
CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY

Improving services and outcomes for looked after children and care leavers through
good and effective corporate parenting



2018-2022

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
Children in Care and Care Leavers

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Opening statements

Chloe Mutton and Reece Graves,
Co-Chairs for the Young Adult
Council / Apprentice Participation
workers

Hello, our names are Chloe Button and
Reece Graves.



We are the co-chairs of the young adult
council, which is also known YAC.

We work as apprentice participation
workers for Virtual School Kent, (VSK)
however, we are care leavers ourselves
and are very passionate about ensuring
that Kent County Council (KCC) has
strong, vibrant and diverse children in
care councils.

In Kent we have 3 children in care
councils to ensure we hear the views and
opinions of all age groups. Through our
work we have seen how children and
young people's views and opinions can
make a real difference and help shape
the service children and young people
receive.

Matt Dunkley, CBE - Corporate
Director for Children, Young
People and Education



Our strategy to
deliver good and
effective corporate
parenting provides
a clear commitment
across all agencies
in Kent to
safeguard and
promote the welfare
of our children

in care and care leavers. KCC is
committed to be the best possible
corporate parent we can be and make
Kent a county that works for all children.

The strategy will set out our key services
for looked after children, young people
and care leavers. As corporate parents
we are aspirational for our children and
young people in care, supporting them
to achieve in all areas of their lives and
ensuring a smooth transition to
adulthood. We give our commitment to
listen to children and young people,
involving them in decision making and
service development. We will be there to
improve their opportunities and ensure
they have the best possible care in both
their childhood and as care leavers.

KCC are extremely proud of all our
children and young people and will
regularly celebrate and support their
achievements. I am committed to our
children being able to look back at their
time in care as a positive and fulfilling
experience, full of good childhood
memories and having gained the
confidence to go forward and succeed in
their adult life.

Roger Gough, MEM Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education

As a corporate parent, and the cabinet member responsible for the services that KCC Provides to children in care and care leavers, I welcome this strategy.



Being a corporate parent means both caring about and taking responsibility for the young people in our care, both their current welfare and future opportunities.

We are determined to be the very best corporate parents that we can be. The voice of the child and young person is central to all we do, and our children in care councils are vital in expressing that voice.

Ann Allen, MBE Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel/Deputy of Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education



It is essential that the voice of the child is heard.

The contribution from our children in care council and our apprentices is invaluable and

Indeed I could not fulfil my role as a corporate parent without their guidance and support.

As parents we all want the best for our children. We are proud of their achievements and create opportunities to celebrate with them as families. As corporate parents it is our responsibility and duty to treat our looked after children as we would our own children.

I am proud of all our young people and their achievements and it is a privilege to work with them. We must take every opportunity to champion for them.

On behalf of the corporate parenting panel I thank you all.

Good and effective corporate parenting in Kent; our vision

The role of the corporate parenting panel is to lead on and ensure that the corporate parenting roles and responsibilities of the council are being met.

The panel is chaired by a county councillor cabinet member. It is the responsibility of all members, not just the lead members for children's services, to be a corporate parent by ensuring that our children receive the right support to enable them to reach their full potential. At KCC we take seriously our moral duty as well as our legal responsibilities to our children and we will continue to strive to improve our services so that our children and young people can experience happy and fulfilling lives by providing warm and nurturing care.

Good corporate parents, just like all good parents need to understand and know what is happening to their children and young people. In Kent this means continuing our improvement journey in ensuring the information that all agencies collect about children in care and care leavers is used to the best advantage, sharing information with each other appropriately. Performance scorecards for children in care and care leavers are reported to the corporate parenting panel for scrutiny, oversight and future work planning to help ensure improved management of performance and outcomes delivered by our services as well as ensuring our children are not disadvantaged by their characteristics or background.

Good corporate parenting is about doing what any parent should do to promote the safety and welfare of their child by: -

- Keeping children at the centre of everything that we do
- Ensuring good results through the support needed to fulfil their potential in life especially in relation to education and health
- Providing the quality of care necessary in achieving the best possible outcomes
- Effective partnership working including working across agency boundaries
- Knowing how many children and young people are in care
- Knowing the profiles of the children and young people (gender, age, race, religion, sex, disability) they have responsibility for within their local authority
- Being ambitious for our children and celebrating their achievements
- Providing good quality local placements through a range of services including Fostering, Adoption, Virtual School (VSK) and the Care Leavers Service, taking into consideration the needs of the child, their background and where they would be best placed

The delivery of warm and nurturing corporate parenting can refer to the functions undertaken by staff in the local authority, district councils, health services, police, schools and further education establishments and other partners working to promote the welfare and safety of children and young people.

