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Corporate Parenting Specialist Advisory Group

Wednesday, 4th July, 2018

6.00 pm

Meeting Room A - Old Town Hall, Blackburn

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
2. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th December 2017**
Minutes 18th December 2017 **3 - 6**
3. **Gamechanger Conference**
Discussion item: for the Group to receive a verbal update on the Gamechanger Conference held on 4th November 2018.
4. **Children Services Ofsted Report**
For the Group to receive a presentation on the Children's Services Ofsted Report.
SIF Inspection Action Plan **7 - 11**
5. **Virtual Headteacher Update**
Discussion item: for the Group to receive an update on Children in Our Care and their attainment data.
6. **Monitoring Report: Children in Our Care**
For the Group to review and consider the latest monitoring report on Looked after Children in the Borough.
One page summary CIOC_July_2018 **12 - 13**

PART 2 - THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

There are no Part 2 items.

Date Published: 27th June 2018

Harry Catherall, Chief Executive

**CORPORATE PARENTING
SPECIALIST ADVISORY GROUP
18TH DECEMBER 2017**

PRESENT – Cllrs Gunn (Chair), Pearson, Whittle, Kay, Surve, Casey, D Smith, Bateson, Daley, Ali, Hussain and Taylor.

Also Present –

Deborah Benmore	Fostering Team Manager
Mike Dixon	Fostering Marketing and Recruitment Manager
Sharon Burns	Chair of Foster Carers Association
Samantha Briggs	Secretary of Foster Carers Association
Gavin Redhead	Participation Officer/Voice
Linda Clegg	Director of Children's Services
Cerys Bedford	Adults and Safeguarding Business Partner
Robert Arrowsmith	Head of Policy Performance and Commissioning (Children's Services)
Phil Llewellyn	Governance and Democratic Services Manager
Firoza Hafeji	Governance Officer

RESOLUTIONS

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Specialist Advisory Group. Apologies were received from Cllrs Shorrocks, McFall, A.Patel, Khan, McGurk, Little and Davies. Apologies were also received from Joanne Siddle, Jessica Byrne and Patricia Harrison.

RESOLVED –

That the apologies be noted.

2. Foster Carers Service

The Chair welcomed Foster Carers, Sharon Burns and Samantha Briggs, to provide Members with a verbal update on Foster Carers Service.

Members were provided with case studies and an overview of the challenges faced by Foster Carers especially as teenagers struggled with changes and the separation from younger siblings. It was highlighted that foster carers are at a high risk of allegations so it is vital that all foster carers kept a log book.

The foster carer shared a poem with the Group followed by a task to identify the emotions and feelings of a foster child. It was noted that social workers held a vital role as a supervisor for the foster carers whilst also supporting the foster child.

The Group heard that the Looked after Child review was carried out by an Individual Reviewing Officer (IRO) and can be held at an alternative place agreed by the foster

child and the IRO. This is to ensure that the foster child had an appropriate review meeting, even if they were not feeling up to it.

The Director of Children Services shared positive feedback received from the Children's Ofsted inspection and highlighted that the "experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence" was rated "Good".

The Group were provided with rewards and challenges of a day in the life as a Foster Carer which highlighted that the foster carers were faced with various challenges on a daily basis.

RESOLVED –

That the foster carers be thanked for the verbal update on Foster Carer's Service.

3. Foster Carers Recruitment

The Chair welcomed Mike Dixon, the new Fostering Marketing and Recruitment Manager and Deborah Benmore, Fostering Team Manager.

The Fostering Marketing and Recruitment Manager gave a verbal update on Foster Carer recruitment and explained that events were planned to help promote and recruit new foster carers. It was highlighted that the Local Authority were seeking for Foster Carers to support large sibling groups.

The Group heard that the Fostering Marketing and Recruitment Manager worked collaboratively with other authorities whilst upgrading the Foster Carers website to ensure it was robust and user friendly. The new website would hold case studies and significant information to support foster carers.

