

JOINT EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES STRATEGY FOR IMPROVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Introduction

Our strategy for the education of looked after children is no different to our strategy for all children – that is, supporting the raising of standards for all, which is an integral part of Darlington's Community Strategy.

Many Looked After Children experience additional barriers to learning as a result of abuse, neglect, family breakdown, disruption of attachments and/or instability of placement. Looked After Children often experience problems in the school environment as a result of emotional, social and relationship difficulties. Particular emphasis needs to be placed on the support of Looked After Children in the school environment to improve their educational attainment, self worth, security and sense of belonging.

The joint Education/Social Services Strategy is designed to ensure that Looked After Children receive maximum educational opportunity within their schools. The local council has corporate responsibility for all Looked After Children and this responsibility must be addressed through partnership working both within the council and its departments and its partners.

Vision

Our vision is that educationally, emotionally and socially all Looked After Children in Darlington will attain to the level of their ability and that they will enjoy a broad and balanced education in schools that understand their needs whilst expecting commitment and success for each child.

Outcomes/Objectives

- Looked After Children to secure good educational outcomes
- Ambition that performance for Looked After Children in Darlington matches/exceeds national expectations
- Shared database to be in place and used jointly by each agency to improve performance
- Comprehensive programme of training for carers, designated teachers, social workers and other relevant people in supporting children's education
- Systems in place to quickly capture underachieving children, SEN at an early age and attendance problems
- Looked After Children to develop high levels of self esteem, social and behavioural skills
- Support to be provided to parents/carers on supporting children in school to maximise benefits
- Looked After Children to be well supported during any school changes or transitions

Acronyms: DT = designated teacher; SW = social worker; C = carer; LAC = Looked After Children ; EM = elected member; AD = Assistant Director; HOS = head of service; SEN = special educational needs; CAM = children's accommodation manager; SIO = School Improvement Officer;

Supporting communication.

Task	Action required	When	Success criteria	Target/PI	Who will do it
Establish LAC monitoring group (rec 11.22)	Identify membership define remit agree meeting and business timetable	November 2003	Defined LAC monitoring group		AD Ed/SS
Develop set of protocols	Define roles/responsibilities	Jan 04	Agreed effective protocols – understood by all		CAM/HOS
Define roles and responsibilities	Review existing document on roles of SWs and DTs	Jan 04	Clear definition of roles and responsibilities		CAM/HOS
Communicate strategy	Joint dissemination event	January 2004			AD ED/SS

Supporting children

Task	Action required	When	Success criteria	Target/PI	Who will do it
Develop PEP for all LAC (rec 10.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> set individual educational target for each child ensure progress against target is maintained use PEP to plan school transitions – specify additional support required 	Spring 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective PEP 	OC2 PAFA2	Designated teachers
PEPs to form the basis for development of relevant sections of Pathway Plans for care leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure the involvement of the leaving care team and Connexions Service with LAC aged 15½ onwards 	Jan 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mutually effective PEPs and Pathway Plans 		Designated teachers Leaving Care Team (AW)
Connexions Services to fulfil liaison role between schools and SSD, with LAC a priority					Connexions Service (LK & TB)

Improving attendance for LAC

Issue	Action required	When	Success criteria	Target/PI	Who will do it
Improving attendance where 25 days or more of school has been missed (rec 10.5v)	DT and SW to convene planning meeting for LAC who misses 10 days of schooling. Second meeting if 20 days are missed. AD in Ed and SSD to be informed of any 20 day meetings.	To be implemented from Sept 2003	Fewer children out of school for long periods of time – performance against local target for number of half days missed and broken weeks improving.	PAF C24	Meeting arranged by DT/SW
Termly reporting to LAC education strategy group on absence.	Planning meeting arranged with 'Welfare Call' 26.1.04. EWS to provide termly report to LAC strategy group. Data to include breakdown by yr group and school.	Termly	As above		HOS
Supporting phase transition (rec 10.5 iii)	DT and SW to ensure Y6 transition support plan is produced – hold transition review	Autumn term prior to transition.	Phase transition supported		
Carers to provide information to schools about non attendance on day one (rec 10.5 v)	Training for carers to ensure a focus on attendance and adherence to attendance procedures	1st day of absence	Absence notified from day one		CAM & C