This means:

- The provisions of suitable placements for children who cannot live with their birth families
- Suitable accommodation and support for young people aged 16 and over
- The opportunity for young people in foster care to remain with their carers after the age of 18 (staying put)
- Ensuring education needs are appropriately assessed, supported, and maximized for future life chances through further education, training and employment
- Ensuring health needs are appropriately assessed and supported, and the opportunity to maximize their health through life skills development and healthy choices, with guidance and support around healthy sexual relationships and reducing risks associated with using alcohol and substances
- Ensure the emotional needs are assessed and supported to minimize the impact of adverse life experiences such as access to mental health and offering support or treatment and the opportunities to build protective relationships such as contact with siblings
- Identify social needs and ensure support is given through opportunities

to make peer relationships, undertake positive activities and contribute more widely to their communities

What it means to be 'in care'

There are 3 main routes by which children can be taken into care

- Care orders made by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989
- Voluntary accommodation arrangements under section 20 of the Children Act 1989
- Police protection or involvement with the youth justice system and since 2013 all young people who are remanded into custody within the youth justice system

The term children looked after has a specific legal meaning based on the Children Act 1989.

A child is looked after by a local authority if he or she has been provided with accommodation for a continuous period of more than 24 hours, in the circumstances set out in sections 20 and 21 of the Children Act 1989 or is placed in the care of a local authority by an order made under part IV of the Act.

What it means to be a 'care leaver'

A care leaver is a person who has been 'looked after' or 'in care' for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, and who was in care on their 16th birthday.

A young person's status as a care leaver can be divided into the following:

- Eligible child - a young person who is 16 or 17 and who has been looked after by the local authority/health and social care trust for at least a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14, and who is still looked after
- Relevant child - a young person who is 16 or 17 who has left care after their 16th birthday and before leaving care was an eligible child
- Former relevant child - a young person who is aged between 18 and 25 (or beyond if being helped with education or training) who, before turning 18 was either an eligible or a relevant child, or both

The Children Act 1989 and 2004 requires local authorities to provide all eligible care leavers with a pathway plan and both a personal adviser and ongoing financial assistance. In May 2013 the government published further guidance for local authorities with regards to arrangements for facilitating care leavers to “stay put” in their foster placements after they reach the age of 18 years.

What it means to be an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people have often faced significant hardship and trauma, due to their travel and cultural heritage before arriving in this country.

Arrival is by various means and methods, from families paying agents to facilitate their travel by aeroplane or car, or by being smuggled, trafficked and hidden in vehicles or shipping containers.

On arrival, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people are considered as extremely vulnerable as they often have no identified parent or family member providing care or support, making them vulnerable to a high risk of exploitation, trafficking, offending and ill health. The local authority is responsible to provide care for them and consider them as children looked-after.

KCC is responsible for several major border control entrance points, at the ports of Dover, Folkestone and Ramsgate and children or young people that are often found at these ports, become the responsibility of KCC.

Over recent years, Kent had the highest number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people.

In 2016 the government introduced the national transfer scheme which now means all local authorities should take the same number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children as everyone else in the country, those with more than 0.7% are dispersed nationally.

KCC must ascertain or determine their age and may undertake an age assessment to support their circumstances and future needs of support.

Children looked-after by other local authorities

In addition to children and young people looked after by KCC more than 1200 children are placed in Kent by other local authorities largely because Kent has relatively inexpensive housing stock compared to the rest of the London and South-East region.

The Kent safeguarding children's board recognises that the number of children and young people placed in our care by other local authorities is extremely high. Work is ongoing to ensure they are safeguarded and the placing authorities are aware of the challenges associated with the high number of placements. This is especially relevant to ensure children who go missing are protected from exploitation such as child sexual exploitation, gang related activity, extremist ideology and modern slavery.

KCC and its partners have levels of responsibility to meet the needs of these children and young people, and will work together to ensure that we continue to:

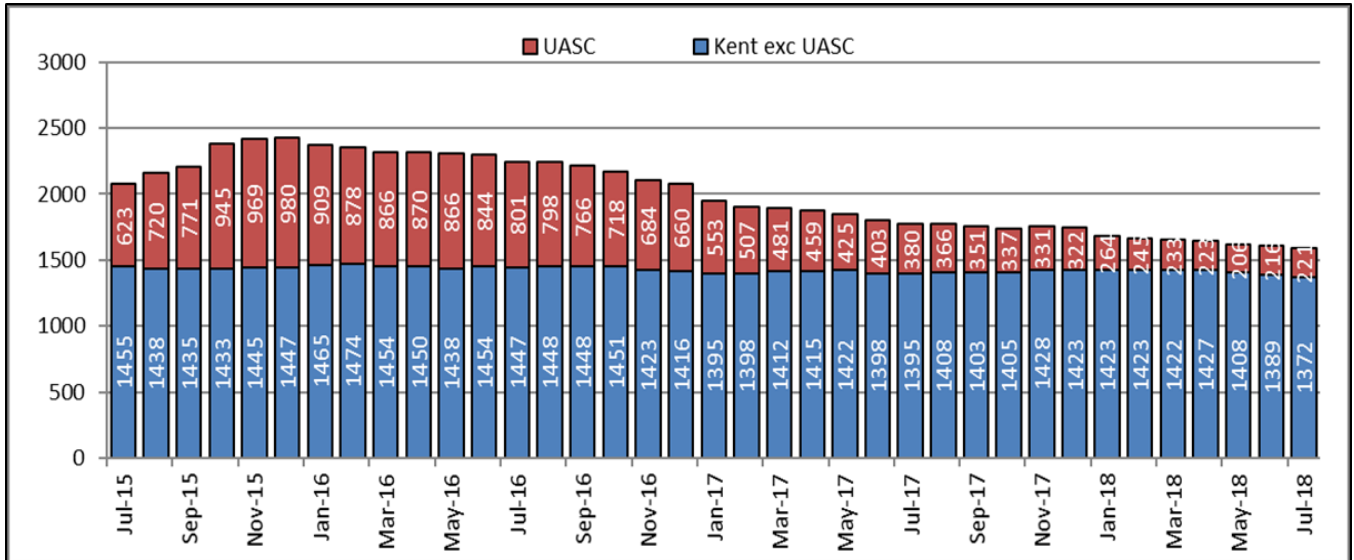
- Work with the corporate parents of (the placing local authorities) of these children and young people to ensure effective communication about where children and young people are living in Kent
- Ensure placing authorities know the areas of Kent which have high numbers of children in care (such as Thanet) and the additional challenges that further placements in these areas would bring as set out in the 'out of authority placement of children in care' Supplement to the Children Act 1989,

Volume 2: care planning, placement and case review guidance July 2014

- Be proactive in encouraging placing authorities to identify ways in which more children and young people can be enabled to remain living closer to their families, friends and local communities
- Challenging other local authorities when it has been identified the children placed in Kent are not having their needs met.

A profile of Kent's children in care cohort (as at July 2018)

Number of children in the care of Kent County Council; including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children



Children looked-after by local authority from 31 March 2014 to 31 July 2018

	numbers and rates per 10,000 children aged under 18 years									
	numbers					rates				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	Jul-18	2014	2015	2016	2017	Jul-18
England	68820	69500	70450	72670	N/A	60	60	60	62	N/A
Kent	1820	1870	2310	1900	1593	56	57	70	57	48

Placement types

Children looked after at 31 July 2018 by percentage in placement

Number	Percentages									
	IFA	KCC Foster Care	KCC Residential	Moving to Independence	Other	P&V	Placed for Adoption	Placed with Parents	Relatives and Friends	
Kent	1593	14.2%	58.9%	1.9%	9.0%	1.7%	7.0%	3.0%	1.2%	3.0%

Children looked after at 31 July 2018 by percentage of legal status

Number	Percentages							
	Gender		Age in years					
	Male	Females	Under 1	1 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 15	16 plus	
Kent	1650	61.3%	38.7%	3.9%	7.1%	15.0%	42.0%	32.0%

Children looked-after at 31 July 2018 by percentage age and gender

Number		Percentages						
		Gender		Age in years				
		Male	Females	Under 1	1 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 15	16 plus
Kent	1593	60.5%	39.5%	3.5%	6.3%	14.3%	43.8%	32.0%

Reasons in percentages for care entry for children who started to be looked after between Aug 17 to July 18

Number of children who started to be looked after between Au17 to Jul 18*	Percentages							
	Abuse or neglect	Child's disability	Parents illness or disability	Family in acute stress	Family dysfunction	Socially unacceptable behaviour	Low Income	Absent parenting
737	27.6%	2.2%	1.0%	11.6%	27.6%	2.0%	0.0%	24.0%

*where a child started more than one episode of care in the timeframe, only the first episode has been counted