Various marketing strategies were shared with the Group which helped to promote foster carers. The Group suggested using the local radio station as it had been a positive resource in the previous years.

RESOLVED –

That the Fostering Marketing and Recruitment Manager and Fostering Team Manager be thanked for the verbal update on Foster Carer recruitment.

4. Agency Commissioned Placements

The Chair welcomed Cerys Bedford, Adults and Safeguarding Business Partner and Robert Arrowsmith, Head of Policy Performance and Commissioning and introductions were made.

The Group were provided with a presentation on Children's Commissioned Placements. It was noted that there were two types of commissioned placements, Independent Fostering Agencies and Residential placements.

The Group were informed that currently Blackburn with Darwen has just under 400 children and young people in our care. The commissioned placements budget supports the placements of 80 of these children:

- **47** children and young people are with agency foster placements
- **3** placements have been commissioned as specific supported accommodation for young people aged 16
- **2** placements are commissioned as concurrent placements for young children who are in court proceedings with a place for adoption
- **1** mother and baby has been commissioned following court direction
- The remaining **27** placements are commissioned residential placements

The cost of young people currently in Residential provision was shared with the Group as:

- 1 young person residing in secure provision costing above £5500 per week.
- 19 young people residing in general residential of which seven costing above £3500 per week excluding the education funding.
- 6 young people residing in a disability provision of which three costing above £3500 per week.
- 1 young person residing in specialist residential school costing above £3500 per week however 50:50 funded by health.

In response to questions raised by the Group it was highlighted that the reason for young people being in agency foster placements was due to the shortage of places available in the Local Authority. Also there were limited skilled Foster Carers for older foster children who have acute needs and their needs are not met in a traditional home environment.

The Group were provided with various case studies to identify why the young people were accessing placements elsewhere rather than in our Local Authority. It was noted that the scale of the young person's needs was thoroughly assessed prior to placing them in a commissioned placement as it cost the Local Authority a substantial amount of money.

It was reported that early intervention is beneficial for the children and young people but due to budget restraints it was proving to be difficult.

It was noted that historically the North West has been a prime area to set up a residential home due to:

- Low price of housing
- Good transport infrastructure
- Three large authorities close by
- Ability to open homes in rural areas

Information on current trends and issues were also shared with the Group.

RESOLVED –

That the Adults and Safeguarding Business Partner and Head of Policy Performance and Commissioning be thanked for the presentation on Children's Commissioned Placements.

5. **Monitoring Report; Children in Our Care**

The Head of Policy Performance and Commissioning provided a presentation on the latest monitoring reports for Children in Care.

The presentation identified that the number of Children in Care had increased since the last report and currently there were 398 Children in Care with more males (56%) than females (44%) in care, 77% of whom were defined as White British.

It was noted that the number of babies and teenagers entering care had increased with a high proportionate of Children in Care being placed in a home environment.

RESOLVED –

That the Head of Policy Performance and Commissioning be thanked for the presentation.

Signed.....

Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were signed

Date.....

