

Welcome

Full Council Briefing

An Overview of Children in Care in Gloucestershire

3rd July 2018

Objectives

- To build on information shared at the Members Induction in June last year
- To re-visit The Corporate Parenting Principles
- To hear first hand about their care journeys from our Ambassadors
- To promote further insight into the profile of children in care in Gloucestershire and the issues they face
- To provide an update regarding a revised Corporate Parenting Pledge

Setting the Scene

- The Corporate Parenting Principles are now enshrined in legislation (s1 of The Children & Social Work Act 2017)
- They were published within Statutory Guidance in February 2018
- The corporate parenting principles are about embedding a positive culture in the local authority towards children in care and care leavers and their success will depend on the extent to which directors, councillors, heads of service and front line managers champion and promote understanding of them
- A strong ethos of corporate parenting means that sense of vision and responsibility towards the children they look after and their care leavers is a priority for everyone

Because....

The experiences of children in care and care leavers, particularly in regards to whether they feel cared for and listened to, will therefore be an important measure of how successfully local authorities embed the principles

Reminder of The Principles

- To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and well-being of children and young people in care and care leavers;
- To encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- To take into account their views, wishes and feelings;
- To help them gain access to, and make the best use of services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
- To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes for them;
- For children and young people in care and care leavers to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
- To prepare them for adulthood and independent living

Quiz (warm-up)

For starters we have focussed specifically on the Full Council Briefings (with a couple of exceptions...), shared by Councillor Boyles since June last year, and have a number of questions for you.....

Kahoot.it

Question1

What percentage increase has there been regarding the number of children in care over the last 3 years (end March 2015 to end March 2018)?

Question 2

How many children were in care at the end of March 2018?

Question 3

In terms of ages of those in care, which age group has increased most over the last 3 years?

Question 4

What percentage of children in care are looked after under a voluntary Section 20 arrangement?

Question 5

Children in care are how many times more likely to have special educational needs compared to their peers?

Question 6

NHS England, My Life, My Plan – a pilot project which provides support children's emotional and mental health is known as:

1. NCP
2. ONS
3. IPC
4. ISW

Question 7

How many Heads of Service now make final decisions regarding a child's entry to care?

Question 8

How many children in care had more than 2 moves (3 placements within the last 12 months (as at the end of March 2018)

Question 9

How many children in care had more than 2 moves (3 placements) since being in care?

Question 10

How many Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children & Young People does GCC employ?

VOICE

gloucestershire

"your voice, we listen"

My Journey into and through Care – The not so good – Eliza

- Came into care when I was 15 into an emergency placement
- Met my social worker the day I was taken into care
- I had lots of questions that she couldn't answer
- Second placement I was left to do my own thing

My Journey into and through Care – The good – Eliza aged 18 Care Leaver living independently

- I had a loving foster carer
- She made me feel so comfortable
- Hugs, smiles , own shelf in the kitchen

What difference being in care has made to me – Eliza

- Showed me what a family is all about
- Being allowed to feel how I wanted to feel (gave me space and allowed me to be myself)
- Helped me stay in mainstream school, she fought my case and stood up for me
- If it wasn't for my foster carer, I wouldn't have finished my GCSE's
- Her love and support encouraged me to apply for the Ambassador job

Planning

- We still have much to do to turn around the service into one which predominantly brings children into care in a planned way
- On average in 2017/18, 37% of requests for placement were received on the day they were needed. Very few were true emergencies
- In April 2018 this was 36% and in May it was 40%!
- The analysis of the new entry to care process will help us in determining what the issues are which result in this high level of unplanned referrals

Impact of Unplanned Admissions

- Emergency placements (keeps the cycle going!)
- No matching
- Placement breakdown
- Instability
- Poor outcomes

My Journey into and through Care – The good -

Aiden aged 17 living with a foster family

- Only changed Social worker once
- Amazing support from all sorts of services,
Virtual schools, Fostering teams etc..
- My current foster carers support me in
everything that I do

My Journey into and through Care – The not so Good - Aiden

- Changed placement 6 times in total
- Only in one placement did I have the chance to be introduced properly and stay beforehand
- Some placements have been so crowded I haven't received the attention I needed

What difference being in care has made to me – Aiden

- More stability
- Made me feel confident in my choice to go to Uni
- Showed me there ARE people who love me out there
- Gave me the opportunity to focus on me
- Gave me resources and opportunities that I would never have had

Stability

- As referenced in the quiz, too many children experience too many placement moves - in addition, too many children have too many changes of school and of social worker
- If children experience instability in all three aspects of their care, outcomes are inevitably poor
- We need access to more placements to respond to the growing care population and achieve right placement first time
- The Sufficiency [of Accommodation] Strategy due to be presented to Cabinet in the autumn will map out what we need to do

My Journey into and through Care – The Good- Emily aged 16 living with a foster family

- I felt safe
- I feel I was well supported
- Virtual school is supportive

My Journey into and through Care – The Not So Good - Emily

- Stayed in the same area as my birth family
- I wasn't informed about what's happening
- Constantly being told I was going to be kicked out or moving placement
- No say in what placement
- Profile didn't reflect me very well, didn't have an input originally
- Things could have been prevented beforehand instead of dealing consequences after

What difference being in care has made to me – Emily

- Made me resilient
- Affected my education for the worse, changed school when first came into care
- Helped me develop a clear vision for my future
- Now aspiring to work within police or fire services

Involving Children & Young People

- They need to be involved at all times in the decision making process
- Their profiles needs to reflect their needs and be balanced so that potential carers get a good feel for them and can assess if the match would be right
- This is their life story
- We are moving towards a one-page profile for children & young people when they need a placement. It will be informed by them.....it will be balanced

More facts

	Jun-16-May17		Jun-17-May-18		Percentage Change
Readmissions to care	56		51		-9%
Children discharged from care	297		224		-25%
Children leaving care to be reunified with their family	123	41%	70	31%	-43%
Children in Care Adopted from care	31	10%	37	17%	19%
Children discharged from care under a SGO	34	11%	23	10%	-48%
Other	109	37%	94	42%	-14%

Snapshot of CiC at the end of June

- 679 in care
- 74% entered care due to abuse and neglect
- 11% due to family dysfunction
- 6% due to absent parenting
- 5% due to family being in acute distress
- 3% due to child's disability or illness

Snapshot cont....

- 135 children have been in care for 5+ years
- 26 have been in care for 10+ years, of those:
 - Four are 10/11 years old....
 - Most are in foster care (incl. with family and friends)

The Corporate Parenting Pledge

Discussion: Moving forward....