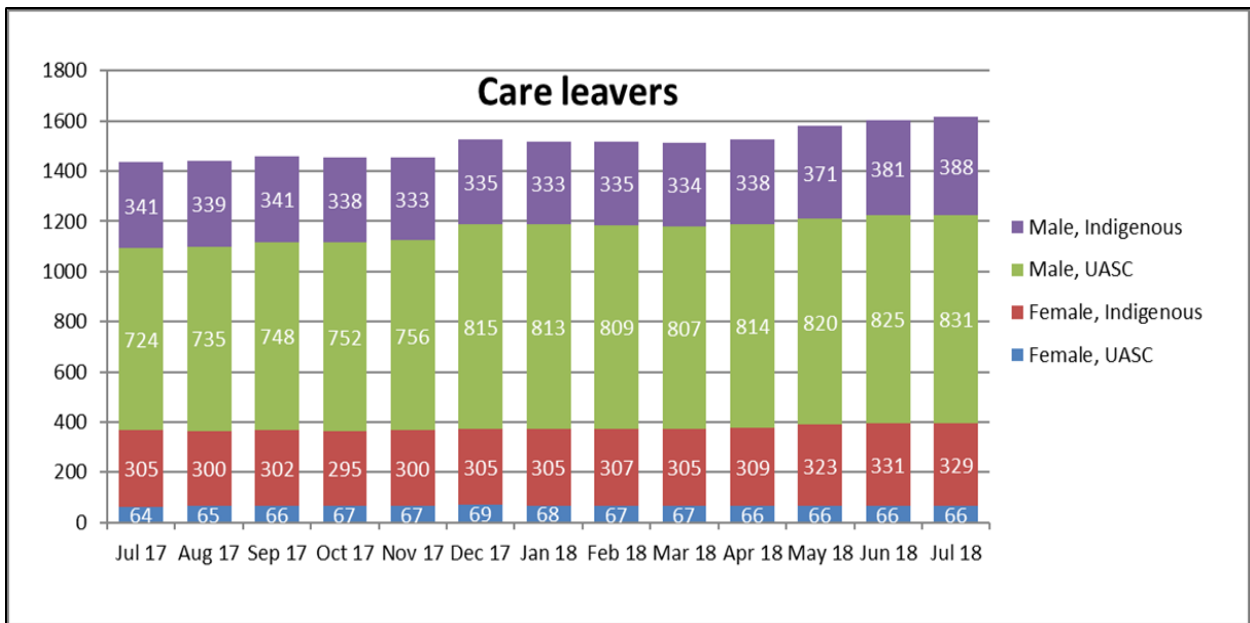
Children looked-after at 31 July 2018 by ethnic origin percentage

Number	Percentages				
	White	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Other ethnic groups
1593	78.6%	5.3%	2.3%	5.7%	8.1%

Education status of Kent children in care at 31 July 2018

Education Status	Total
Full Time Education	1172
Full Time Employment with no planned Training	4
Full Time Employment with planned Training	4
Full Time Training	5
Not in Education, Employment or Training	105
Not Recorded	245
Part time Employment, Education or Training	55
Unemployed for other reason	3
Grand Total	1593

Care Leavers cohort as at 31 July 2018



Ethnicity of Care Leavers as at July 2018

Ethnicity	Total
A1 - White British	626
A2 - White Irish	2
A3 - Any other White background	33
A5 - Gypsy/Roma	10
B1 - White and Black Caribbean	9
B2 - White and Black African	8
B3 - White and Asian	6
B4 - Any other mixed background	18
C1 - Indian	2
C2 - Pakistani	4
C3 - Bangladeshi	1
C4 - Any other Asian background	49
D1 - Caribbean	1
D2 - African	447
D3 - Any other Black background	5
E1 - Chinese	1
E2 - Any other ethnic group	392
Grand Total	1614

Age of Care Leavers as at July 2018

Current Age	Total
16	5
17	30
18	411
19	556
20	447
21	130
22	18
23	11
24	6
Grand Total	1614

Vulnerabilities of children in care and care leavers

Exploitation

KCC acknowledges that children in care and care leavers, due to their life experiences, are potentially more vulnerable and therefore more at risk of being exploited. Children and vulnerable young adults can be exploited through many ways and children in care teams and the leaving care service work closely within Kent's safeguarding children and adult procedures to ensure that both children and adults are protected from this and all forms of abuse.

Children who go missing

Looked after children missing from their placements are particularly vulnerable. They may have been coerced to run away by someone else. There are concerns about the links between children running away and the risks of sexual exploitation. Missing children may also be vulnerable to other forms of exploitation, to violent crime, gang exploitation, or to drug and alcohol misuse.

Kent uses its Missing Children protocol and offers a return interview to all children and young people returning from a missing episode. Care leavers in the 18+ Service take a similar approach where young people are tracked, and Personal advisers will address the needs of citizen young people who go missing. Asylum care leavers who go missing are triaged with the police and home office and often due to the need of this service group, are robustly monitored by team managers.

Child sexual exploitation

Kent Safeguarding Children Board has implemented a strategic action plan to improve identification and protection of all children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation including children in care and extending advice to care leavers. Significant multi-agency work is being undertaken including training, toolkits and data collection to ensure that all staff are aware of child sexual exploitation, and this knowledge is being used to identify at the earliest opportunity, cases of potential child sexual exploitation.

Quality assurance work, training for foster carers, support and interventions are in place to improve Kent's overall response to child sexual exploitation. This remains a key priority for Kent's safeguarding children board and this strategy to work in partnership with all agencies to address child sexual exploitation.

For further information on child sexual exploitation click [here](#).

Gangs strategy

We have wider responsibility for the safety and welfare of children looked-after and care leavers. These vulnerable groups can often become involved in gang related incidents, so we work closely with partner agencies to agree key principles to be adopted by all agencies identifying and responding to young people at risk of or being affected by gang activity.