Blackburn with Darwen SIF Inspection Action Plan

Inspection date: 25th September – 19th October 2017

Action	Lead Officer	Timescales	Progress/Comments	RAG Rating
5. Ensure that life-story work and later-life letters are available for children looked after to assist each child's understanding of their history and plan for their future.				
Key success indicators: Audits of children's case files evidence good quality life story work completed at the appropriate point.				
a. Review support materials available	Head of Social Work Service	December 2017	Comprehensive materials are available however it was identified that the procedure needed to be more explicit on expectations around recording of direct work; this has been added as a separate action.	Green
b. Review policy	Principal Social Worker	January 2018	Meeting held in January to review policy; policy fit for purpose a minor amendment suggested to the membership of the virtual team. Policy revised and changes submitted, although they will not be live until the next Tri.X update in September 2018.	Green
c. Reinststate the life story virtual team	Principal Social Worker	TBC	This action is being reviewed to assess whether it is the best way of providing support.	Red
d. Relaunch revised arrangements to all staff	Principal Social Worker	TBC	Dependent on c) above	Red
e. Deliver life story workshops	Principal Social Worker	TBC	Dependent on c) above.	Red
6. Ensure that personal education plans for children looked after involve children and young people and are specific about targets and achievements, and that the impact of pupil premium funds is monitored and used to best effect.				
Key success indicators: All looked after children have a PEP which is reviewed each term; high quality Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are seen in termly audits; regular analysis of pupil premium funding is undertaken and reported to the Virtual School Governing Body.				
a. Review PEP format	Virtual Headteacher	September 2017	New annual format of PEP ensures that targets from previous term(s) are monitored and providing greater oversight. The new PEP format was implemented in September 2017. An annual document being updated termly is working better, progression is clearer, as is the impact of pupil premium.	Green
b. Review Children in our care (CIOC) Pupil	Virtual Head	March 2018	The new policy will be presented to the Virtual School	Green