Monitoring and tracking performance of LAC

Task	Action required	When	Success criteria	Target/PI	Who will do it
Establish rigorous systems to monitor ongoing performance against expected progress. (rec 11.17)	Improve assessment procedures. Improve data collection	January 2004	Rigorous systems established to monitor performance.	OC2	School effectiveness/ performance data team Designated teacher.
Develop LAC monitoring group	Identify personnel for monitoring purposes. Agree what is to be monitored Agree who provides information, and to whom, when, and to what purposes it will be put	All for January 2004	Reports provided on progress to LAC strategy group on a termly basis		HOS/CAM working with DTs and SWs

	Agree actions to be taken from monitoring exercises (see tackling underachievement)				
Harmonise and simplify data collection systems within LA (rec 10.33)	Define process to monitor LAC This will include definition and collation of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance data – collection process established (EWS) - Attainment data – collection process - Trigger factors – ie 20 days absence and exclusions etc. Define action to follow - Transition support – define action required 	Spring 04	Effective, relevant database with agreed protocols for access.		School effectiveness/ performance data team Designated teacher.
Track progress of individual children (rec 10.16)	Review and improve target setting process to ensure pupils progress over time is recognised.	Spring 2004	Prompt identification of underachievement	OC2	School effectiveness/ performance data team Designated teacher.
Support the development of PEPs and ensure these are monitored termly (rec 10.4)	Develop effective, appropriate PEPS and ensure these are available for looked after reviews. During termly review meetings identify key issues for action – intervention strategies if appropriate	Termly	Effective, relevant PEPs. Prompt identification of underachievement and the delivery of intervention strategies as appropriate.	Ensure PEPS are up to date and available for looked after reviews	DT,SW and SES
Monitoring outcomes at end of: (rec 11.17) KS1, KS2, KS3 and KS4	Collect and provide report on performance of LAC at end of key stage.	Autumn term	Identification of underachievement	OC2 PAFA2	
Monitoring SEN (rec 10.5 ii)	Report on the number of LAC identified as having special educational needs, the provision made and outcomes	Termly	Termly report to LAC strategy group.	OC2	
Monitoring Foundation Stage Profile (rec 11.18)	Collect and provide report on performance of LAC at end of reception using statutory Foundation Stage profile assessment	September	Annual report to LAC strategy group.	OC2	HOS - EY
Monitoring exclusions	Collect ongoing information about the exclusions of LAC – fixed term	Ongoing	Termly report to LAC strategy group.		EWS/schools

	and permanent. Offer support, alternative provision as appropriate.				
Reporting on outcomes of monitoring	Provide summary report to LAC strategy group on a termly basis. Provide summary report to Lifelong Learning and Health and Social Affairs Scrutiny Committees annually on progress and attainment of LAC.	Termly October each year.			HOS/CAM AD (Ed and SSD)

Tackling underachievement

Task	Action required	When	Success criteria	Target/PI	Resp.
Tackling underachievement at all key stages; KS1 KS2 KS3 KS4 (rec 11.17)	Ensure participation of LAC in tests. Ensure all children have a PEP and that it is reviewed annually. Ensure any pupil performance data is considered and progress planned. Ensure that intervention strategies are delivered and their impact monitored. Develop PEP to ensure progress is planned in line with child's projected performance. Ensure progress is reported at Looked after review and termly SIO meetings	Termly	Improved levels of participation in tests – improvement at least in line with targets met.	OC2	C and SW DT, SW and C SES
Supporting SEN (rec 10.5 ii)	Agree protocols between agencies for LAC with SEN moving into/out of Darlington. Implement a system for joint monitoring of provision and progress – in line with SEN Code of Practice	Spring 04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smooth transition arrangements, ensuring provision is made efficiently Joint arrangements, ensuring effective monitoring and improving outcomes 	Protocols agreed and implemented. Improvements annually from base-line	CAM/HOS- PS/HOS-SEN

Supporting schools

Task	Action required	When	Success criteria	Target/PI	Resp.
Develop role of designated teacher – to include: Children's Homes managers Children Homes team Manager. Children's Home Team Manager Foster Carer Senior Practitioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer relevant training and non contact time to perform role Support schools in the increased vulnerability of LAC in policy review i.e. behaviour + attendance, bullying etc. Co-ordinate service provision for LAC who have SEN, use EAL or have suffered disruption to their schooling in the past 	Spring Summer 2004	Effective designated staff with clear understanding of roles and responsibilities	100% to receive training	HOS

