

# Out of Borough Placements

# Snapshot

- November 2019 when there were 402 children in care in Blackburn with Darwen.
- There were 166 children in placements recorded as being outside the local authority boundary

# Placement Type

<b>In house foster care</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Independent Fostering Agencies</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Family and Friends</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Residential</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Placed with parents</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Adoptive placements</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Regulation 24 placements</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Other IA placements</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Supported accommodation</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Young Offender Institutions</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Hospital</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>

# Distance from BwD

- The majority of children in foster care living outside of the local authority boundary are still in the North West with 28 children in IFA placements being placed in Lancashire CC boundary.
- 95 are living more than 20 miles away, the majority of whom are still in the North West – Manchester, Liverpool, Stockport, Lancaster and Morecambe etc.
- 20 children are living a significant distance from BwD ie more than 50 miles away. A number of those living at the greatest distance from BwD are in adoptive or connected persons placements .

# How do we know that children living out of borough are safe and well cared for?

- Commissioned placements Fostering
- Placements are commissioned through the North West Framework
- Process of matching and ensuring suitability
- Sharing of information
- Placement planning and reviews

# Commissioned placements - residential

- North West Framework
- Policy of 'good' or better
- Process of matching and suitability
- Information sharing
- OFSTED
- Compliance visits

# In house fostering

- 29 children in out of borough placements are with in house foster carers
- Rochdale, Burnley, Accrington, Clitheroe, Bacup
- Assessment and approval of foster carers
- Annual reviews
- Fostering service supervision and support
- Unannounced visits
- Role of the fostering panel

# Role of OFSTED

- Registration of services
- Inspection of fostering services
- Inspection of residential homes
- Notifications to local authorities



# Role of the Social Worker

- All children in our care are allocated a social worker who is responsible for ensuring that children are properly cared for, their needs are met, their voice is heard and they are helped to feel happy and settled in their placement. Social workers undertake this role through six weekly (minimum) visits to the child, liaison with the placement provider, liaison with other relevant professionals and parents, and make referrals to relevant services. Unannounced visits are also undertaken.

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- To monitor the standard of care offered by the placement including the physical standards, house rules and behaviour management strategies;
- To identify whether there are toys or games to play with and the access that the child has to them;
- To monitor how the contact arrangements with family members and friends are working and to discover whether these are promoted within the home;
- To consider the child's sleeping arrangements such as room sharing, display of personal belongings and the physical state of the room. Has the child got clean clothes that are stored appropriately?

# Children with Disabilities

Social workers visiting children with disabilities and/or complex health needs also consider the following:

- Whether practices that are being employed are appropriate and do not compromise the child's safety e.g. the method of lifting a disabled child;
- Does the carer have sufficient equipment i.e. bath chair / hoist etc.?
- Managing the child's health appointments
- Ensuring the correct administration of medication?

# Role of the IRO – LAC reviews

There are two clear and separate aspects to the function of the IRO:

- chairing a child's review
- and monitoring a child's case on an ongoing basis

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- Consult the child about his/her Care Plan at each review and at any time that there is a significant change to the Care Plan;
- Ensuring that Care Plans for looked after children are based on a detailed and informed assessment
- Identifying any gaps in the assessment process or delivery of service;
- Offering a safeguard to prevent any 'drift' in care planning and the delivery of services;
- Monitoring the activity of the Local Authority
- Problem-solving where there might be difficulties or issues
- Alerting the local authority if there are concerns that the placement is not meeting the child's needs.

# Advocacy, Independent Visiting and Mentoring

- BwD commissions a service from Barnardos that offers access to advocacy, independent visiting and a mentoring specifically for looked after children .
- Children and young people living outside of the local authority boundary can access this service which provides an additional layer of support for those children who need it most.

# Quality Assurance

- Children's Services have a quality assurance framework that ensures that children's care is safe, meets their needs and helps them to develop. This framework is built around two practice weeks every year and includes:
  - Case file audits
  - QA of assessments and court reports
  - Supervision of social workers
  - Observation of practice
  - Observation of key meetings
  - The voice of children and young people