For further information on gangs click [here](#).



PREVENT

As corporate parents we are committed to ensure the safety of our children in care and care leavers. The prevent strategy is focused on safeguarding people from radicalisation and extremism. We all have a lead role in delivering the prevent strategy in Kent in accordance to the guidance and working with key partners, the police, health, district councils and home office.

Prevent has 3 key themes:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism
- Support vulnerable people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism
- Work with key sectors and institutions to address risks and issues

Our responsibilities include us to regularly challenge and scrutinise circumstances and liaise with partner agencies accordingly, following the prevent guidance.

Modern slavery

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 was legislated in March 2015 as an instrument to combat the growing issue of human slavery by bringing perpetrators to justice and protecting and supporting victims. The modern slavery act brings together trafficking, facilitation and exploitation offences under one Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (MSHT) bill.

As Corporate Parents we have a responsibility to ensure that children in our care or who are leaving our care, (both unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and Kent citizen) are not exploited through being trafficked or made to work illegally or to work in poor conditions through modern slavery.

Any child that is transported for exploitative reasons is considered a trafficking victim, because it is not considered possible for children to give informed consent. It is therefore important that all unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are considered to possibly being at greater risk of being trafficked either from other countries into the UK or from one part of the UK to another.

All social workers and personal advisers can access the Kent safeguarding children board training on trafficking and will follow the procedures on any child, (unaccompanied asylum-seeking children or citizen) believed to be risk.

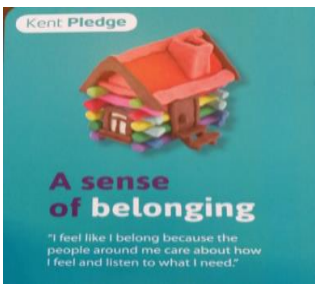
Youth Offending Service (YOS) and Probation

As corporate parents we recognise how the vulnerability of our children looked after and care leavers can make them at risk of becoming involved in offending. We work closely with the police, youth offending service and probation to ensure that looked after children are not unnecessarily criminalised especially for incidents which can be resolved through informal restorative approaches outside of the criminal justice system. We expect foster carers and residential placements to have ways of managing

challenging behaviour that does not involve the police unless necessary.

We have partnership agreements that ensure that when a child in care or care leaver is involved in the criminal justice system they will have a coordinated plan that will offer support, challenge and the opportunity to repair the harm for their offences. This includes those young people who are in custody, who will have a resettlement plan that ensures timely suitable accommodation, education and employment, health provision and other support are in place for their release to reduce the risk of reoffending.

Our promise to children in care and care leavers



KCC has made six [pledges](#) to our children and young people in care and [care leavers](#) and

every effort is made to ensure its aspirations are made a reality.

KCC pledges many things to ensure children and young people's time in care is a positive experience.

The six pledges are based on the following themes:

- A sense of belonging
- Getting ready for being an adult
- Championing your needs and interests
- An adult who is always there for you while you are in care

- A good education
- Good memories for the future

KCC know from experience supporting young people through the process of leaving care that many do go on to achieve success in their lives, and they value continuing support during adulthood from their corporate parents.

Voice of the children and young people

Our children and young people in care council (OCYPC) and the super council



KCC and VSK support OCYPC (for 11 to 16 year olds) and the super council (for 7 to 11-year olds).

VSK apprentices help to organise and support council meetings for children and young people in care. The groups meet regularly and are facilitated and supported by staff from the VSK and apprentices, who are Kent care leavers.

The lead member and the director for specialist children's services have also attended the meetings.

OCYPC has expanded over recent years to engage more with children in care and ensure its representatives reflect all children in care and include the diverse needs and back grounds of children and young people.

The young adult council (YAC)



This is the Children in Care Council's older representative group of young people,

facilitated by care leaver apprentices and predominantly attended by care leavers aged 16 – 21. The purpose of YAC is to help change things for the better for children in care and care leavers, to help ensure they have a good experience and become happy successful adults. YAC responds to commitments in the Kent Pledge and Care Leaver's Charter enabling young people to be consulted and involved in consultations about the service they receive. The meetings give young people a chance to have their say on improvements to be made to help them and others. They also get the chance to socialise, take part in activities and events, and meet other young people and staff in KCC who make the decisions about their future.

For further information please click [here](#).



Advocacy

The young lives foundation is commissioned to deliver the representation rights and advocacy service, based locally in Kent. Advocacy for children: -

- Children in care
- Care leavers aged 18 – 25

- Children in need
- Children subject to a child protection plan
- Independent visitors for children in care aged 8 – 18 years;
- Independent person for stage 2 complaints under Children Act 1989
- Accompanying adult's service for age assessment interviews for UASC.

Children and young people can make self-referrals or be referred by their carers, key worker, social worker or personal advisor.

For further information please click [here](#).