Continuing Professional Development

Task	Action required	When	Success criteria	Target/PI	Resp.
Develop joint training for teachers, social workers and carers (rec 10.27)	CPD for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated teachers Social workers For those working with LAC in a variety of settings eg Children Homes managers Children's Homes Team Manager Foster Carer Senior Practitioner 	Spring /Summer 2004	Effective CPD responsive to current and future need	CPD offered/ CPD attended	HOS

Supporting carers

Task	Action required	When	Success criteria	Target/PI	Resp.
Raise awareness of governing body responsibility and Local authority as Corporate parents. (rec 10.9 & 9.16i)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure governors have an understanding of promoting the needs of LAC and monitor outcomes Ensure the Elected Members as 'corporate parents' have an understanding of their role and promote corporate parenting. 	Summer 04 - ongoing	Governors and LA with clear understanding of their role as 'corporate parents'	Offered/att ended	HOS/CAM
Support carers in their role (rec 10.27)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer high quality support + training to carers in meeting educational needs of LAC To ensure that additional support 	Ongoing	Carers with clear understanding of roles and responsibilities	Offered/att ended	Fostering Team Children's residential Managers. HOS/CAM

	can be accessed to limit opportunities for underachievement				
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MS/GW/Looked After Children 3.12.03

Data Collection/ performance indicators LAC

<p>Establish set up information:</p> <p>Child's name: Dob: UPN: Local Authority: School name & contact number: Year group: Designated teacher: Carer name & contact: Social Worker & contact:</p>	
<p>Attendance PAF C24</p>	<p>Monitor Weekly, monthly, termly Monitor absence – reason</p>
<p>Pupil performance OC2</p>	<p>Foundation stage End KS1, KS2, KS3 KS4 (PAFA2)</p>
<p>Pupil progress OC2</p>	<p>Over time – monitor personal education plans Monitor intervention strategies and impact</p>
<p>Exclusions</p>	<p>Monitor frequency, duration and reason for exclusion.</p>
<p>Note all performance against these indicators will be expected to be 'broadly in line or exceed peers'.</p>	

Narrowing the gap in educational attainment and participation

The target to narrow substantially the gap in educational attainment and participation of children in care will have been achieved if, by 2006:

- outcomes for 11 year olds in English and Maths are at least 60 per cent as good as those of their peers;
- the proportion who become disengaged from education is reduced, so that no more than 10 per cent reach school leaving age without having sat a GCSE equivalent exam; and
- the proportion of those aged 16 who get qualifications equivalent to five GCSEs graded A*-C has risen on average by 4 percentage points each year since 2002; and in all authorities at least 15 per cent of young people in care achieve this level of qualifications.

For this target, 'children in care' means those looked after children, defined as above, who were in care on 30 September and had been continuously looked after for at least a year.

Target date – 30 September 2006.

Sources of data: The Department of Health OC2 return and DfES data.

Baseline data – baseline data for the year ending 30 September 2002 will be available in June 2003.

How will this be calculated?

Outcomes for 11 year olds in English and Maths: this measures the relative proportions of children in care achieving level 4 in English and Maths at Key Stage 2 (KS2) compared with the proportions of all 11 year olds. It is measured as follows:

$$\left[\frac{(\% \text{ children in care aged 11 obtaining level 4 in KS2 English} + \% \text{ children in care aged 11 obtaining level 4 in KS2 maths})}{2} \right] \div \left[\frac{(\% \text{ all children aged 11 obtaining level 4 in KS2 English} + \% \text{ all children aged 11 obtaining level 4 in KS2 Maths})}{2} \right]$$

Aged 11: means those of the appropriate age to have been in year 6 in the school year prior to the 30 September date – ie for 30 September 2006, refers to school year 2005–06.

School leaving age: means those who ceased to be of compulsory school age (as defined in section 8(3) of the Education Act 1996) during the year to 30 September.

Aged 16: means those of the appropriate age to have been in year 11 in the school year prior to the 30 September date – ie for 30 September 2006, refers to school year 2005–06.

Sat an exam: means entered for and obtained a result in a GCSE or equivalent qualification.

All authorities – means all councils with social services responsibilities in England where there are at least 10 children in care aged 16 in the relevant year. Children are included in the count for the authority which is looking after them.

Source – 'A better education for children in Care' (Social Exclusion unit)