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Agenda Item 4

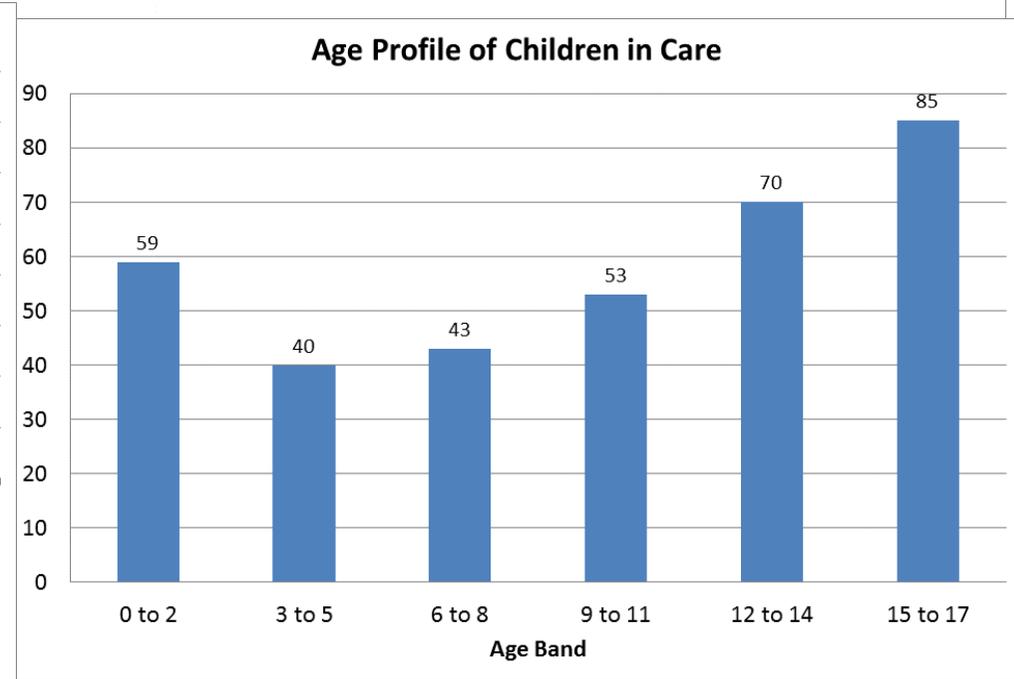
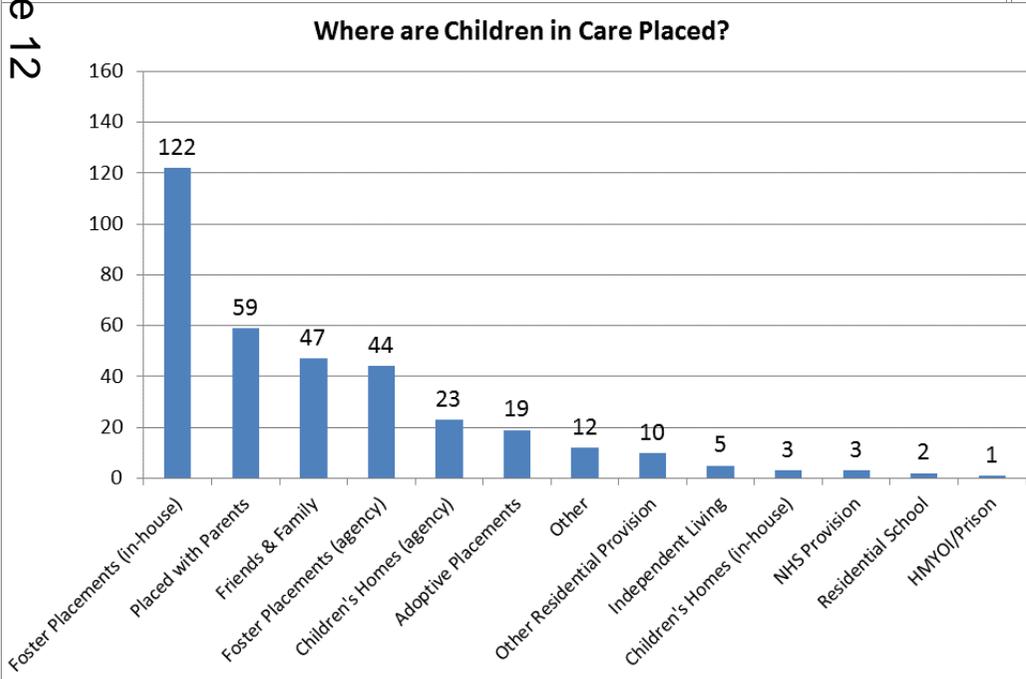
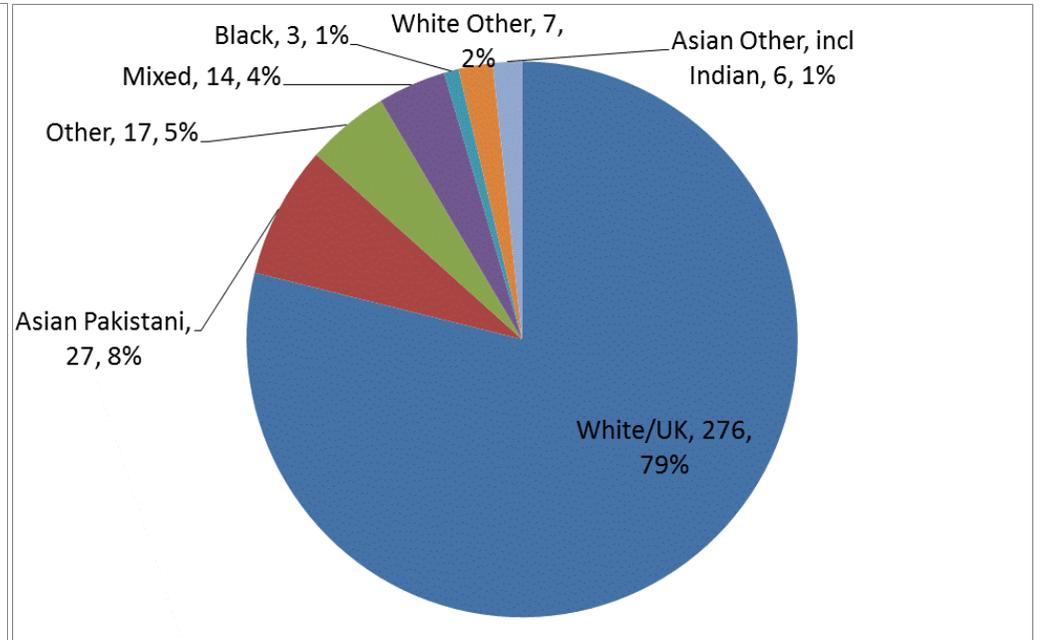
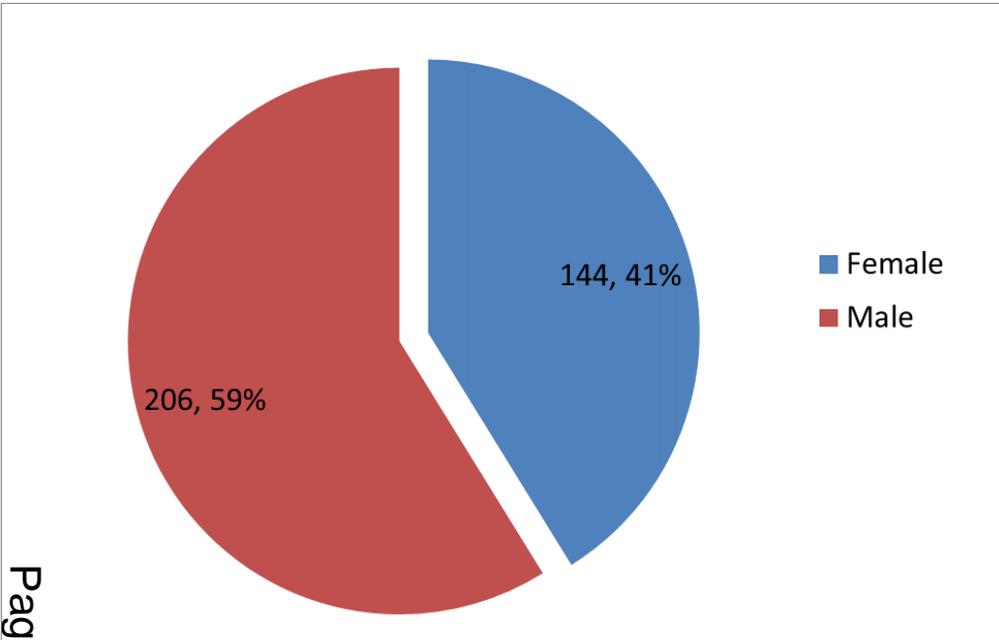
Action	Lead Officer	Timescales	Progress/Comments	RAG Rating
Premium Plus policy			Governing Board in June. There has been good engagement with CIOC Professionals (including Designated Teachers) regarding our proposed approach.	
c. Virtual School to offer mandatory training for practitioners in relation to PEPs and Pupil Premium plus (PP+).	Virtual School	November 2017	Additional termly training on target setting has been added to the training plan and will be a recurring event. General training will continue to be included in the Virtual School training plan for the 2018/19 academic year.	
d. Deliver mandatory training for social workers	Virtual Head	April 2018	These were delivered in April; further mop-up sessions will be held for those who were unable to attend.	
e. Hold regular PEP drop-in sessions for social workers	eLAC Manager	September 2018	In April, it was agreed that the eLAC Manager will hold regular drop-in sessions for social workers. These will begin in the new academic year, alongside the PEP updates. In the meantime, social workers have been provided with contact details for the team with an invitation to contact at any time for support, advice and guidance and the team have had some positive uptake on this.	
f. Build capacity within the Virtual School for monitoring use and impact of PP+ and ensuring compliance and quality within PEPs.	Virtual Head	March 2018	The Virtual School Headteacher intends to recruit a PEP Co-ordinator to scrutinise target setting, amongst other things (the successful candidate will be a qualified teacher as is standard in other local authorities). This can be funded using Pupil Premium, however there have been delays in getting approval to recruit to this post. From September 2018, there are increased statutory duties for the Virtual School Headteachers in relation to Previously Looked After Children and as a result the role requirements now need to be re-visited, which will create a further delay. In the meantime, the service are in discussions with a recently retired Virtual Headteacher with a view to commissioning this service.	
g. Review recording of PEPs	Virtual Head; Service Lead,	September 2018	PEPs are not recorded on the Protocol recording system; a demo of a Professional Portal took place in April and there is	