Independent review officers

The roles of independent reviewing officers (IROs) is to scrutinise and monitor the implementation of care plans for children in care until the age of 18. IRO's provide independent oversight of the quality of services being provided for children in care and record their "footprint" on the child's file. They provide challenge where there is drift, delay or poor outcomes for children and young people. IRO's champion the voice of the child and ensure that their views are listened to and will meet children before their review meetings. They will also encourage the child's participation in review meetings and ensure that children understand their right and entitlements. IRO's may also meet the child between reviews to help ensure they understand their plan.

Accommodation and sufficiency

The government has made it a statutory requirement for all local authorities to have a sufficiency strategy since 2011. The sufficiency strategy will review, evaluate and project accommodation required for children in care and care leavers. Kent has faced significant challenge over recent years in respect of the rise of unaccompanied asylum seekers, as well as intensifying financial challenges with the political landscape in Kent changing and adapting to legislative changes have presented additional expectations for Kent to meet. The dedicated accommodation team in the 18+ care leaver's service manages this transition, supporting personal advisors and providing advice regarding available accommodation as well as ensuring both quality and standards of such accommodation is acceptable to KCC.

The requirement for local authorities to support and monitor arrangements whereby young people remain with their former foster carers beyond their eighteenth birthday is set out in S.12 of the Children Act 1989.

'Staying put' arrangements enable young people to remain with their former foster carers to help ensure that they are adequately prepared for adulthood.

For further information on staying put click [here](#).

The transition to adulthood

We want to actively ensure effective transitions to support young people to become valued young adults and contributing to their communities. As some children in care and care leavers have additional needs, we must ensure that we work in partnership with colleagues in adult services for the success of some of our vulnerable young people leaving care. Vulnerable adults (VA) Joint Working protocol has agreed that the key services for young adults will have an identified VA lead to improve communication and work together to ensure support with transitional arrangements and issues and implement a shared approach to implementing support care plans and lead responsibilities with packages of support, such as accommodation.

Our future aspirations

Together with service user feedback, Ofsted inspectors report and our data profile with analysis, these inform the following challenges in Kent, working with children looked-after and care leavers:

- Reducing the number of children and young people who need to become looked after through integration with our Early Help Service
- Ensure national transfer scheme implementation and the timely dispersal of UASC.
- Improving our response to 16 and 17-year old's who present as homeless, through improving integration with our early help service and working closely with local housing authorities

- Develop a stable social work workforce through recruiting sufficiently skilled and experienced permanent social work staff and personal advisers
- Provide a comprehensive learning and development offer to social workers and personal advisers to support them in their interventions with children and young people
- Ensure equitable and manageable caseloads across all specialist children's services
- Ensuring wherever possible, children and young people are enabled to return home to live with their parents, extended family or achieve permanency through adoption and special guardianship orders
- Recruiting and retaining foster carers with the right skills, in
- Increase apprenticeship opportunities for all
- Ensure effective data information regarding care leavers
- Develop effective young parents' assessment programme
- Improving restorative responses to children in care who offend and improving joint working with youth offending and probation services
- Provide intervention and support to children in custody and exit from custody with better care planning
- Develop a creative and innovative approach to build on statutory practice and improve outcomes for children in care and young people leaving care; include drop-ins and

sufficient numbers and in the right areas of the county

- Ensuring timely and effective support for the emotional and mental health needs of our children in care and care leavers
- Develop effective accredited transition skills programme to support children looked-after and care leavers
- Ensure placement sufficiency and good quality accommodation with support for care leavers working with district councils and providers
- Increase the number of children and young people who are in education, training and employment

open days enabling access to information and services

- Increase staying put arrangements within Kent
- Improving transitions from children in care to leaving care and where appropriate transferring to or accessing additional support from adult services
- To ensure KCC can implement the requirements of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Homeless Reduction Act

Our strategic priorities and plan

How well we commission or provide services for looked after children and care leavers.

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Effective sufficiency strategy and resource enabling good transitions with housing support to children in care and care leavers	Implement sufficiency strategy	Commissioning service Corporate parenting service
Children's Social Work Services (CSWS) partnership with district councils to provide; Effective response to homeless 16 and 17-year old's	Develop 16 & 17-year-old joint housing protocol	CSWS
Care leavers with sustainable housing and accommodation options, securing permanent tenancy and avoiding the use of bed & breakfast	Establish partnership with JPPB and address sustainable housing options for care leavers	CSWS
Embed housing related support to provide accommodation options	Develop housing related support	CSWS, Commissioning 18+ Care leavers service
Establish Total Placement Service (TPS) process for accommodation for 18+ care leavers Service	Commission Catch 22 to provide good quality supported lodgings to our staying put arrangements for care leavers	Commissioning 18+ Care leavers service
	Care leavers to be in suitable accommodation	
	Use panels to ensure housing options are sufficient for all young people leaving care and reduce cost to 18+ care leavers service	18+ Care leavers service CSWS Commissioning
	Establish and improve partnership between TPS and 18+ accommodation team	TPS and 18+
Support independent and proactive Advocacy	Young lives foundation advocacy service is commissioned to provide service to all children in care and care leavers	Commissioning service
Improve access to services for care leavers	Establish drop-ins with early help services using youth hubs	18+ Care leavers service

How well our children looked-after do at school, both academically and in terms of other achievements.

