with challenging behaviour

Evidence from a small number of high-quality studies suggests that Treatment Foster Care (TFC) also known as intensive foster care is a promising intervention for older children whose home situation or placement has broken down for severe behavioural reasons including persistent offending behaviour. The intervention appears to work for a range of children and youth with behavioural and emotional disorders, particularly those with conduct disorders and delinquency (MacDonald and Turner, 2007). Reported outcomes include improved placement stability.

Achieving placement stability with 'family and friends' placements

Where a 'friends and family' placement or 'kinship care' is possible, a recent overview of studies (Stein, 2009) confirms that it is vital that the child is placed within six months of being received into care. Evidence suggests that placements with fathers should be considered, not just return to the mother. Placement with other relatives can be successful, suggesting that a broad notion of kin should be explored in seeking placement.

They authors concluded that current best evidence suggests that children in kinship care may do better than children in traditional (non kinship foster care) in terms of their:

- Behavioural development;
- Mental health functioning;
- Placement stability.

Children in kinship care did less well in terms of

- Accessing services;
- Permanency outcomes.

The Quality Protects research (Stein, 2009) also reported that overall family and friends placements produced higher well-being scores and lasted longer.

Placement with parents

Children placed with parents did better if the child wanted to be with their parents and did not have a need code for abuse on their case file. Children who wanted to be removed from their parents did less well on return and placements were more likely to break down. Good practice for reunification with parents involves:

- realistic assessment;
- clear planning;
- a commitment from all the stakeholders;
- carrying out the agreed plan within the time-scale;
- carers who support the plan, and
- maintaining continuity including links with siblings and school.

Factors associated with failed return home include:

- Parental drug and alcohol use;
- Domestic violence;
- Previous failed attempt at return;
- Child not wanting to return;
- Abuse or neglect;
- Being in care for more than six months.

(Stein, 2009)

Support for young people leaving care

Young people settled in placements should leave care as young people leave home, gradually, with a chance of return and back-up support from those who have been looking after them.” (Stein, 2009:40)

2.2 Best practice/ research: Being Healthy

The main message from National research is that what works is to **prevent** children from developing emotional or mental health problems by promoting children’s psychological well-being and ensuring that they have the building blocks of good mental health not merely the absence of problems. It is worth looking at the argument for well-targeted, preventive strategies that have been identified by the Narrowing the Gap reviews:

- supporting parents to parent in a positive way;
- providing a good housing and local environment including opportunities for play and positive activities;
- providing high-quality educational settings that value and promote children's psychological well-being and mental health;
- intervening early with well-evidenced approaches when there are first signs of problems;
- targeted support using well-evidenced interventions for vulnerable groups;
- listening to children and young people;
- providing high-quality, accessible play opportunities;
- providing a good home-learning environment.

(Coghlan et al, 2009; Kendall et al, 2008.)

2.3 Best practice/ research: What best works – Enjoy and Achieve.

A Better Education for Children in Care (2003)

The SEU has identified five key reasons why children in care underachieve in education:

- (i) Too many young people's lives are characterised by instability;
- (ii) Young people in care spend too much time out of school or other place of learning;
- (iii) Children do not have sufficient help with their education if they get behind;
- (iv) Carers are not expected, or equipped, to provide sufficient support and encouragement at home for learning and development; and

(v) Children in care need more help with their emotional, mental or physical health and wellbeing.

Strategic, structural and process issues in education for looked after children

Aspiration and attainment amongst young people in deprived communities (Social Exclusion Task Force 2009)

A policy review of children and young people – a discussion paper

HM treasury and Department for Education and Skills. (2007)

2.4 Best practice/ research (Positive Contribution)

LAC research paper – ECM outcome Enjoy & Achieve which shows National Research on:

Voice in decision making

The Youth Justice Board has a series of effective practice guides, and commissions and recommends programmes based on evidence of effectiveness of interventions with looked after young people.

Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme

In response to evidence that 3% of young offenders were committing a quarter of juvenile crime the ISSP was developed. In the first two years of the programme it showed a 39% reduction in re-offending for those taking part plus a reduction in seriousness of offences by those who did re-offend.

Treatment (Intensive) Foster Care for children with challenging behaviour including offending behaviour

Treatment foster care (TFC) also known as intensive foster care is designed to enable foster carers to sustain placements for children with very challenging behaviour whose difficulties or circumstances place them at high risk of placement breakdown, leading to multiple placements and/or secure placements. TFC is also used as a youth justice disposal to address offending behaviour and is to be recommended for national roll-out following successful pilots for the Youth Justice Board.

Treatment foster care aims to provide foster carers with the skills they need to manage challenging behaviour: conduct disorder; delinquency; emotional and psychological disorders; complex medical conditions and the challenges associated with caring for children who may have suffered maltreatment.

- Foster carers are typically offered routine and accessible support from staff expert in managing behaviour.
- Direct work with the children and young people is undertaken or made available.
- Immediate access to child and adolescent mental health services is provided.
- Where relevant, steps are taken to minimise the influence of peers e.g. with delinquent youth, and to maximise that of the foster carers

(MacDonald and Turner, 2007:6).

Barnardos “Voice” participation resource.

A resource that includes guidance for practitioners that was written with young people and includes Recruitment panels, Service Evaluation and Participation training.

2.5 Best practice/ research (Economic Well-being)

No place like home report: A National Voice

ANV carried out a large survey of the housing needs of Care leavers. They surveyed almost 300 care Leavers around England as well as almost 300 professionals who work with care leavers (Housing Professionals and Leaving Care Workers/Personal Advisors).

Child Well-Being Index (CWI)

January 2009 the CWI acquires information from a wide variety of sources, including health, education, crime, housing and environment.

Bradford was placed 335 out of 354 LA districts as an average score based upon the CWI.

Into the mainstream

A JRF funded piece of research looking at the experiences of care leavers entering work, education and training.

“Research has shown that young people leaving care are less likely to be involved in education, training or employment and are more vulnerable to poor life chances and social exclusion in later life. This study sought to examine care leavers’ transitions to independent living and to identify the factors that help and hinder their economic engagement.”