Action	Lead Officer	Timescales	Progress/Comments	RAG Rating
	Quality Assurance (QA), Inspections & Systems		an agreement in principle that this is the way forward. Funding needs to be resolved and system configuration needs to be fully tested.	
7. Improve work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for care leavers.				
Key success indicators: increased number of care leavers in education, employment and training (EET).				
a. Ensure Employment and Skills Strategy includes provision for additional support to care leavers within the Council.	HR & Workforce Strategy Manager	January 2018	Strategy has been updated to explicitly reference care leavers as a priority: <i>5.1 We will develop new strategies to support care leavers into employment.</i>	
b. Explore apprenticeship opportunities for care leavers within the Council	HR & Workforce Strategy Manager; Leaving Care Manager	January – July 2018	<p>A task and finish group was established to identify the key actions required to make a difference in this area. It has been agreed that the Council needs to lead by example by providing the apprenticeship opportunities, before we can approach partners. As a result, care leavers have been guaranteed an interview should they apply under the ongoing apprenticeship recruitment. All care leavers were written to, inviting them to the Council open evening in April and Personal Advisors supported a number of care leavers in accompanying them to the event.</p> <p>Work experience for care leavers outside of the apprenticeships programme is also being considered by HR colleagues, and opportunities through volunteering will be considered through Lancashire Volunteer Partnership.</p>	
c. Specify the resource and support requirements necessary to ensure that care leavers are successful in completing their apprenticeships	HR & Workforce Strategy Manager	April 2018	<p>A document has been developed which sets out the Council's commitment entitled 'Supporting our care leavers – Apprenticeships and work experience'.</p> <p>The Leaving Care Team will develop training for managers within the Council so that managers know what to expect, how to provide the appropriate support and manage their young person to give a better chance of success.</p> <p>We will also have to consider our own internal HR policies to</p>	