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Reduce the number of children looked-after and care leavers who are not in employment education or training (NEET)	<p>NEET inter-dependency meeting to target vulnerable groups</p> <p>Explore support and access to ESOL</p>	<p>Corporate parenting service</p> <p>Corporate parenting service VSK</p>
Nil exclusions of children looked-after	<p>VSK to work in partnership with school's key workers to avoid permanent exclusions</p> <p>Monitor and review fixed term exclusion cases, explore patterns and look at addressing any learning</p>	<p>VSK</p> <p>VSK</p>
Becoming effective lifelong learners and reaching aspirations	<p>VSK to monitor and target children and young people not achieving their potential and provide support and services to address this. Reduce the number of NEET cases</p> <p>VSK NEET officer to support staff with enabling access to apprenticeships</p>	<p>VSK</p> <p>VSK 18+ Care leavers service</p>
Recognise and celebrate the achievements	Regular recognition and annual celebration of academic achievements	<p>Corporate parenting service VSK 18+ Care leavers service</p>

How good the health and wellbeing of the children in our care is.

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Greater understanding of health needs for all children looked-after with timely completion of initial and review health assessments and Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQs)	<p>Ensure process for health assessments is adhered to</p> <p>Review SDQs to establish support with procurement of training, services and support to staff, foster carers and key workers.</p> <p>Review emotional wellbeing strategy</p>	<p>LAC health service 18+ Care leavers service</p> <p>Corporate parenting service Children in care teams</p>
Care leavers to understand health needs with good quality health summaries	<p>Ensure all care leavers have a health summary and history</p>	<p>LAC health service</p>
Access to good quality health care, advice and guidance	<p>Promote and enable access to sexual health services and anti-natal support</p> <p>Promote and enable access to alcohol and substance misuse support</p> <p>Develop preparation for parenthood guidance</p>	<p>LAC health service Commissioned sexual health services Commissioned alcohol and substance services 18+ Care leavers service Corporate parenting service</p>
Improve mental health services for all children looked-after and care leavers with responsive CAMHS	<p>Evaluate health needs and identify complex issues to streamline CAMHS involvement</p>	<p>LAC health service CAMHS</p>

How stable and secure are the lives of our looked-after children while they are in care and those leaving care.

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
<p>Effective match of placements and permanency leading to cost effective sustainable placements</p> <p>All children in care and care leavers to be in stable placements</p>	<p>TPS to ensure placement suitability and rising 18 placements are reviewed</p> <p>TPS to undertake matching of all placements for children in care</p> <p>Accommodation team to approve all post 18 accommodation needs</p> <p>Reduce placement stability indicator</p> <p>All 16+ children looked-after are considered for staying put</p>	<p>TPS, 18+ Care leavers service; Accommodation team</p> <p>TPS</p> <p>18+ Care leavers service: Accommodation team</p> <p>Corporate parenting service</p> <p>Children in care teams</p>
<p>Ensure accommodation sufficiency and working in partnership with district councils and providers</p>	<p>Implement sufficiency strategy</p>	<p>Commissioning service</p> <p>Corporate parenting service</p> <p>18+ Care leavers service</p>
<p>Provide support to young parents with access to early help services</p>	<p>Develop preparation for parenthood guidance</p> <p>Develop early help services to target vulnerable groups</p> <p>Drop-in services to be establish support in youth hubs</p>	<p>Corporate parenting service</p> <p>Early help service</p> <p>Corporate parenting service</p> <p>Early help service</p> <p>18+ Care leavers service</p>

How well we do at finding appropriate adoptive families for children for whom it is decided this is the right option.

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Sufficient number of adopters	Ensure recruitment of adopters and timelines of progressing adoption plans Provide support to adopters and reduce adoption breakdowns	Head of adoption service
Continue to improve and implement foster to adopt initiative	Develop recruitment campaign to target diverse adopters in identified area of Kent Ensure timely assessment of prospective adopters	Head of adoption service
Adoption orders granted	Ensure timeliness of application and support to complete process to reach expected targets, that maintain Kent as a Good adoption agency	Head of adoption service
Development of regional adoption agency	Establishing partnership model Identify phased implementation plan Work in partnership with DfE	Corporate parenting service Head of adoption service

How well our foster care arrangements work.