Action	Lead Officer	Timescales	Progress/Comments	RAG Rating
			ensure the needs of care leavers can be met.	
d. Develop Work Ready course for care leavers	Leaving Care Manager	May 2018	A Work Ready course has been developed for care leavers, as a pilot with Training 2000. The first six weeks will be spent working at Training 2000, where they will learn employability skills such as CV development and interview skills. A 3 week work experience placement will then follow, moving the young people around so they can experience different positions. 13 young people started their course in May.	
e. Develop traineeship programme	Leaving Care Manager	May – September 2018	<p>A traineeship programme has been developed in partnership between BwD Leaving Care, Blackburn Rovers Community Trust and the English Football League Trust (EFLT). This will see the delivery of a traineeship programme for 16-25 year olds. It will start in September in and will focus on personal social development and will require young people to undertake tasters in different areas.</p> <p>The qualifications will be accredited by West Lancashire College, whilst on the course the young people will be covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability • Personal and Social Development • First Aid Qualification. • Level 1 Football or Netball Coaching Badge / or sport related depending on what the young people would like to cover. 	
f. Increase offer of supported internships for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)	HR & Workforce Strategy Manager; Post-16 Manager	August 2018	<p>The Post-16 Manager is exploring options for taking this forward in a small pilot, working with 2 or 3 test employers in collaboration with the LA (who would likely be the main pilot organisation). This would be with a view to upscaling the model incorporating any learning as part of that.</p> <p>We will also consider creation of supported internships for young people with SEND (but not necessarily EHCP) once we have a successful model.</p>	

Action	Lead Officer	Timescales	Progress/Comments	RAG Rating
g. Influence external partner organisations to consider creation of employment opportunities for care leavers.	Chief Executive; Director of Children's Services; HR & Workforce Strategy Manager	March 2019	As internal processes and support are proved to be successful, we will then look to expand on this with partners.	