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Transparent staying put arrangements and support with transitions	Transitions workshop to review staying put arrangements Develop life skills programme for children looked-after and care leavers	Corporate parenting service Fostering service Fostering service 18+ Care leavers service Practice development Officers

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Increase number of foster carers recruited and trained to provide good quality care	<p>Targeted recruitment for carers who can offer permanency through to adulthood and commit to keeping young people under staying put.</p> <p>Comprehensive training programme for all foster carers and individual personal development plans. Monitored through the Fostering Independent Review Team undertaking all foster carer annual reviews.</p> <p>Updated recruitment campaign planned to target “empty nesters” October 2017</p>	Fostering service
High quality foster carers providing safe and proactive care to children looked-after	<p>Review of safe care practice in Kent Fostering in September 2017 following allegations within the service. Mandatory training for all staff:</p> <p>Keeping children safe: sexual abuse in foster care.</p> <p>Panel training and workshops.</p> <p>New risk assessment template for all new foster carer applicants and registered carers.</p> <p>Well-being and keeping safe groups for girls aged 12-16 years to be piloted in East Kent</p> <p>Review of PREVENT strategy</p>	Fostering service
Increase the number of special guardianship orders	<p>Clear focus on permanency planning with mandatory on-line training on care planning for all fostering staff</p> <p>Streamlined connected person assessment to use Kent template.</p> <p>Focus in early permanency planning for children prior to entry into care to reduce placement moves and secure early permanency options</p>	<p>Fostering service</p> <p>IRO service</p> <p>Children in care social workers</p>
Effective safeguarding; recruitment and retention of high quality carers	<p>See above for safeguarding plan</p> <p>Retention of foster carers through our sense of belonging project, our offer to improve placement stability and retain our experienced foster carers</p>	Fostering service

How good the standard of residential care provided or used by Kent for children in care and suitable placements for care leavers is.

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Monitoring of other local authority children looked-after place in Kent	Local authorities to follow process to alert KCC of any child placed into Kent	Safeguarding unit
Reduce high cost placements	18+ Care leavers service high cost placement panels to review expenditure	Sufficiency strategy officer accommodation team TPS
Ensure good quality standards are achieved with all accommodation provision	Accommodation team to ensure regular monitoring and reviews of accommodation	Accommodation team
Identify in county and in-house accommodation provision for children in care	Sufficiency strategy	Commissioning service Corporate parenting service

What support does your authority provide to young people leaving care and how effective is it?

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Good quality Pathway Plans with young people completed personal advisors and social workers	Exemplar pathway plans in induction Ongoing workshops	Corporate parenting service 18+ Care leavers service Children in care teams Practice development officers
Transparent entitlements to be promoted to all children looked-after and care leavers	Establish locality open days to promote resources, available service and local offer	18+ Care leavers service
Personal advisors to ensure relationship building and support to care leavers	Recruitment of good quality personal advisors Personal advisors to attend penultimate LAC review and	18+ Care leavers service 18+ Care leavers service

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
	handover meeting, prior to young person turning 18	
All young people in custody to be afforded same level of support and entitlements to services	Ensure effective monitoring, tracking and care planning	18+ Care leavers service YOS Children in care teams
Effective transition pathways with adult's services	Implement joint working collaborative protocol	Corporate parenting service 18+ Care leavers service
Ensure access to services for all care leavers in Kent	Establish drop-ins with early help service at youth hubs in all areas of Kent	18+ Care leavers service Early help services

How effective is our professional workforce of social workers, personal advisors, family support workers and others responsible for running services for and working with looked-after children and 18+ care leavers.

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Good quality training provision for all staff	Mandatory eLearning Use of embedding research in practice Implement induction programme Support CPD online	Corporate parenting service 18+ Care leavers service Children in care teams Practice development officers
Recruitment of high quality professional staff	Review supervision policy Ensure care leavers contribute to interview panels	Corporate parenting service 18+ Care leavers service Children in care teams Practice development officers

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Practice meetings to capture feedback from audit activity	Monthly practice meetings and audit activity by team managers Senior personal advisors to undertaken monthly reflective practice group work	18+ Care leavers service
Effective quality assurance	Regular auditing Cycle of continuous service development/feedback	Corporate parenting service Practice development officers

What more could be done to fulfil the council's responsibilities as a 'corporate parent'?

Outcome	Actions	Responsibility
Responsive, warm and nurturing leadership and management to ensure best possible life chances for children in care and care leavers	Ensure vision and support to all staff working with vulnerable groups promoting the expectations to be good and effective corporate parents Review strategy every 6 months in children in care management meeting	Corporate parenting service
The voice of the child/young person is evident throughout work	Recognition of achievements on individual basis and events	Corporate parenting service
Robust partnership and joint working with other stakeholders and agencies	Ensure representative corporate parenting is representative and evidenced in all policies and procedures working with vulnerable children and young people	Corporate parenting service
Annual corporate parenting report on progress	Annual report to be presented to cabinet committee on corporate parenting progress	Assistant Director for corporate parenting