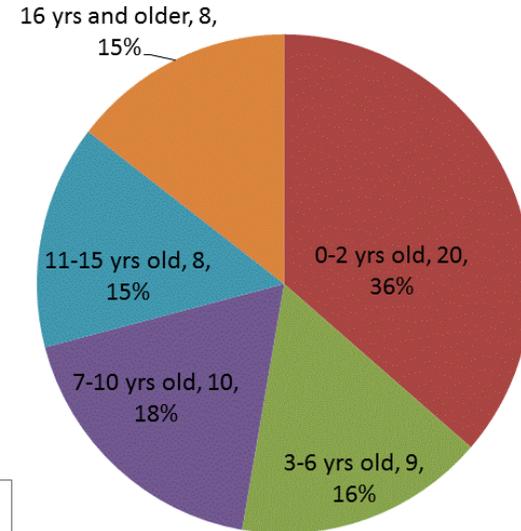
June 28th 2018 - Number of Children & Young People in Care: 350 (-48 from last meeting (18/12/17))



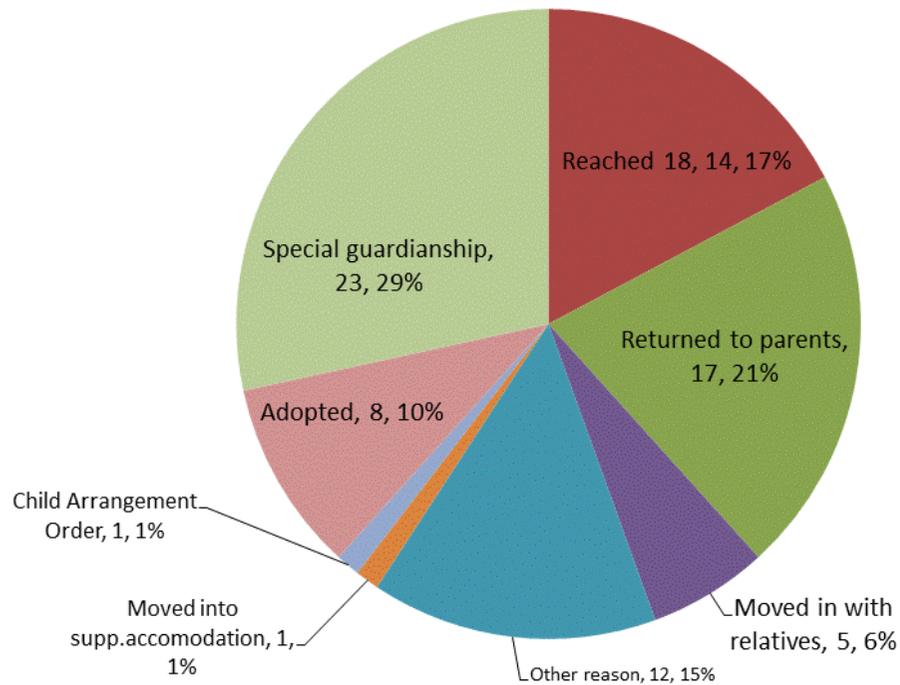
Number of Children in our care since 2008



**Age of Children Entering Care
January 2018 to July 2018**



DESTINATION OF CARE LEAVERS: Jan 2018 to July 2018



	Entering	Leaving	Net
Total in 2001	111	95	16
Total in 2002	103	117	-14
Total in 2003	131	134	-3
Total in 2004	102	104	-2
Total in 2005	119	100	19
Total in 2006	94	104	-10
Total in 2007	97	92	5
Total in 2008	114	104	10
Total in 2009	151	94	57
Total in 2010	112	123	-11
Total in 2011	155	128	27
Total in 2012	125	149	-24
Total in 2013	123	120	3
Total in 2014	89	125	-36
Total in 2015	163	139	24
Total in 2016	170	139	31
Total in 2017	161	143	18
Total in 2018	55	81	-26